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Public Sees Thanksgiving Issue Through Party Glasses

Republicans Are Against FDR Plan, 4 to 1

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PRINCETON, N. J., Aug. 24.—What John Smith, U.S.A., thinks about President Roosevelt's plan to change Thanksgiving Day pretty much depends on what John Smith thinks of President Roosevelt.

That fact, which explains a lot of the tumult over the President's plan, is indicated today in preliminary returns from a nationwide checkup by the American Institute of Public Opinion.

Though President Roosevelt acted in response to the wishes of retail organizations who want the period of Christmas shopping extended, the survey shows that a majority of Americans — and particularly Republicans — are in favor of letting the nation's turkeys live a week longer.

No issue to make cabinets totter, the turkey day issue is, nevertheless, a prime example of the way Americans sometimes see questions through party-colored spectacles.

The American Institute put President Roosevelt's plan to a cross-section electorate in every state after receiving letters and telegrams from the public asking for such a survey. The Institute asked:

"Do you approve or disapprove of President Roosevelt's



CLASH OVER THANKSGIVING

President Roosevelt and former Governor Alf M. Landon, 1936 presidential rivals, were on opposite sides again as Landon criticized FDR's move to have Thanksgiving fall a week earlier. The majority of the public—according to preliminary returns in an Institute survey—are on Landon's side. Nobody sympathized with the turkey, center.

plan to change Thanksgiving Day to one week earlier?"

Preliminary returns from New England, the East and the Mid-West, with a few returns from the South and far West, are:

APPROVE THE CHANGE...38%
DISAPPROVE62%

Republicans Feel

Most Strongly

"DICTATORSHIP," "whimsy" and "just upsetting everything he can" are some of the typical charges leveled against the President's plan. In general, the comments of the Republican man-in-the-street echo the sentiments of Alf M. Landon, Roosevelt's rival in 1936, who complained last week that the President "sprang" the change on the country "with the omnipotence of a Hitler."

A majority of Democrats (i.e., those who voted for Mr. Roosevelt in 1936) loyally back him up today on the Thanksgiving issue.

The usual words the typical presidential defender finds are that "it will help Christmas business," or that "the business men asked for it," or that "one date's as good as another," the survey comments show.

A substantial number of Democrats, however, couldn't find it in their hearts to subscribe to the change.

The vote by parties is:

	Approve Plan	Oppose
Democrats	52%	48%
Republicans	21	79
Others	33	67

Approximately one person in five said he had no opinion on the

Preliminary Vote Finds Democrats In Favor

Some Typical Reactions

Following are some of the most typical individual comments both pro and con on the question of moving Thanksgiving to a week earlier:

Pro

Rhode Island salesman—"He wouldn't have done it unless it were for the people's good."
Ohio teacher — "It doesn't make any difference; if it helps business I'm for it."

Con

Pennsylvania housewife — "I believe in custom first, last and always—whenever possible."
Vermont stenographer — "It's a state tradition; Roosevelt's violating states' rights again."
Massachusetts policeman — "Why should he change something traditional just because somebody might scrape up a few extra dollars?"
Illinois farmer — "It ought to be called the 'Thanksgiving Reorganization Plan.' It shows the same kind of disregard for traditions that the Court plan showed."

Pro and Con

New York fruit grower — "Seems like a sacrilege to me, but maybe it'll help business."
Connecticut writer — "The great 'Turkey Issue of 1939'—just what I want for my new comic opera."

President's course. Typical of many of these was a Massachusetts carpenter's assistant who said:

"It makes no difference to me when I celebrate Thanksgiving. It'll be just beef-stew and a day off—whenever it comes."

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