

# Grave Problems the New President Faces

**W**HAT ARE THE NEW PRESIDENT'S thoughts as he takes the oath of office, and reviews the glittering parade that symbolizes the nation's acclaim?

No new Executive was ever given such a foretaste of his perils as Franklin Roosevelt had when he narrowly missed death at the hands of the would-be assassin Zangara, only a few days before going to the White House.

And yet, as David Lawrence of the Consolidated Press points out, the attempt on his life has brought a great tide of friendly feeling toward Roosevelt, and it would not be surprizing to this clear-eyed watcher of the political scene if Roosevelt entered the White House with a country united as strongly in support of him as it was in support of President Wilson when we entered the World War.

Franklin D. Roosevelt knows, as well as any one else, that he takes charge of the Government in a greater crisis than has confronted any other President except George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—Wilson's great crisis came after he had served his first term.

The whole country, to use the phrase of an Iowa editor, looks to the new President as "the key-stone to recovery."

Congress has just given him almost dictatorial powers over reorganization of the government machinery in the direction of economy. When the time comes for President Roosevelt to present his definite program to end the depression, Congress, says Senator Wheeler of Montana, "will jump through a hoop to put it through." After all, declares Frank Kent in his *Baltimore Sun* column, Mr. Roosevelt can really make himself a dictator—and a constitutional one. To do this, we are told, "four things are essential—first, a revival of the party caucus that will insure party solidity behind his recommendations; second, leadership in the new House, and this means an effective Speaker; third, use of his Federal patronage to keep Senatorial weaklings in line; fourth, grim determination itself."

How Franklin Roosevelt wields the tremendous power that will be in his hands, remarks the *New York Times*, "will depend upon his resourcefulness, his determination, and his resolve to assert and exercise the full authority of the President."

**W**HAT kind of President will Roosevelt be? That is what everybody is asking. One might guess, writes William Hard in the *Washington Evening Star*, "that Mr. Roosevelt might temperamentally prefer the rôle of a party moderator, but the circumstances are combining and conspiring to thrust upon him the rôle of a party master."

The whole country, continues Mr. Hard, "lies under a blight of indecisiveness. Among members of Congress, and just as



**CORDELL HULL**  
of Tennessee,  
Secretary of State.

much among the master minds of finance, business, and the academic world, all sorts of ideas are buzzing about "in uncontrolled and contradictory disorder." Here are deflationists, reflationists, and inflationists. Here are those who would bring back prosperity by "buying American," with the idea that prosperity begins at home; and others who would "do business, coming and going, backward and forward, throughout the habitable globe, and trust to the notion that what is good for the globe will ultimately be good for Galesburg." This confusion of counsel, we read on, explains why Congress and the people want definite leadership:

"The country is tired of going nowhere with the mob. It wants to go somewhere with a man.

### Roosevelt Cabinet



**WILLIAM H. WOODIN**  
of New York.

Secretary of the Treasury.

and State administrative activities as far as possible to relieve distress, an objective which is responsible for the conference of Governors to be held at the White House two days after his inauguration; a condition of acute distress which finds its resultant in 12,000,000 unemployed citizens, with a third of the nation's entire population directly affected; formulation of a tariff policy, and the disposition of at least the important features of patronage and appointments—assuredly these form a formidable array of matters of domestic concern.

"But this is only a part of the picture.

"International questions of tremendous moment are pressing for attention: war debts, disarmament, the approaching World Economic Conference, stabilization of currencies.

"The issues which Mr. Roosevelt will face, the problems for the solution of which he must accept responsible direction, are those of a nation and a whole people, and rise far above parties or politics. If ever American sentiment, regardless of section or party, should concentrate its power and demands in support of a man who has been called to a great trust, one involving the welfare, the stability, and, it may be, the destiny, in great measure, of the country, that obligation will rest upon the people of the United States when Franklin D. Roosevelt takes the oath of office."

"No President has ever inherited such a load of problems and responsibilities as Roosevelt," writes Elliott Thurston from Washington to the *Philadelphia Record*.

In rural Mississippi, the *Jackson Daily News* bids us "look at the picture flung into the face of Franklin Roosevelt":

"Ships are tied up in harbors and their hulls are rotting; freight-trains are idle; passenger-cars empty; 11,000,000 people are without work; business is at a standstill; the treasury building is bursting with gold, yet Congress wrestles with a deficit mounting into the billions, the result of wild and extravagant spending; granaries are overflowing with wheat and corn; cotton is a drug on the market; food crops are gigantic and unsalable, yet millions beg for food; mines are shut down; oil industries are



“Remember, I Voted for a Change!”

