

Thomas E. Dewey Is Dead at 68

Racket Buster Twice Ran for President— Governor 3 Times

Special to The New York Times

BAL HARBOR, Fla., March 16 — Thomas E. Dewey, Governor of New York for three terms and twice the Republican nominee for President, died about 3:30 P.M. today while alone in his room at the Seaview Hotel in this resort town north of Miami Beach. He was 68 years old.

Mr. Dewey died less than an hour after having returned from an 18-hole round of golf.

At the Miami Heart Institute, which Mr. Dewey visited yesterday, a post-mortem examination revealed that he had suffered "an acute fatal heart attack."

Mr. Dewey was to have been a guest tonight at the White House for a party marking St. Patrick's Day. President Nixon said: "The occasion is diminished beyond words for both Mrs. Nixon and me by his death."

Role Was Influential

In national and state Republican party politics from the mid-1940's to the mid-1950's, Thomas Edmund Dewey played a powerful public and behind-the-scenes role. And, because of his friendship with President Nixon, he was an informal



Thomas E. Dewey

The New York Times

Continued on Page 50, Column 1

Thomas E. Dewey Is Dead at 68; Ex-Governor and Twice a Presidential Nominee

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2

White House counselor until his death.

Twice his party's nominee for President—in 1944 and 1948—Mr. Dewey also served three terms as Governor of New York. He closed out his formal political life in 1954, devoting himself to a lucrative legal practice.

A leader whom many found without the gift of flair or flamboyance, Mr. Dewey depended for his appeal to a large extent on his excellent legal mind, his ability to marshal facts and arguments. He also relied on his well-earned record as a prosecutor to suggest himself as the implacable foe of public malefactors.

However, Mr. Dewey did not endear himself to all Republicans, and in some he inspired a degree of scorn. To Mrs. Alice Roosevelt Longworth he resembled "a groom on a wedding cake."

And after his defeat in 1948, the tart-tongued Mrs. Longworth, a daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt and the widow of House Speaker Nicholas Longworth, remarked: "We should have known he couldn't win—a soufflé never rises twice."

Backer of Eisenhower

Mrs. Longworth's assessment was not that of Richard M. Nixon, who owed his Vice-Presidential nomination in 1952 to Mr. Dewey. Mr. Dewey, who was a strong backer of General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower for the Presidential nomination, introduced Mr. Nixon to the general.

Mr. Nixon had first come to Mr. Dewey's attention for his role as an investigator in the Alger Hiss case, in which the former State Department official was accused by a House committee of ties to Whittaker Chambers, a self-confessed Communist agent.

According to insiders, Mr. Dewey saw Mr. Nixon as "a respectable McCarthy." The allusion was to Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin, whose anti-Communist charges offended some political leaders.

Mr. Nixon was grateful to his sponsor, and after his election to the Presidency in 1968 offered Mr. Dewey the Chief Justiceship of the United States. Mr. Dewey declined on the ground of his age. However, he was a frequent White House visitor and adviser.

Mr. Dewey's defeat by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944 was expected, but his defeat by President Harry S. Truman four years later was one of the nation's greatest political upsets. Mr. Dewey joined the little group of Presidential aspirants, which included Samuel J. Tilden and Charles Evans Hughes, who tasted the bitterness of defeat after believing that their election was certain.

As was the case in 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson defeated Mr. Hughes, Mr. Dewey's defeat by President Truman in 1948 was largely due to Republican overconfidence and to the defection of supposedly Republican states in the Middle and Far West.

At the time the Republican, Democratic and Progressive national conventions had made their nominations in Philadelphia, Mr. Dewey seemed sure of election, with Earl Warren, his running-mate. The popularity of Mr. Truman, who had succeeded to the Presidency on the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt, was at its lowest. There had been opposition to his nomination by a powerful group of Democratic leaders who had tried unsuccessfully to get General Eisenhower to be a candidate.

Moreover, a revolt of Southern Democrats, on adoption of a strong civil rights plank by the Democratic convention, had resulted in the nomination of Gov. J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina for President on an States' Rights ticket.

