

As We See It

The Campaign for Mayor Is Finally Getting Specific

THE CAMPAIGN for mayor of Detroit, which has been moving with all the speed and enthusiasm of the Paris peace talks, may finally be under way.

Roman S. Gribbs has been concentrating in recent days on the need for firm law enforcement. Five times in two days he talked about how to control student unrest and "excessive permissiveness."

And Richard Austin, the Wayne County auditor, finally spelled out his programs for fiscal reform. Heretofore, Mr. Austin has seemed to cite only his record in bailing out the county and to ask the voters to have faith.



Gribbs



Austin

Giving some hard answers

Wednesday night at Henry Ford High School he wrestled with specifics—and came out the clear winner. He wants wholesale reforms of the tax structure so that the state provides a "basic level" of services to Detroit and other cities.

Mr. Austin does not underestimate the problem of selling such a program to the Legislature, but neither is he discouraged by it.

The cities, he points out, are what make the suburbs possible. And the cities, with their declining property tax bases and ever-increasing costs of services, are simply unable to support themselves.

The past record of the Legislature does not offer much room for hope, but time and circumstances have changed. The Legislature refused to do anything for Detroit this year because the Common Council refused to help itself or even to ask for help.

Further, the basic outline of Mr. Austin's fiscal plan conforms closely to the educational proposals the governor handed the Legislature Thursday.

If the impossible can be accomplished in education, it might also be done in tax reform.



John S. Knight's Notebook

Nixon Errs, But to Cry For His Hide Is Premature

NOT SINCE President Nixon basked in the warm glow of Apollo 11 has he enjoyed many comforting days in office.

To drag out a few cliches and mix some metaphors, the tide has turned, the honeymoon is over, "the curs," as the late Col. Robert R. McCormick used to say, "are snapping at the mastiff's heels."

Newsweek headlines huge newspaper advertisements "Nixon in Trouble," an appraisal of the President's first nine months—"the less-than-a-year that has already sown many seeds of discontent, disillusion and impatience."

Editorialists proclaim that friendly Republicans, along with the Democrats, now see the Nixon presidency as a frightening echo of the last months of the ill-fated Johnson administration.

Sen. Fred Harris, the Democratic national chairman, bellows that this is the time to "take the gloves off" on Vietnam. For this ill-advised statement, Harris drew a withering blast from war opponent Sen. Frank Church, D-Ida., who refuses to convert legitimate protest into a partisan issue.

DURING THE 1968 campaign, candidate Nixon asserted that "the days of a passive presidency belong to a simpler past. . . . The next president must take an activist view of his office. . . . He cannot stand aside from crises; he cannot ignore division; he cannot simply paper over disunity."

Critics now assert that President Nixon is not fulfilling his own admirable job description.

Disenchantment with the President comes from many sources—some sincere, others self-serving and not a few politically inspired.

There are ructions over ending the war in Vietnam, complaints on the President's civil rights program, disputes about inflation and unemployment, resentment over what Republican members of Congress call Nixon's isolation from reality and a considerable fuss concerning the qualifications of Judge Clement Haynsworth for the Supreme Court.

And, with typical demagogism, Hubert Humphrey used the AFL-CIO platform in Atlantic City to charge that Nixon is taking care of wealthy and southern friends rather than minorities and working men and women.

AS A SUPPORTER of Dick Nixon in 1968, I find his worsening public posture to be very sad indeed.

Perhaps no president could in these turbulent times have faced every crucial situation with equational wisdom.

But I think it fair to say that the hue and cry of the pack for Mr. Nixon's hide is suspect and possibly premature.

