

HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY TAKES THE STUMP IN KENTUCKY PRIMARY

"I want to make it definite and clear to you that I am not interested in any shape, manner or form in the primary campaign in Kentucky."

This astonishing statement was made with straight face by Franklin D. Roosevelt to a crowd of some 50,000 Kentuckians gathered at Latonia race-track outside Covington on July 8. He was starting off on a cross-country stump-speaking tour in behalf of pro-Roosevelt Democratic candidates for Congress and against those who have not supported him. He was speaking as "Head of the Democratic Party," according to his fireside chat June 24. But because he is also President of the United States, the Latonia crowd did not laugh. Well they and everyone else knew that Mr. Roosevelt's sole reason for coming to Kentucky, to make three scheduled speeches in a single afternoon, was to help his Majority Leader of the Senate, Alben W. Barkley, in a red-hot fight for Democratic renomination against Governor Albert B. ("Happy") Chandler. This Mr. Roosevelt proceeded to make clear by following up his disavowal of interest in the primary with high praise of Senator Barkley, concluding:

"I have no doubt that Governor Chandler would make a good Senator from Kentucky—but I think he would be the first to acknowledge that, as a very junior member of the Senate, it would take him many, many years to match the national knowledge, the experience and the acknowledged leadership in the affairs of our nation of that son of Kentucky of whom the whole nation is proud, Alben Barkley."

From Kentucky the Head of the Democratic Party rolled on to Oklahoma to say a word for Senator Elmer Thomas. After stops for other favorites, he was due to arrive in San Diego, put off in a warship for several days of fishing in the Galapagos, then back to the South and politics about Aug. 7.



Senator Barkley, 60, is inclined to stodginess in action and thought. But on the stump he becomes a nimble-witted, spine-tingling orator. Left: a Barkley campaign sign.