College administrators have learned to recognize the coming of spring by the multiplication of undergraduate fads and unscheduled extra-curricula. Once in every four years Washington and Lee undergraduates channel this seasonal energy into a campus-wide production which their administrators feel has real educational value—a mock political convention for the party out of power.

Ever four years since 1908, with only two wartime lapses, they have undertaken the responsibility of nominating the candidate who will later be picked by the real convention delegates, and seven out of eleven times they have been right. The 1,100 students become delegates, Doremus gymnasium is transformed into Convention Hall, and downtown Lexington sports banners and bunting of state and candidate headquarters for days before the convention begins.

Central figure of the 1960 Mock Democratic convention on May 2 and 3 was former President Harry S. Truman, who keynoted the opening session and added authenticity to the partisan enthusiasm. He was introduced by an old friend, alumnus H. Graham Morrison, class of 1932, chairman of the 1932 Democratic Mock Convention. In his twenty-two minute speech Mr. Truman reminded delegates that, in choosing the man whom we will select as our next President, we must elect “an honorable man, a
of courage... a man who will make decisions." He told the students that he would like to return to Washington and Lee to tell them about the job of being President, and what it entails.

Joining him on the celebrities' bench at the convention were two other well-known figures—"Miss America of 1960," Lynda Lee Mead of Natchez, Mississippi, and U. S. Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington. Miss Mead, who rode on the New Jersey float in the pre-convention parade, told the delegates she felt right at home in a Democratic gathering, coming from a state "where there's no such thing as a Republican." Senator Jackson feared that America is losing the initiative in world affairs because the present leaders have no clear ideas of what our purposes are and how we go about achieving them. He urged an all-out effort for building a world community here which makes room for all peoples and "for fulfillment of their legitimate aspirations—for economic progress, equality of status, freedom and security."

During the balloting, presidential candidates John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Stuart Symington, and Adlai E. Stevenson received the largest number of votes, with Senator Kennedy forging ahead on the sixth ballot to win. Senator Jackson was named by the collegians as running mate for Kennedy, on the third ballot.

The pre-convention parade was led by Mr. Truman and Dr. Fred C. Cole, president of Washington and Lee, riding in a huge open 1940 Duesenberg. An estimated 20,000 spectators cheered the 75 floats and twelve bands which wound their way through Lexington's streets.

Mr. Truman's last official act at the convention was to participate in the dedication of a memorial plaque to the memory of former Vice-President Alben W. Barkley, who died of a heart attack in 1956 while delivering the keynote address at the Mock Convention in Lexington.

Opposite page, bottom to top: delegates assemble in Convention Hall for the opening session of the 1960 Mock Convention; Miss America speaks to the delegates before the convention begins and thanks her sponsors from the New Jersey delegation; Virginia's state bird, the Cardinal, joins Virginia debutantes on a float in the pre-convention parade; Nebraska exhibits a donkey. Above: former President Truman and Dr. Cole watch from an open 1940 Duesenberg automobile; Senator Henry Jackson, who was nominated later as a running mate for Senator Kennedy, delivers a speech to the convention delegates.