—Orr in the Chicago “Tribune.”

engaged in cutthroat competition; farmers are desperate, taking the law into their own hands to prevent foreclosures; factories are idle; industry is paralyzed; 200,000 to 300,000 beardless boys are drifting aimlessly along the highways; an active smokestack is a curiosity.”

“To figure out something definite, to propose ways and means of getting back on the highway, to formulate constructive policies, to lash a laggard Congress into action, is the task of Roosevelt—the most stupendous task any human being ever assumed.” And yet the Mississippi editor has faith that the new President, while not a superman, may be “a man of destiny”:

“Physical handicaps do not discourage him; crippled limbs do not depress his sunny spirit; bullets from an assassin’s gun do not frighten him; not even the power of Tammany can deter him from the performance of a plain duty.”

Not quite so certain is William Allen White, who writes of Roosevelt for the North American Newspaper Alliance—

“No one knows his heart and few have seen behind the masking smile that wreathes his face.

“We have had to be satisfied with urbanity when we needed wisdom, with mystery when we should have a complete understanding. We are putting our hands in a grab-bag. Heaven only knows what we shall pull out.

“Yet upon this man’s character rather than upon his wisdom depends the immediate future of the United States. Not so much depends upon how wise he is as upon how brave he is, how fair he is, and how he reaches the affections and so holds the confidence of the American people.

“In a word, it isn’t so much his intelligence as his nerve. He might be infinitely wise and fail if he wobbles. A fool who will do something and stick to it and pound out a policy in this crisis, a fool who can lead is better than a wise man who can fumble.”

And here is a word of advice from a spokesman of that newspaper profession which has so much to do with the impression a President makes on the country. Says *The Editor and Publisher* (New York):

“What the country needs, if we are to shake off the torpors of fear and hopelessness, is a series of blinding head-lines proclaim-

ing action, resolute leadership, a firm grip at the controls.

"It is our feeling that the President must work rapidly and openly, speaking his mind in plain terms, not in the riddles of diplomacy, if he is to succeed in creating the psychological reaction that is so desperately needed as basis for a thorough-going reorganization of national and international affairs.

"Blinding head-lines . . . let them come! The people and the press await with bated breath. Millions of intelligent, patriotic, earnest citizens, party lines forgotten, are ready to spring to the standards in defense of American principles at the President's call. This country is to be saved to its people, its revered policies kept intact. We have faith that political leadership and constitutional action can achieve that end."

**N**ATURALLY some line on the President's policies was obtained when his Cabinet choices became known. A Democratic characterization of the entire Cabinet as "a rare piece of political craftsmanship" is quoted by the New York *Herald Tribune*. President Roosevelt has a Cabinet that will work with him, is the way the New York *Times* sums it all up. Some disappointment is voiced over the non-inclusion of some of the great Democratic leaders whose names have been discussed so freely ever since the election. But realizing that facts are facts—the New York *Herald Tribune* thinks "the country will be slow to criticize Mr. Roosevelt for his failure to assemble a Cabinet of prima donnas."

The choice of Mr. Hull for the State Department and Mr. Woodin for the Treasury was generally applauded by the press as placing those key positions in the hands of able, conservative, experienced men, on whose loyalty the President can count.

Cordell Hull of Tennessee was a member of the House of Representatives continuously from 1906 till 1930, with the exception of one term. He was elected to the Senate in 1930. He is described as a modest, quiet, logical, humorless man, who has become the leading authority on the tariff in Congress. While he has never held any diplomatic post or any membership on any international commission he has been a careful student of foreign problems, and a New York *Times* correspondent hears the remark about Mr. Hull "that if he ever took the examination for appointment in the foreign service of the State Department, he could pass with a mark of 100." He is a Protestant and a dry, an active political leader, and, as the *Charlotte Observer* notes, he is the first Southerner to be Secretary of State since John C. Calhoun. Many press writers consider it extremely significant that Mr. Hull has for years strongly advocated reciprocal tariff reductions as an aid to world economic recovery.

William H. Woodin, on the other hand, has no political past. Up to 1928 he was a Republican. He is a millionaire industrialist, having been president of the American Car and Foundry Company since 1922. "Slender, of medium height, with light hair, blue eyes, and a keen, pleasant face, he possesses an un-hurried, agreeable manner," according to the New York *Herald Tribune*, which considers him "a man of infinite variety," being a numismatist, a print collector, and a composer of fine music. In fact, Mr. Woodin wrote the "Franklin Delano Roosevelt March" for the inaugural. Mr. Woodin wouldn't say anything to the reporters about policies, but, according to the United Press, did remark that he had heard that Austen Chamberlain, British Chancellor of the Exchequer, was also a musician, and suggested that, "this might result in some harmony." He added: "From now on I will probably be more interested in Federal Reserve notes than musical notes."