Republican Presidential Candidate

Dwight David Eisenhower, Republican candidate for reelection as President of the US, was graduated from West Point Military Academy and commissioned in 1915. His military career reached its climax when, as Allied Commander, he accepted, in 1945, the German surrender.

Then he was successively US Army Chief of Staff, president of Columbia University, NATO Supreme Commander in Europe, and the successful candidate in the 1952 presidential election. His vice-presidential running mate in the 1956 campaign is again Richard M. Nixon (below).

The Republican convention which chose Dwight D. Eisenhower and Richard M. Nixon as its candidates was held in San Francisco in a huge amphitheatre known as the “Joe Palais”.

By contrast with the Democratic convention a week earlier the Republicans put on a quieter show although not without the colourful features that have become characteristic of US political conventions.

There was no doubt from the beginning about whom the Republicans would choose as their presidential candidate. President Eisenhower’s nomination was a foregone conclusion. There was, however, an unsuccessful attempt to oppose the nomination of Mr. Nixon.

The White House has been the goal of political aspiration in the US since George Washington watched the laying of its cornerstone in 1792. Known at first simply as “the President’s house” and then, more formally, as the “Executive Mansion”, it acquired its now internationally known name, the “White House”, after it was burned by the British in the War of 1812-14. Only the fire-blackened walls remained standing.

When the structure was rebuilt within the walls, the latter were painted white to hide the marks of the fire.

Democratic Presidential Candidate

Adlai Ewing Stevenson, again the candidate of the Democrats for the presidency, attended three universities, worked as a journalist and then became a lawyer. During the Second World War he was a special assistant to the Secretary of the Navy and later to the Secretary of State. He was chief of the 1945 US delegation to the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations. Elected Governor of Illinois, he had been in office three years when chosen as presidential candidate in 1952. His 1956 vice-presidential running mate is Estes Kefauver (below).

The Capitol building, not far from the White House, is the meeting place of both houses of the US Congress. Elections are being held the same day as the presidential election for all of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives and for one-third of the 96 seats in the Senate. Gaining majority control of both houses is a major campaign objective of both the political parties.

The Democrats had a precarious majority in the Senate throughout President Eisenhower’s 1952-56 term and also, after 1954, a majority in the House of Representatives.

The Democratic convention which was held in August in the International Amphitheatre in Chicago selected Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver as its presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

The Democrats held an exciting, dramatic convention. Stevenson had obtained the support of a majority of the delegates during the pre-convention campaigning but at the last moment former President Harry Truman placed his great prestige and influence behind the candidacy of Averell Harriman, the Governor of New York.

The Stevenson supporters overcame the threat. Then Mr. Kefauver narrowly won from Senator John F. Kennedy.

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