

# BARKLEY SUCCUMBS AT CONVENTION

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# FUTURE MOCK PLANS ARE NOW INDECISIVE

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## Steering Committee and Faculty Will Decide Convention Fate

President Francis P. Gaines postponed the Mock Convention indefinitely last night following the sudden death of Sen. Alben Barkley of Kentucky.

It was also announced that the Steering Committee of the Convention will meet within two or three days with the Executive Committee of the Faculty to determine whether W&L will set another date for its Convention. However, any final decision will be in the hands of President Gaines.

Barkley had viewed the parade yesterday from a chair on the lawn of President Gaines' home, after riding behind the VMI marching band.

From his chair on the lawn, Barkley saw Gov. Thomas Stanley receive a shower of oranges from a group of girls on the Florida float. A total of 118 units and nine area bands participated in the parade.

Miss Sharon K. Ritchie participated in the parade on the New Jersey float. Miss Ritchie later excused the convention hall when she described the event as "most interesting and educational" and commented upon her welcome.

In the float competition, first place was awarded to the Iowa float with its "House that Benson Built"—an outhouse filled with farmers. The second place award went to Oregon, which had a salmon can float.

The Virginia Military Institute Band was judged the best band in the parade, and the Greenbrier Military School, second.

Augusta Military Academy's marching unit was awarded first place in that category.

After the parade, the convention activities switched to Doremus Gymnasium, where the delegations were called to order by Ellis Drew, acting chairman of the Democratic National Committee. The National Anthem was led by the Washington and Lee

University Band, and the invocation was given by the Rt. Rev. John J. Gravatt of South Carolina, retired.

The Honorable Paul A. Holstein, mayor of Lexington, Va., gave the address of welcome, and the temporary roll of the convention was presented by Samuel A. Syme, Secretary.

Senator Barkley was nominated by Townsend Oast as temporary chairman, and elected by the delegates by acclamation. After the appointment of committees, Governor Stanley was present.

The Governor spoke briefly and then introduced the keynoter, Senator Alben Barkley.

President Francis P. Gaines will meet with the student steering committee later this week to decide the future of the Mock Convention. Classes will resume tomorrow. A proposal to resume the convention early next week has been discussed, but there is no official comment on this.

Dean Gilliam, commenting on the suspension of the convention, said that he felt that this was the most respectful gesture that the students and administration could make.



**SENATOR ALBEN BARKLEY** is pictured smiling after retorting his last quip about "automotive equipment" minutes before his Biblical quote after which he collapsed to the floor.

—Photo by Juhring

## Senator Falls Dead on Podium; Last Words Are Awe Inspiring

"I would rather be a servant in the house of the Lord than sit in the seats of the mighty," with these words Alben W. Barkley fell to the floor of the speaker's rostrum of the Mock Convention and died a few minutes later—the victim of a "sudden heart attack" during his keynote address yesterday.

The 78-year-old senator and former vice president had almost completed his speech when he stated that he would not be a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination. He then uttered his dramatic last words, dropped his head and collapsed.

Dr. Robert S. Munger, Lexington physician, and members of the Life Saving Crew administered oxygen to the senator for about fifteen minutes.

Lexington Mayor Paul Holstein announced Barkley's death at 5:30 p.m. and requested a minute of silent prayer. The convention crowd of some 1,700 had remained hushed and intense during the minutes which had elapsed since Barkley collapsed.

Holstein, who with others rushed to Barkley's side, loosened his coat and tie. The mayor said that he could not feel a pulse. Governor Stanley of Virginia was also present on the platform. He had spoken, introducing Barkley as temporary chairman of the convention.

Barkley's speech to the Convention was of the Veep's usual brand—a blistering attack on the Republican Party mixed with salty humor. In his opening remarks he said he had not planned to attend the real Convention in Chicago this summer, but "since coming here the old firehorse hears the bell."

But he said, "I am not a candidate for the presidential nomination. Now days most fire apparatus is automotive, not horse drawn."

He defined the difference between

the Democrats and the Republicans as progress against stagnation.

"In 1912," he continued, "Woodrow Wilson said the Republican party had had no new ideas in 40 years. That makes 84 in all."

"Name one great statue on the books originated by the Republicans" asked the man who was probably the foremost exponent of telling the Democratic version of the Republican story.

Tracing the progress of the Roosevelt administration, Barkley brushed against a microphone on the platform which tumbled off. "That is only a symbol of what will happen to the Republicans in November," he quipped to the delight of the convention crowd.

The senator was tracing his political career from a junior senator to vice president and back to junior senator, when he died.

After Barkley was pronounced dead at Stonewall Jackson Hospital, his body was taken to Harrison's Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held tomorrow in Washington at Foundry Methodist Church. Burial

(Continued on page two)

## Death Affects National Plans For Keynoter

The untimely death of Sen. Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky has taken from the Democrats a prospective keynoter for their presidential nominating convention and a veteran warhorse of the campaign to follow.

