

Bitter Eisenhower-Haters Swayed Stevenson Course

By FRANK R KENT

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14—There are two widely divergent views as to the manner in which Mr. Adlai E. Stevenson conducted himself during the recent effort of the Eisenhower Administration to gain his help, as titular leader of the Democratic party, in a great national crisis abroad.

The effort failed and that, of course, means that there will not be bipartisanship, so far as the United States is concerned, at the NATO meeting in Paris next week.

Most Americans will be distressed at this. Certainly it is not what they expected. Certainly, too, it is not what the President expected or tried for—quite the reverse.

DIFFICULT COURSE

As for the two views on the Stevenson course, his friends insist that the Eisenhower request put him in a very difficult position. He acted, they say, as a patriot and not as a politician when he agreed to come to Washington as a consultant. If he had failed to accept that invitation he would have been open to just criticism. Having had all the facts laid before him and given his views, he does not think he is called upon to do more. With most of what the Administration proposes he is in accord, but should he have accepted the President's invitation to attend the Paris NATO convention as one of the American delegation it might force him into approval of the whole American position, in some of which he does not believe.

The other view of Mr. Stevenson is that he has been grudging and reluctant in the bipartisanship into which he was forced. There was not even a flavor of real co-operation about his response to the President's cordial appeal.

He not only lacked in graciousness and generosity but showed himself too small a man to rise above politics and, in the interests of the country, co-operate with the man who had twice beaten him for the presidency. He gave proof of this, it is maintained, by consulting in Washington and taking the advice of the three or four most bitter of the anti-Eisenhower people in the whole United States—personal as well as political haters of the President.

These were the people he sought out here and by whose counsel he was guided. They were, it is true, supplemented by a small group of journalistic left-wingers who have been the center of anti-Eisenhower and pro-Stevenson propaganda for nearly six years—and still are.

These are the friends upon whom Mr. Stevenson relies. They were pleased—as was he—that Mr. Eisenhower had asked him to go to Paris. First, because merely being singled out somewhat restored what was certainly his greatly impaired prestige; secondly, because he could so easily refuse, which he promptly did, without seeming absolutely churlish and political.

POLITICS SEEN MOTIVE

There are some well-informed men in Washington who insist that from the start to finish Mr. Stevenson, in this episode, has been motivated by politics and not patriotism. His "close friends" have succeeded in putting the idea that in 1960 he can be renominated for the presidency back in his head and this time win because Mr. Eisenhower cannot run again.

Mr. Nixon, whom most observers believe will be nominated for the presidency at the Republican Convention in 1960, is a man he can really defeat. It is pointed

out by his friends that while there are plenty of Democratic aspirants for the presidency they are not outstanding men, and with Nixon instead of Eisenhower running there should be little trouble for Adlai to get a third nomination if he plays his cards right.