

# Dwight Eisenhower: Man of Conscience

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Time and again through the past decade, before audiences cutting across the entire social spectrum of the western world, Dwight David Eisenhower has told his listeners that the most valuable practical counsel he ever had heard came from the lips of his mother: "Always take your job seriously. Never take yourself seriously."

Chiefs of state and leaders of industry and high-school students have heard the advice of a Kansas small-town mother repeated by her son in scores of talks and addresses. On the eve of momentous decisions, during fund-raising drives for Columbia University, amid the clatter of campaign trains, on every occasion, whatever the topic under discussion or the problem confronting the group before him, the speaker's acceptance of it as a fundamental personal rule for the business of daily living has been emphatically evident.

The importance attached by him to two short sentences, the repeated stress on their perennial pertinence, comprise a major clue to a personality unique among those who wield immense power or who exercise leadership over many millions.

The President of the United States, his essential character unworped by a constant accelerating spiral in his world position and prestige, is at once among the plainest of men in his lack of affectation and among the most capacious in his interests and sympathies.

## No Stuffey Veneer

On the one hand, a host of honors have added no veneer of stuffiness to insulate him from the bulk of men and their anxieties. On the other, despite the mass of problems that always has faced him through the past 10 years, he has constantly absorbed new interests, often in areas that seemed alien at the time to his current mission. He has preserved his simplicity of manner and attitude even as he has broadened mightily from a purely professional competence in one field to a global grasp of human affairs.

Whatever the composition of his Cabinet and of his staff may be through the years ahead—and two qualities that he will demand will be outstanding ability and unalloyed devotion to the work in hand—the President will dominate his administration by his energy, by his confident optimism, by a comprehension of world problems that is panoramic in scope, and an insight into their man-made nature that is microscopic. But none within the administration will be more

free than he from pretentiousness or the accumulation of headstrong willfulness that the British call "side." In consequence, no one will possess in a higher degree than he that sixth sense of what is in the forefront of men's minds and cares, which we call "the common touch."

Winston Churchill once covered this most prominent facet of the President's personality in a single explosive second. It was the evening of July 3, 1951, in Grosvenor House in London, where General Eisenhower, then supreme commander of the Allied powers in Europe, was the English-Speaking Union's guest of honor, prior to his participation the following morning in a memorial ceremony at St. Paul's.

General Eisenhower spoke and was followed by Clement R. Attlee, who was then Prime Minister. Mr. Churchill was next. As he stood before the microphone, through a long pause, he gazed silently at the head of the guest of honor, seated immediately to his left. Then he turned front and said:

## Calls Him 'Ike'

"What shall I call this man? How shall I refer to him? By what title shall I address him? this soldier; this great soldier. This educator and historian. This great educator and great historian. This statesman, for truly he is one of the great statesmen of all time. Why, I shall call him what I have ever called him and what I shall always call him—Ike!"

In truth, that single three-letter monosyllable is at once the hallmark of the man and an index to the qualities that compose his leadership. A man called Ike is at home anywhere from Maine to Texas, Alaska to the Florida keys, because his name is as authentic American as hominy grits and flapjacks. And that is particularly true of this Ike, because there is compressed within his personality those traits that the world has come to think of as peculiarly American—simplicity, optimism, a genius for team work, confidence in the essential decency and good will of mankind.

There are many sides to Mr. Eisenhower as there are to every human being, whatever his station or calling. The day-to-day man is as homelike as carpet slippers before a glowing fireplace; more ready to play with his grandchildren than to sit in on a council; prouder, it sometimes seems, of his paintings that he works away at tirelessly than of his military decorations; as imperial in the kitchen over a pot of soup made to his own recipe as any grand hotel chef; most energetic when noisily singing ballads in a family gathering.

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The same Eisenhower, however, can erase from his mind all thought of happier pursuits and plunge with lightning facility into a heavy schedule of work, tolerable only to one possessed of an iron frame and a dedicated mind.

## Driven by Conscience

On a seven o'clock breakfast that is hardly more than a whisper of food, on a lunch of raw carrots and little else solid, he tackles a desk loaded with papers, talks his way through a score of appointments, exhorting some visitors, upbraiding others, lecturing within the space of a single morning on subjects as divergent as tank warfare, the stocking of fish ponds, the moral content of western culture.