An even more serious threat to President Truman's election was seen in the candidacy of Henry A. Wallace, former Vice President, who was nominated for President by the newly organized Progressive party. It seemed probable that Mr. Wallace would draw heavily from left-wing and radical groups that in at least the three preceding Presidential elections had voted for President Roosevelt.

Mistake in '48 Campaign

As the 1948 campaign is viewed in retrospect, it is evident that Mr. Dewey and his supporters made the mistake of believing that his nomination was equivalent to election. Consequently Mr. Dewey and his campaign managers abandoned the aggressive strategy that enabled him to get a unanimous nomination on the third ballot at the Republican convention in favor of a campaign designed to avoid giving serious offense to any large group of voters.

This policy apparently led many thousands of voters to feel that Mr. Dewey was seeking to avoid discussion of vital issues. President Truman in his campaign made the direct charge that Mr. Dewey was evading issues, and Harold L. Ickes, former Secretary of the Interior, undoubtedly damaged Mr. Dewey's chance of election by describing him as "a candidate in sneakers."

Because of the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act by the Republican 80th Congress, the main branches of organized labor—the American Federa-



Thomas E. Dewey with Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia in 1937, when he became New York County prosecutor.



Governor Dewey inspecting housing in the Bronx in 1945, year after first unsuccessful Presidential bid.

tion of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the Railroad Brotherhoods—were against Mr. Dewey. This was known to the Republican high command.

What the Republican leadership did not know and did not find out until after the votes were counted was the disaffection in the usually Republican farm states. This disaffection was caused partly by lack of governmental grain-storage facilities that the 80th Congress had done nothing to correct.

Other factors entered into the defeat of Mr. Dewey. Because of Communist domination of the Progressive party, the vote for Mr. Wallace was only a small fraction of what originally had been expected. But the loss of the farm votes in such states as Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin, which gave those states to President Truman, was decisive, and insured the election of the President by 303 electoral votes to 189 for Mr. Dewey.

Sober-Sided Campaign

Only the revolt of the Southern Democrats stood up as expected, and Mr. Thurmond received the 38 electoral votes of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina and the vote of one vote pledged elector from Tennessee.

Although Mr. Dewey conducted a sober-sided campaign, he had a sense of humor. "One time I kidded him about being a New Dealer at heart," a reporter said in 1948. "Mr. Dewey shot back, 'If you read the Chicago Tribune regularly, you'd know that I am a direct lineal descendant of F.D.R. without the personal charm.'"

It was The Tribune that "elected" Mr. Dewey over President Truman in an eight-column front-page headline late on Election Day.

After, in the words of one wit, "snatching defeat from the jaws of victory," Mr. Dewey proved gracious. Appearing at a Gridiron Club dinner of news-

papermen in the capital that December, he recounted his campaign vicissitudes with polished humor. He reserved his aloofness for the public, a trait observed by a Collier's magazine writer in the 1940's.

"Till he gets to the door, he may be cracking jokes and laughing like a schoolboy. But the moment he enters the room he ceases to be Tom Dewey and becomes what he thinks the Governor of New York State ought to be."

Mr. Dewey's rise as a state and national political figure began with his appointment, in 1935, as Special Prosecutor to conduct what came to be known as the Rackets Investigation in New York County. It was spurred materially two years later by his election as District Attorney of New York County. He was the first Republican to be elected to that office since Charles S. Whitman, who also afterward became Governor of New York.

Within a year after taking office as District Attorney Mr. Dewey made his first and unsuccessful run for Governor, losing to Herbert H. Lehman by 64,000 votes. It was Mr. Lehman, incidentally, who started Mr. Dewey up the political ladder by appointing him Special Prosecutor.

Although he lost the 1938 state election, his race had been so spectacular and the margin of defeat so small that he attracted national interest. A concerted effort was made to get him the Republican nomination for President in 1940, and he entered the Republican National Convention that year with the support of more delegates than any other candidate.

But his youth—he was only 37 years old at the time—and an inability to inspire strong friendships weighed heavily against him. After a few ballots his delegates began to desert him and the nomination went to Wendell L. Willkie. The election was lost by Mr. Willkie to Mr. Roosevelt, who thus became the first third-term President in the history of the United States.

