

Profiles in courage



of the of the Concerned 20 March Profiles in Courage Profiles in Courage is a Pulitzer acclaimed biography, celebrating the matchless courage and integrity of the eight senators hailing from the United States, culled from the entire history of the US Senate, as it existed in the times of President John F Kennedy. Of the eight senators referred to in this book, the history of George W Norris and Robert A Taft is especially amazing. George W Norris George W Norris was a senator from the state of Nebraska. He served five terms in the United States Senate, spanning across the period 1913-1943 (Kennedy 171). Though being from a family of not much educated farmers of Scottish ancestry, he turned out to be a bright student who secured a degree in law from Valparaiso University (Kennedy 173). Senator George W Norris was especially known to be a man of vision and a fearless and honest speaker, emphatically dedicated to the cause of the common people (Kennedy 172). Though Senator Norris was not always successful in his endeavors, yet he seldom hesitated from responding to the call of his conscience, sans personal interests and party affiliations. Senator Norris was also known for committing himself to political causes that though just and in national interest, sometimes contradicted with the stakes of his constituency. Senator Norris held a filibuster against Woodrow Wilson's intentions to use the American merchant ships for military purposes, an act that enervated his supporters in Nebraska (Kennedy 182). In the year 1928, Senator George W Norris happened to be the only prominent politician from Nebraska, who supported the presidential campaign of a highly unpopular Democrat Al Smith, solely out a sense of unwavering personal conviction (Kennedy 178). Again it was George W Norris who led the revolt against the autocratic powers of the Speaker of the House, Joseph Gurney Cannon, in 1910

(Kennedy 175). In history, Senator Norris is remembered as a man of justice. Robert A Taft Senator Robert A Taft was the son of President William Taft and as a politician, do aspired to be the President (Kennedy 193). Taft was a man known to stand behind his convictions, with firmness and resolution, irrespective of the magnitude and nature of political and public adversity, accorded to them (Kennedy 194). In 1946, when his party that is the Republicans expected a landslide victory, Taft did not hesitate from rocking the boat, by coming out strongly against the Nuremberg Trials (Kennedy 196). Though Taft deplored the atrocities committed by the Nazis, he opposed the tough penalties being awarded to them in the name of justice. Taft held that the crimes for which the Nazi perpetrators were being punished were never before recognized by the international community, and the Nazis had no notion that they will be subjected to trials by the international community for the actions being carried out by them in the frenzy of war. For this expression of personal faith and conviction, Taft was severely criticized by his party men, colleagues and constituents. However, irrespective of such harsh consequences met to an act that could have virtually jeopardized the election prospects of his party, Taft never publically or otherwise regretted his gumption of questioning the morality of Nuremberg trials (Kennedy 199). This very act of Senator Taft made his name synonymous with ' political courage'. Works Cited Kennedy, John F. Profiles in Courage. Perennial: New York, 2000.