The heart attack that felled Barkley at Washington and Lee yesterday shocked Democrats and Republicans alike. It removed from the national scene a former vice president who retained at the age of 78 a spellbinding oratorical ability highly valued by his party.

Although younger men had been suggested for the role of temporary chairman and keynoter at this year's presidential nominating convention in Chicago, many politicians had expected Barkley would be the compromise choice if any controversy developed over a selection.

Barkley's history as a keynote speaker is probably the longest and most colorful of that of any person before, regardless of party. In 1932 Senator Barkley served as Temporary Chairman of the Democratic Party's National Convention in Chicago.

Again, in 1936, the Democratic Party called upon the then majority leader of the Senate to deliver the keynote address. The "old firehorse" delivered an oration of such merit that he was given the position of Permanent Chairman at the Chicago Convention in 1940.

In 1948 the Democrats searched for a man who would serve notice to the American people that the Democratic Party was strong and healthy and had other men of ability to succeed Franklin Roosevelt. Their choice was again the great Senator from Kentucky. His keynote address at that Philadelphia Convention in 1948 helped win him his party's nomination for Vice President of the United States.

His energy, ability, and the respect held for him were considered a great help to the Democratic presidential nominee in 1948. Barkley's popularity among the masses of citizens as

well as among the party leaders had already earned him the title of "Mr. Democrat."

Many observers of the political scene in the early 1940's believe that Barkley would have been the vice presidential candidate in 1944 if it had not been for his disagreement with President Roosevelt at that time over several important issues.

Then in 1952 Barkley received the blessings of President Truman in his quest for his party's nomination for the President of the United States. Former President Truman just recently pointed out in his "Memoirs" that Barkley had his support until the Kentuckian decided to bow out of the race.



RIDING IN THE PRE-CONVENTION PARADE, Senator Barkley is shown enjoying the festivities with President Gaines and Chairman Carl Swanson.

(Photo by Moriata)

## Sen. Barkley—"old fire-horse" Who Served His Country Well

The tragic death of Alben Barkley has bereaved Washington and Lee students as deeply as it has the rest of the nation. The dramatic demise of this great statesman will be imbued upon the minds of each and every one of us at W&L who saw him pass away while delivering the keynote address to the 1956 Mock Democratic Convention.

The full impact of this great loss to the nation is, in the final analysis, unexpressable in words. We here at W&L reverently share today with millions of Americans across the nation a silent tribute to one of the greatest political figures of our time.

The feeling of a personal contact with the distinguished statesman, as our guest speaker, shall enhance our grief for the loss of this truly great man.

The name "old fire-horse" best characterizes the career of the senator from Kentucky. Truly, no other words could better capture the real personality of this man. Barkley, who has served the nation in a multiplicity of capacities, shall, perhaps, be best remembered as one of the greatest leaders of American politics.

A sincere and devoted advocate of Jeffersonian principles, Barkley started his political career as prosecuting attorney of McCracken County, Ky. Following an appointment as county judge in 1909, Barkley embarked upon his national political career which has endeared him to members of both the country's political parties.

His services as a House Representative, United States Senator, and Vice-President of the United States are perhaps the posts which will remain as the most prominent ones in our memories.

Ever a supporter of the great American political system, Barkley has always led his party, in and out of power, in search of the principles which we, as a free nation, have held up proudly for all to see.

An exemplar of the two party system, a man of his convictions, and a stern advocate of the Democratic party, Barkley has demanded our praise despite our own personal political alliances. This, perhaps, best pictures the very essence of the respect due to the great Kentuckian.

The Editors

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## Barkley Dies at Convention

(Continued from page one)  
will be in Paducah, Kentucky, his home.

Four W&L students and four VMI cadet captains will attend funeral services. The four students are: Ellis Drew, Bob Huntley, Sam Syme, and Carl Swanson.

## Nat'l Leaders Express Grief On Tragedy

Statesmen all over the nation signified their regret on the passing of Senator Alben Barkley yesterday.

In Washington, President Eisenhower was informed of the Veep's death while he was in conference with congressional leaders on foreign affairs. The White House issued this statement from the President:

"I was shocked to learn the news of the sudden death of Sen. Alben W. Barkley... Mr. Barkley had a long and distinguished record of public service for the people of his state and country. The nation is the poorer by this tragic event. Mrs. Eisenhower and I join with all other Americans in extending our heartfelt sympathy to his family."

Adlai Stevenson sent a telegram from Portland, Oregon to Bill Burns, Chairman of the Illinois Delegation here at W&L. The telegram read:

"I am shocked and saddened to learn of the death of my kinsman and beloved friend, Alben Barkley. He was the noblest Kentuckian of them all, and his contributions to our country were immeasurable. Every American will ever be in his debt, but for me the sense of personal loss transcends any other thought at this time."

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## National Plans Affected

(Continued from page one)

remark that "Now days most fire apparatus is automotive, not horse drawn." However, the loss of Senator Barkley will represent the loss of one great and famed gentleman of the party who will be most difficult to replace with any younger man.

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