He listens to quick presentations of problems by subordinates and snaps out even quicker decisions, that stick and work. He instantly blots out the latest discussion as the caller walks out the door and immerses himself in dictation or reading or another conversation "shouldering his way hour after hour through the press of business until the evening shadows crowd around his window, the lines deepen in his face, and he crouches in his chair to pounce on the last chore, finish it off, and go home.

Day after day, week after week, he maintains the same un-

flagging outward pace, while within his own mind in the quiet seclusion of his room or before his easel he hammers away at the knottiest of his problems. And he continues the same pace until even that relentless taskmaster, his own conscience, says: "You've earned a rest." But his days and mind are not forever preoccupied with the complex and global entanglements of high policy.

In the middle of a multitude of pressures, he may take an hour or two or three hours to work over one letter, drawing on a world of background and experience and common sense, to counsel a college student or a soldier's wife or a mother who had written him for advice. He shoves wide gaps into his schedule to make room for men and women who come to him as a court of final appeal. He is never too busy for a visit with an old friend.

## Inspired Energy

Within the man there is a fiery and inspired energy that derives from no normal ambition for place or prestige, applause, or approval. For one like himself whose first ambition is for a quiet life in a home of his own choice within a world at peace, he has had more than his share of them.

Rather, a flaming faith, born out of deep religious convictions,

powers Eisenhower: faith in himself, in his fellow men, in his country, in a provident God whose guiding hand he sees in all the history of men and of nations. And to faith is added a passion for America, its people, and the principles that are its spiritual core.

For Mr. Eisenhower, human freedom, human rights, human obligations, human dignity that is a reflection of man's divine origin and destiny, are the central facts of human existence. In almost every public speech and general conversation, they have a prominent place. No pallid catchwords or threadbare slogans, their inescapable corollary for him is opportunity that every man may demonstrate his worth in free competition with all others and a lifelong responsibility on every man to exhaust the opportunity given for his own and his family's advancement and for service to his fellows.

## Key to Character

Therein, as I see it, is the key to our President's sense of duty and love of country that dominate his life. Because the American system is founded on the individual citizen's freedom, rights, and obligations; because it recognizes each man's equal dignity within the community and before his creator; because it fosters opportunity for all men to use their God-given talents and, in the fullness of its citizenship, imposes on every American a responsibility to use his particular talents and the opportunity given him, because of all these truths, America is a passion with Dwight Eisenhower.

Beyond his own qualities, the President possesses a wife who is the perfect foil and partner to her husband. A woman of quick and deep and informed perception, she knows intimately the penalties imposed on the American family by life in these torn times and the multiple sacrifices required of wives and mothers. Time and again, her reactions to problems and their proposed solutions are both more realistic and more warmly human than those of experts on the staff. If a wife can be described as both a rudder and a guide to her husband, Mrs. Eisenhower meets that description.

These, then, are the chief assets in my opinion that Dwight David Eisenhower brings to the presidency of the United States: a seldom-paralleled sympathy of character, a nearly universal sympathy and interest in things human, a relentless taskmaster in his conscience, a stout faith in mankind and in God, a passion for all that is the real America, a wife called Mamie.

## Democracy Workshop

By the Associated Press

Williamsburg, Va.

The necessity for keeping freedom of expression a living force in America has been emphasized both by students participating in the annual Democracy Workshop and one of their adult guests, Senator J. William Fulbright (D) of Arkansas.

The workshop brought together high-school youngsters from 30 states, Hawaii, the District of Columbia, and two foreign countries, all state or national winners of the Voice of Democracy contest or exchange students. The Democracy Workshop, a national youth forum sponsored by Colonial Williamsburg, also features guest authorities, including government officials, journalists, and scholars.

Senator Fulbright noted a growing tendency to lose much of our freedom of expression by default. As an illustration of this, he cited a hesitancy to argue with Senator Joseph R. McCarthy (R) of Wisconsin.

The students came to the conclusion that the tyranny of majority opinion and the fear of speaking out against it poses a greater danger to freedom of expression than abridgement by official action.

In round-table discussions on "Freedom of Expression: Was George Mason Right?" students agreed that limiting freedom of speech was not the best defense against a Communist threat. They argued, instead, that this same freedom should be used in a militant campaign for democratic ideals.

Citing examples of textbook banning and other ideological censorship, students called for more, not less, classroom examination of the workings of communism. Actual Communists, however, should not be allowed to teach in the public school system, they felt.