

Memo to Doris Fleeson

William Marshall Boyle Jr., was born February 3, 1902 at Leavenworth, Kansas. The family moved to Kansas City later where Boyle and his twin-brother Russell, attended the grammar and high schools here. He obtained his formal education at Georgetown University and was graduated in law from the University of Kansas City School of Law on the 2nd day of June, 1926. He was admitted to the Missouri Bar on the 17th day of July, 1926.

His early legal career was spent in the mine-run practice that is the usual apprentice period of the young lawyer and with the Kansas City Gas Company.

During the 1930's he was active in democratic politics in Kansas City and was the Pendergast leader in the bon-ton 8th Ward where he did a good job with his party chores, notwithstanding the heavy incidence of moneyed gentry centering in that southwestern section of Kansas City. Despite their predilection for a Republican ballot in the exercise of their franchise, Boyle usually came in with a fair to middling vote - the type too, that had to be worked for and one definitely not interested in adapting their voting preferences to the famous old Kansas City election day dollars.

In connection with this phase of Boyle's life, it is accurate to say that he possesses a trait often found in the Irish character - the ability to command wide and firm friendships. This characteristic was well emphasized during his early political life here, and has been demonstrated in his Washington career also. Very few men enjoy the wide circle of friends that is Boyle's in Kansas City. This, in a measure, is illustrated by the fact that at a recent dinner in Kansas City, Mayor Roger T. Sermon of Independence concluded his introduction of him with the remark: "He's Jackson County's second best-known citizen."

When the Pendergast dynasty crumbled, with the indictment and subsequent incarceration of the boss in Leavenworth - in early April of 1939 - Boyle received the first real recognition of his organizational ability and the confidence in which he was held in Kansas City. The Kansas City Police Department, after the Pendergast explosion, was in a state of complete collapse. It was commanded by a Pendergast satellite who himself ran afoul of the income tax laws and ultimately joined his old schoolmate in college at Leavenworth.

Bryce B. Smith, one of the top-flight executives of the General Baking Company and,

then as now, within two or three of President Truman's most intimate friends, was Mayor of Kansas City. He immediately appointed Boyle Director of the Kansas City Police Department on April 15, 1939.

I talked with Roy Roberts specifically about this today, and he agrees that Boyle set to work and did a commendable and workmanlike job in eliminating the chaos that had engulfed the Department. With forthright courage, he promptly fired some of the more venal machine members of the force and gave heart to those in its ranks who hewed to the purpose of maintaining a decent and effective police operation. He did this job, too, without employing J. Edgar Hoover tactics in the management of his fellow-officers or shouting out a "bring-'em-in-on-a-slab" attitude at the general public. He stayed on the job until Bryce Smith could no longer stomach the short-sighted activities of the remnants of the Pendergast outfit, those whose attitude seemed to be "hang on and boss." Smith finally resigned in disgust; he just couldn't stomach the continuous sniping at his efforts to salvage what was mortal of the Democratic party.

For the next few years, Boyle retired to a quiet and unexciting law practice - until Senator Harry Truman prevailed on him to come to Washington and assist him on the Truman investigating committee. Early in 1942, when Harry Vaughan, the Senator's then Secretary, entered the service and departed for the South Pacific, Boyle took over as Truman's Secretary, where he remained until 1944.

I happened to be in Washington on the day that President Roosevelt announced Bob Hannegan of St. Louis as his choice as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. It might serve history to state at this point that Truman, single-handed and alone, was completely responsible for the emergence of Bob Hannegan from the obscurity of his Collector of Internal Revenue job in St. Louis to the national prominence he afterward achieved. It was all accomplished through the original idea of Truman in, first, forcing Hannegan's appointment as Collector in St. Louis, over the violent protest of the St. Louis press; then as Commissioner of Internal Revenue in Washington, and then as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Boyle telephoned the news to me and said that at Hannegan's insistence, he was leaving Truman and going with Hannegan as Executive Assistant.

Boyle stayed with the Committee during the campaign of 1944 and for some little time

thereafter, when he resigned to embark upon a very successful law practice in Washington. During the interim, he remained close to the President, being called upon to do many political odd-jobs for him. In April of 1948, when Gael Sullivan concluded there wasn't much point in listening further to the death rattles of a certain prematurely-interred corpse and made his departure to more fertile fields while the getting was still good, Boyle was drawn closer to the President.