Two years later, in 1942, Mr. Dewey ran again for Governor and was elected by a plurality of 647,395 over John J. Bennett Jr., Democrat. This margin was sufficiently impressive to make him a leading contender for the 1944 Presidential nomination.

Mr. Dewey at first did not wish to seek the nomination for President, as he realized that it would be difficult to defeat President Roosevelt because of world conditions. However, under pressure from supporters, he finally consented to become a candidate.

The 1944 campaign was waged against the background of a two-front war, and Mr. Dewey faced the obstacle of a widely held belief that his election, involving defeat of the nation's wartime Commander in Chief, would give aid and comfort to the enemy. He also had to temper his criticism of the national administration's conduct of the war lest he impair homefront morale. Mr. Dewey was defeated by President Roosevelt, as he had expected, by an electoral vote of 432 to 99.

Record Majority in 1948

In 1946 Mr. Dewey maintained his place as a national figure by defeating James M. Mead, Democrat, by 637,151 votes in a two-man race for the governorship. This was the largest majority ever obtained by a candidate for Governor in New York State, although both Mr. Lehman and Mr. Roosevelt had obtained larger pluralities as candidates for this office.

This record majority put Mr. Dewey in the forefront of aspirants for the 1948 Presidential nomination. This became virtually assured when it was announced that Senator Edward Martin of Pennsylvania, allied with Joseph R. Grundy, industrialist, and G. Mason Owlett, National Committeeman and head of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association, would place him in nomination. This Pennsylvania support proved to be no asset in the election and was used by President Truman in his charges that Mr. Dewey was the candidate of the moneyed interests.

It was largely through the efforts of Mr. Dewey that General Eisenhower defeated United States Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio for the Republican Presidential nomination in 1952. General Eisenhower defeated Adlai E. Stevenson, Democrat, by 412 electoral votes to 89 for the Presidency.

There was little in Mr. Dewey's background when he was appointed Special Prosecutor in New York County to suggest that he would be the national figure that he became. At that time he was young, 33 years old.

The son of George Martin and Annie Thomas Dewey, he was born in Owosso, Mich., March 24, 1902. His father, before he died in 1927, had been for many years Republican county chairman, postmaster of Owosso and editor and publisher of a weekly newspaper, The Owosso Times.

Mr. Dewey's grandfather, George Dewey, is said to have been a charter member of the Republican party. Adm. George Dewey, the hero of Manila Bay, was the latter's third cousin. On his father's side Governor Dewey was descended from English and Huguenot pre-Revolutionary stock. His earliest American ancestor, Thomas Dewey, settled in Massachusetts in 1634. His mother's mother was born in County Cork, Ireland.

In Newspaper Office as Boy
As a boy, Mr. Dewey did chores around his father's newspaper office. At 13 he obtained the agency for several weekly and monthly magazines and hired several other boys to help him. From his savings and a month's work on a farm he paid his way through his first year at the University of Michigan, from which he was graduated with an A.B. degree in 1923.

Possessor of an excellent baritone voice, Mr. Dewey led his college glee club for two years, won the Michigan state singing contest and placed third in a national contest. Encouraged to go to Chicago and New York for voice training, he studied first at the singing school of Percy Rector Stephens the summer after his graduation from college.

It was there that he met his future wife, the former Frances Eileen Hutt, grandniece of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy. They were married June 26, 1928, and had two children, Thomas Edmund Jr. and John Martin Dewey. Born in Sherman, Tex., Mrs. Dewey was reared in Sapulpa, Okla. A soprano, she played in several musical comedy road compa-



Governor and Mrs. Dewey on campaign trail in Charleston, W. Va., during race in 1944 against President Roosevelt.

nies, but abandoned a singing career after marriage. Mrs. Dewey died last July.

Coming to New York to study voice, Mr. Dewey enrolled in Columbia Law School to have an alternative occupation to fall back upon and for a time was torn between singing and law as a career. He helped pay his law school expenses by singing in church and synagogue choirs.

