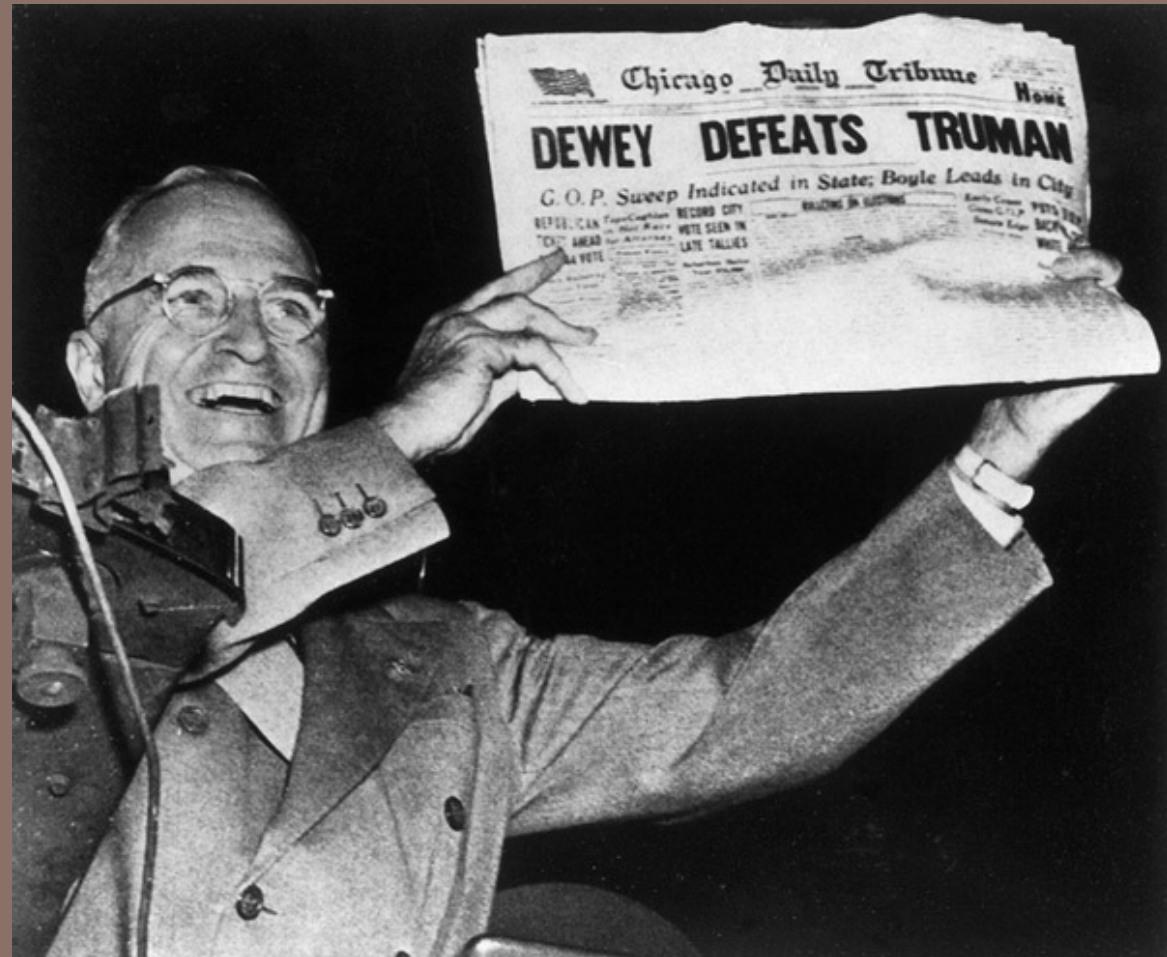


Context:

- Apartheid in S. Africa
- Marshall Plan- provided monetary aid to war torn Europe
- Berlin Airlift
- 22nd Amendment
- FDR served 3 terms
- First election post WWII
- 1 million households own a TV (was just 5,000 3 years earlier)
- Communism on the rise in Czechoslovakia
- McCollum v. Board of Education- ruled against religious instruction in schools



ELECTION OF 1948

Truman beats the odds!

Candidates:

Thomas E. Dewey



Party: Republican
Running Mate: Earl Warren
Home State: New York
Platform: Expanding Soc. Security, more funding for public housing, civil rights, federal funding for health & education
Experience: Federal Prosecutor, Special Prosecutor, Manhattan District Attorney, governor of NY

Harry S. Truman



Party: Democrat
Running Mate: Alben W. Barkley
Home State: Missouri
Platform: Civil rights, promoted diplomacy abroad, housing projects, eradicate discrimination.
Experience: VP & incumbent due to FDR's assassination. WWI Vet, Senator from Missouri, Major Colonel, county judge.