Mr. Truman evidently had concluded that he needed trusted and tried political confidants in close as he observed the storm- clouds gathering. Since that time, Boyle has practically abandoned the practice of law and has served the President with an inspiring and selfless devotion. Shortly after Sullivan's exit, Boyle resumed his old base of operations at the National Committee. It has been said that he was the leader of a group - about twenty in number - who were the only people in Washington and New York who thought the President could be elected.

Those who know Boyle concede him a rather acute prescience in politics. This, coupled with a good strain of Gaelic courage, in a measure accounts for the affectionate esteem in which he is held by the President and his intimates.

This characteristic was well demonstrated very recently. A day or so after the election, a group of Kansas City political and businessmen friends of the President started discussing a big Truman victory dinner in Kansas City. The local Democratic Committee is presided over by a Kansas City lawyer beholden to Jimmy Pendergast. When the subject of the dinner was broached to him, he failed to move, for reasons best known to himself and his sponsor. But the original supporters of the idea, unconvinced by the dilly-dallying tactics of the party chairman, launched the dinner themselves. Boyle was asked to be the principal speaker. He readily accepted. When that fact became known, the Pendergast wing of the party here set out to boycott the affair and to use their influence officially and otherwise to call Boyle off. Jimmy Pendergast himself wrote his old compatriot, Boyle, beseeching him to have no truck with the Pendergast enemies and to cancel out his scheduled Kansas City return.

Undismayed by this ominous looking quarrel in his old political family in Kansas City, Boyle stood by his original acceptance. He faced up to the situation, delivered a good speech, made a fine impression, achieved the plaudits of the Kansas City Star, and sent

the thousand dinner guests away feeling they had gotten full value for their ten-dollar investments. This was accomplished without the presence of either the Chairman of the Jackson County Democratic Committee, Jim Pendergast, or any recognizable Pendergast stalwart. Less stout-hearted men could have stubbed a toe here or worsened an already ugly-looking situation. Boyle did neither.

Boyle still maintains his official residence at 3636 Euclid, in Kansas City, Missouri. It is a fetish with him to appear in Kansas City on voting days. Notwithstanding the fact that he has spent very little time in Kansas City during the past seven years, he still wields wide influence in party circles here.

He is a Catholic, of course. He is without any hobbies other than politics, and has an abhorrence of golf or any other forms of physical exertion, although he does maintain a mild interest in baseball. The employees around Committee headquarters will attest to his enormous capacity for work and the late hours he keeps when there is work there to do. He has an aversion for getting out of bed in the morning, is a chain-smoker, and uses liquor sparingly and generally not at all.

He married Genevieve Hayde of Kansas City on February 12, 1928, and they are the parents of two children, Jean Marie, 18, and Barbara Ann, 16. They reside at 2924 Upton Street, N. W., in Washington. He is entering politics because he has come to realize that government, as never before, plays a vital role in his personal well-being. You, for example, who have sweated out the business of paying a fabulous price for meat, for butter, have come to know personally the importance in your daily lives of a government which is either friendly to the people and conscious of their welfare, or a government so ridden with subservience to the big Washington lobbies that the welfare of the people goes by the board.

It is this issue of whether government is to be the people's government, the welfare of the many as its aim, or whether it is to be dominated by the narrow views of the discredited conservatives that this primary campaign is deciding. This is a complex race, to put it mildly. I had wished that the issues might have become clear, indeed I think it might have become clear, were it not for the entrance upon the scene of a third individual, whose program is no program, and who has nothing to offer but the customary Fourth-of-July generalities. It is undoubtedly true that with the support of the

Democratic organization here and with the very respectable sums of money that his supporters are mustering for him, Mr Axtell will draw off a considerable slice of the anti-Slaughter vote. I think we can win because the Great majority of ghe people in this district, regardless of organizations, regardless of bought votes, regardless of factional line-ups, sincerely believe in the principles which I have tried to emphazise in this campaign. These principles, are the age-old liberal view.