While studying law he became a Republican election-district captain. He finished the three-year law course in two years, being graduated in 1925, and then toured England and France with a college chum in a battered automobile. It was on this summer trip that he first grew the mustache that later

appointment as Special Prosecutor. The underworld leaders at first ridiculed him and looked upon him as a "boy scout." They changed their minds after he had convicted Charles (Lucky) Luciano, for whose parole he later was to be criticized. He smashed rackets in the restaurant and trucking businesses. In a little more than two years he had convicted 72 persons, with only one defendant being acquitted.

Mr. Dewey's success as Special Prosecutor led to his nomination for District Attorney of New York County by the Republican, American Labor and City Fusion parties. Running with Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia, he won easily.

His term as District Attorney

many of the state departments, put through a revision of the tax laws and shook up the state police. Public works, including new housing, hospital and highway projects, were planned, the Workmen's Compensation Law was overhauled, mental-hospital administration revised and veterans'-aid legislation enacted.

When Mr. Dewey neared the end of his second term in 1930, he was reluctant to run again and announced his intention of returning to the practice of law. Joe R. Hanley, then Lieutenant Governor, became a candidate for the Republican gubernatorial nomination.

Leaders of the party became convinced that Mr. Hanley would have little chance of election to the governorship and at a conference succeeded in getting him to consent to run for United States Senator. It was later disclosed that Mr. Hanley had written a letter to W. Kingsland Macy, then a Representative in Congress, from whom he had borrowed money, stating that arrangements had been made to pay his debts and to assure him of a state job, if defeated for Senator.

Letter a Campaign Issue

This Hanley letter, which became the subject of investigation by a United States Senate subcommittee, became an issue in the campaign and Mr. Dewey was charged by Democrats with having been party to an "iniquitous" deal. Mr. Dewey, however, defeated Walter E. Lynch, Democratic-Liberal candidate for Governor, by a plurality of 564,844, carrying with him the rest of the Republican state ticket. Senator Herbert H. Lehman, who a year earlier had defeated John Foster Dulles, Mr. Dewey's adviser on foreign policy, was re-elected by a plurality of 261,029 over Mr. Hanley.

In 1949 Mr. Dewey sought to get first-hand information of conditions abroad by a trip to Great Britain and Western Europe. In 1951, he went to the Orient, visiting, among other places, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

In 1953 Mr. Dewey brought about legislation that compelled the Board of Estimate to accept a financial package that brought about creation of the Transit Authority and an increase in the transit fare to 15 cents.

Mr. Dewey faced serious trouble in 1953, when the murder of Thomas F. Lewis, president of a local of the Building Service Employees International Union, A. F. L., brought about an investigation that disclosed corruption in operation of the Yonkers Raceway. Mr. Dewey met this situation by appointing a Moreland Act Commission to investigate this and

other harness race track scandals. Democratic leaders charged that political associates of Mr. Dewey were involved in these scandals.

Almost simultaneously it was revealed that State Senator Arthur H. Wicks, Kingston Republican, had visited Joseph S. Fay, convicted labor extortionist, in Sing Sing prison. Mr. Wicks was temporary president of the Senate and Acting Lieutenant Governor at the time. After considerable maneuvering, Governor Dewey forced his resignation.

Racketeering on New York's waterfront caused Governor Dewey to join with Gov. Robert B. Meyner of New Jersey in forming the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor in an attempt to curb crime and exploitation on the docks.

On June 16, 1954, Governor Dewey announced that his decision not to seek a fourth term as Governor was "definite and irrevocable." The Republican State Convention was held on Sept. 23 and Mr. Dewey was influential in obtaining the gubernatorial nomination for United States Senator Irving M. Ives. Senator Ives was defeated by the Democratic nominee, Averell Harriman, in a close race.

During his three terms as Governor, Mr. Dewey's legal residence was in the Roosevelt Hotel, where he had a suite. His country home was on the 486-acre farm at Pawling, N. Y., which he bought in 1937. There he studied milk-production records, played golf and visited his neighbors.