Strom Thurmond



Party: States' Rights Democratic Party (Dixiecrat)
Running Mate: Fielding L. Wright
Home State: Missouri
Platform: Split from national Democrats over the laws and constitutions of S. states, which had disenfranchised blacks.
Experience: Major General in WWII, had an affair & child with his 16-year old black servant.

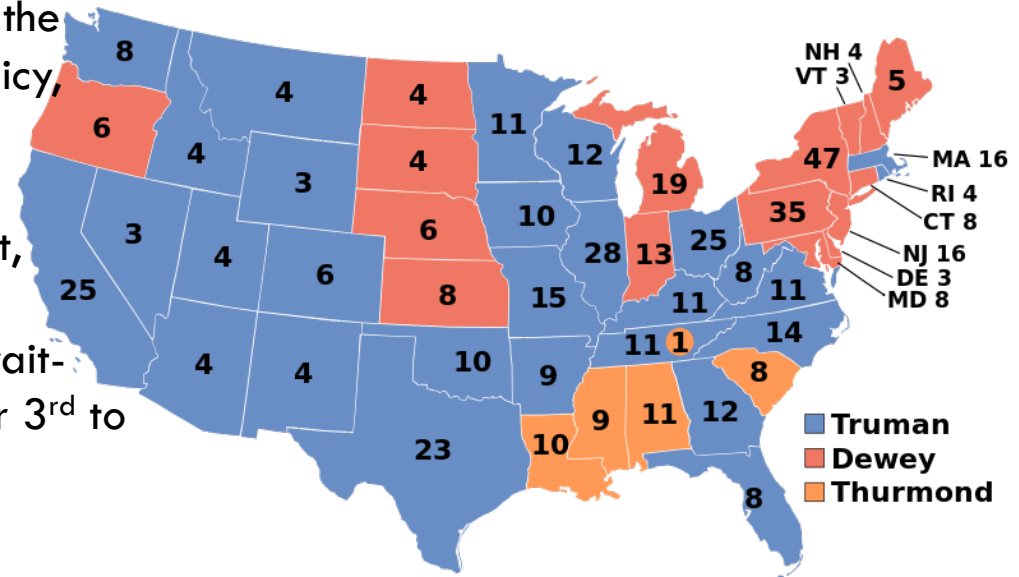
Henry A. Wallace



Party: Progressive Party
Running Mate: Glen H. Taylor
Platform: Advocated friendly relations with Soviet Union, end to the Cold War, an end to segregation, voting rights for blacks, universal health care.
Experience: Secretary of Agriculture, FDR's 2nd VP, Secretary of Commerce, Editor of *The New Republic*.

Results of the Election:

- Truman didn't win a single Gallup poll, but gained popularity at such a quick rate that the Roper poll suspended its Presidential polling at the end of Sept., barring "some development of outstanding importance."
- Key States: Ohio, California, Illinois. Truman won each by less than 1%.
- Only the third time in American Presidential history that a candidate won without having Pennsylvania and New York.
- Truman's victory can be attributed to his aggressive, populist campaign style, Dewey's complacent approach to the campaign, the public's approval of Truman's foreign policy, and the belief that the Democrats would help the US economy to recover.
- Previous to the election results coming out, newspapers began to print that Dewey was the winner. Because of this, Dewey waited until late on the morning of November 3rd to concede to Truman.



Impact:

- Truman's Presidency marked the end of the American monopoly on nuclear weapons, as the Soviets launched their atomic bomb project. The Cold War escalated. Truman's reaction to the escalating tensions with the Soviet Union was a 58-page top secret policy paper issued by the US Security Council, the NSC-68 (National Council Report 68). The NSC 68 made containment against communist expansion high priority. Also supported NATO.
- Truman's dismissal of General Douglas MacArthur was one of the most unpopular decisions in US presidential history, and led to suggestions of impeachment. His approval rating dropped as low as 22%, which was the lowest until George W. Bush.
- Truman renovated the White House in the midst of war, which wasn't good for his popularity.
- Truman's reaction to steel & coal strikes was to take control of a number of the nation's steel mills in April 1952, citing his authority as Commander in Chief and the need to maintain an uninterrupted supply of steel for munitions to be used in the war in Korea. The Supreme Court found Truman's actions unconstitutional and reversed the order in a major separation-of-power decision. The court's reversal of Truman's order was one of the notable defeats of his presidency.
- Truman made many questionable appointments to the Supreme Court, and was criticized for cronyism and favoritism, resulting in unqualified candidates
- As early as 1962, a poll of 75 distinguished historians ranked Truman among the "near great" presidents, even though he was one of the lowest ranked presidents ever.