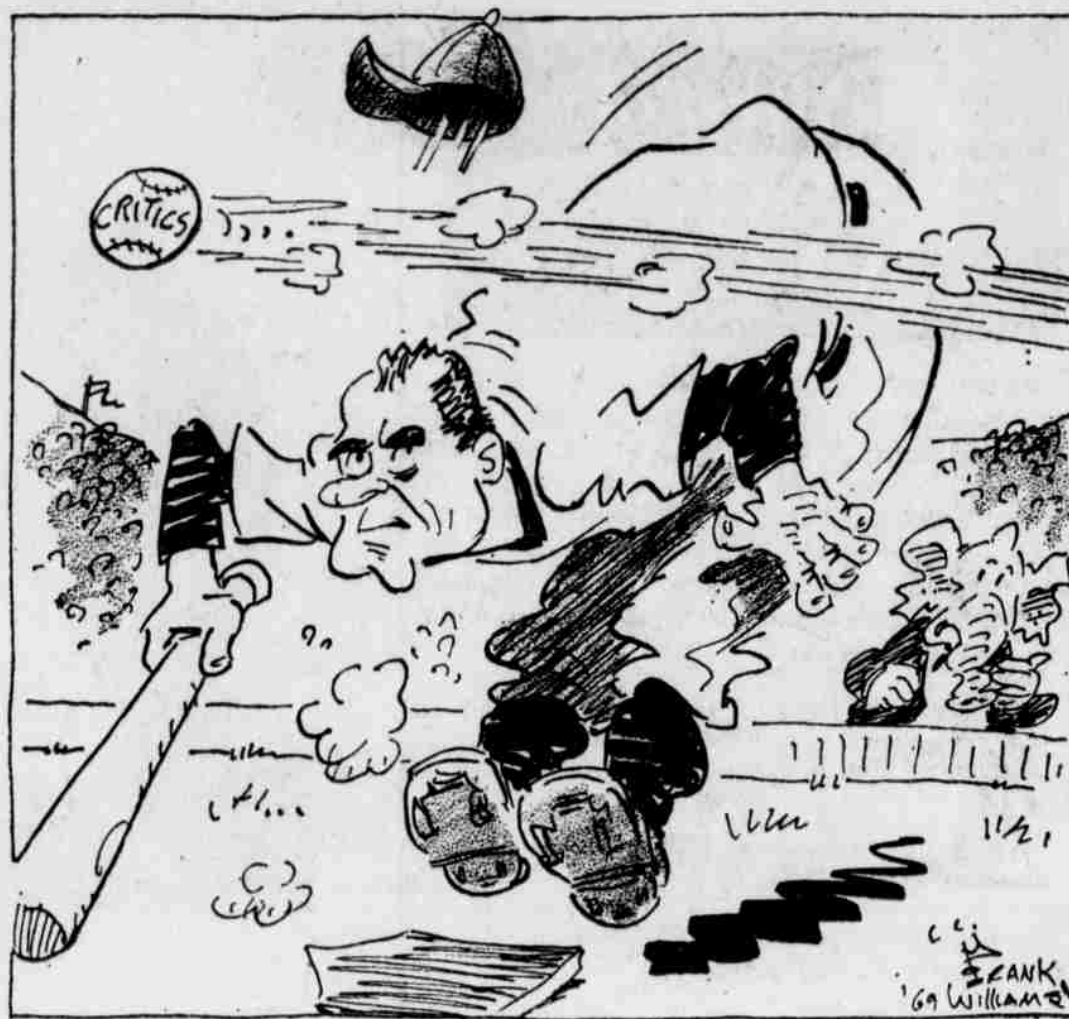
For where were the Hubert Humphreys and the baying members of Congress when the Tonkin Gulf resolution was passed in 1964?

What were they doing in the critical years when a full-scale Senate debate on Vietnam might have altered our course?

Where did they stand—both Republicans and Democrats—during the hours when President Johnson turned a "little war" into a major conflict with dire consequences to the nation?

In case you may have forgotten, with few exceptions they were waving the flag, flaunting their patriotism and supporting the President.

So at least in this instance—having belatedly felt the chilling winds of the war's unpopularity—they now approach the bar of public opinion indicted as mere time



servers or even betrayers of the public trust.

NO APOLOGY is offered here for the President's errors of judgment, both past and present.

The country certainly did not need an Agnew, splendid fellow and amiable golf companion though he is.

An alert staff would have checked Judge Haynsworth's credentials more carefully; distinguished scientists such as Dr. Franklin Long should not have been disqualified for government positions because of their opposition to the ABM system; the President did himself little credit in dropping Dr. John Knowles' nomination for a high post in HEW under pressure from the American Medical Association.

PRESIDENT NIXON'S castigation of Defense Department critics as "the new isolationists" was unfair and unwarranted. Deep concern is felt over the exact nature of our secret pledges to Laos and Thailand and the fuzziness of State Department policy.

Of these and many other aspects of the Nixon administration, my comment has been pointed and often critical.

But let us not dismiss the President—considered by many political analysts the most astute politician of our times—as a do-nothing nincompoop after nine months in office.

Nixon said last May that he was "pledged to end this war. . . in Vietnam. . . and if I fail to do so I expect the American people to hold me accountable for that failure."

And he may be sure that they will.

MY OWN VIEW is that Nixon does have a plan, or at least a concept of long-range strategy for ending the war. Sen. Hugh Scott, the new minority leader, has hinted as much on "Meet the Press" and other forums.

People who believe that instant withdrawal from Vietnam is as simple as brewing breakfast coffee are simply unacquainted with logistical and military realities.

There are no instant solutions to any of our pressing problems. Yet it is part of the American credo that the reverse is true.