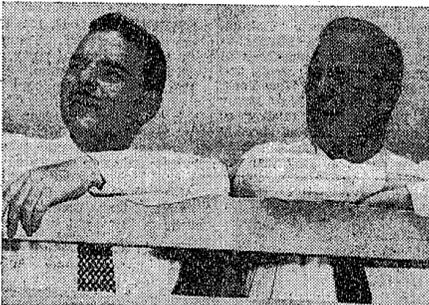
After leaving Albany, Mr. Dewey became senior member of the law firm Dewey, Ballantine, Bushby, Palmer & Wood at 140 Broadway. He occupied a spacious suite with a grand sweep of the harbor and the World Trade Center, which he abandoned.

His law firm had many international clients including the Government of Turkey, and associates said that Mr. Dewey compiled a formidable income. To visitors, he seemed perpetually tanned and relaxed.

After Mrs. Dewey's death, he shunned social engagements for a while, but in recent weeks he was seen at the theater in the company of Kitty Carlisle, the widow of Moss Hart.

Mr. Dewey was a member of the American, New York State and New York City Bar Associations, the New York County Lawyers Association, the Phi Mu Alpha and Phi Delta Phi fraternities and the National Republican Club and had received honorary degrees from many colleges and universities. He was an Episcopalian and a Mason.

Surviving Mr. Dewey are his two sons, Thomas of Chicago and John of New York, and two grandchildren.



Gov. Earl Warren visiting Governor Dewey at his farm in Pawling, N. Y., in summer of 1948. Mr. Dewey was offered Chief Justiceship of the United States by President Nixon in 1968, but declined on ground of his age.

proved a boon to political cartoonists.

On his return from this trip Mr. Dewey definitely decided to make law his career, and took a job in a downtown law office. After a year he obtained a junior partnership in the law firm of McNamara & Seymour, and his income began to rise. When his first period of private practice ended in 1931 he was making \$8,000 a year.

In 1931, George Z. Medalie, then United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, appointed Mr. Dewey his chief assistant in charge of 52 other lawyers. He was then 29.

After Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President in 1932, Mr. Medalie resigned two days after the trial of Irving (Waxey Gordon) Wechsler, reputed beer runner, for income tax violation had begun.

No successor to Mr. Medalie had been appointed. The Federal Judges of the district appointed Mr. Dewey. He went on with the trial and won a conviction.

Mr. Dewey returned to private practice on Dec. 27, 1933. He had won a reputation among lawyers as a trial counsel of ability. He later declared that his earnings during a year and a half of private practice were about \$75,000.

In 1935, Mr. Dewey accepted

was marked by many important convictions. He convicted James J. Hines, important Tammany district leader, for using his political influence to protect racketeers, and brought about removal of Hulon Capshaw as a magistrate. He also convicted Richard Whitney, stockbroker, and Fritz Kuhn, Nazi Bundist. He made charges of corruption against Martin T. Manton, judge of the United States Court of Appeals. Mr. Manton subsequently was convicted in Federal Court of selling justice. One of the leading gangsters prosecuted for racketeering by Mr. Dewey was Louis (Lepke) Buchalter, who later was convicted of first-degree murder and executed.

In 1941, Mr. Dewey declined to run for re-election as District Attorney. He succeeded in getting a bipartisan nomination for Frank S. Hogan, an independent Democrat and member of his staff. He then had a year of successful law practice with Charles D. Breitler, later to become his counsel and a Supreme Court Justice, as his partner.

As Governor, during his first term, Mr. Dewey was responsible for a long-overdue reapportionment of Congressional and legislative districts in New York State, for placing the state on a pay-as-you-go policy for capital construction, for increasing state aid for education and for establishment of the first state commission to eliminate religious and racial discrimination in employment. He also was responsible for liberalizing the unemployment-insurance law and lightening the burden of employers, and for launching a concerted drive to wipe out tuberculosis in the state during a period of 20 years.

In addition, he claimed credit for increasing New York's industrial contribution toward winning World War II, for piling up surpluses in the state treasury from \$80-million, which he inherited, to \$615-million and which were earmarked, at his insistence, for reconstruction and rehabilitation of state institutions and highways neglected during the war period. He also contended that the comparative stability of labor-management relations during the war was largely due to the efforts of his administration.

Backed by safe majorities in both houses of the Legislature, Governor Dewey reorganized



Governor Dewey acknowledging applause of delegates to the Republican convention in Miami Beach, Fla., in 1968.