Least of all does Dick Nixon want to be "another Lyndon Johnson."

Although the sand is sifting through the hour-glass, Nixon's time has not yet come.

Random Notes

SEN. EDWARD M. Kennedy's challenge of proposed procedures in the Mary Jo Kopechne inquest is correct in one particular and wrong in another.

Certainly, the senator's lawyers should have the privilege of questioning witnesses if his rights are to be protected.

But there is no justification for the request that proceedings be closed to the press.

For unless the press is present, how can anybody really be sure of what actually happened at the Chappaquiddick tragedy?

MIAMI BEACH hoteliers and restaurateurs will be delighted to know that AFL-CIO delegates left the Atlantic City convention grumbling about rundown hotels and lack of diversions.

After sampling the Miami area's attractions in 1967, the prospect of an evening stroll along the boardwalk didn't have much appeal.

MIKE MANSFIELD, wise majority leader of the U.S. Senate, takes exception to Republican criticism that we have a do-nothing Congress.

"I think we should not be judged," said the senator, "on the basis of the quantity of legislation we pass but on the quality of the legislation and the type of debate we conduct."

How sensible.

THINGS DO change. The Cornell Daily Sun, an independent newspaper edited by undergraduates, finds it a "sad reality" that while "pamphlet pushers still jam the Straight steps at noon and political graffiti continues to spring up overnight, Cornell's left is not what it used to be.

"Students for a Democratic Society," laments the Sun, "long the major radical force on campus, appears to have outlived its political effectiveness and, as some observers have suggested, may not live to see the spring."

The Sun is now exploring the "future of the New Left."

JOHN S. KNIGHT

The Burning Rivers

WHEN YOU have a river that burns, for crying out loud, you have troubles. It happened on Cleveland's Cuyahoga, and now it has happened on the Rouge River.

The city of Detroit is now evidently pulling its creaking artillery into place for an attack on the sewage dumped into the Detroit River. Common Council is going to approve a sewer rate increase necessary to pay for the local share of improving our sewer system and treatment facilities.

But the Rouge fire demonstrates that action by the city alone is not going to be enough. Those oil and chemical wastes are industrial pollution. The state and federal bureaucracies that are breathing down Detroit's neck must also crack down hard on the oil dumping that goes on in the Rouge and in the Detroit River downstream.

Surely there are precautions that can

prevent the kind of accident that permitted a large quantity of oil to escape into storm drains and out into the river at the Shell Oil depot. And surely, too, it is not beyond the power of man to prevent the oil dumping by ships that makes for a standing fire hazard along the banks of the Rouge.

Industries themselves along the Rouge and the Detroit are going to be threatened, as the Shell Oil refinery might easily have been Thursday, if the conditions along the rivers are not effectively controlled.

The city has had little room for joining the demand for action until it got its own house in order. But the public agencies are now acting on public pollution problems.

Will industry do as much? Or will even a fire on the river not awaken the social consciences of those whose complicity or acquiescence has permitted this abominable condition to evolve?

Politics and Architects

THE CHARGE that the Nixon administration is treating major architectural awards like ordinary political patronage is too strong to be dismissed.

The statement from Roderick Kreger, an assistant in the General Services Administration which handles such things, that "there's certainly no more politics in this agency now than in the past," simply doesn't wash. As James Batten of our Washington Bureau has documented, there is entirely too much politics in an area which should not be political.

The specific case which touched off this row was a decision, in which the White House admittedly took part, to take a \$1 million design contract from an architectural firm which had already done the preliminary studies and give it to another firm headed by a good Republican contributor.

The new firm is Vincent G. Kling of Philadelphia, and it hardly seems coincidental that the new head of the General Services Administration, Robert L. Kunzig, is also a Pennsylvanian. Mr. Kunzig managed Gov. Raymond Shafer's well financed campaign in 1966.

This incident, while one of the largest, is only one. Members of the American Institute of Architects point out that under Mr. Kunzig, the GSA has withdrawn the power of its regional administrators to award contracts up to \$35,000. This power, with its obvious political potential, has been returned to Mr. Kunzig's Washington office.

Further, four of the 10 regional bosses of the GSA, the government's procurement agency, have been replaced since Mr. Kunzig was sworn in. Others are rumored out.

Finally, the architects note that two months ago the GSA changed the rules for selecting architects. Until August, the GSA would ask an architectural advisory panel to list three firms capable of doing the given job. Under Mr. Kunzig, the advisors are asked for eight, with the obvious presumption that at least one is bound to be headed by a good Republican contributor.

Under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, the architectural quality of federal buildings was greatly improved. Though the Kling firm itself is rated as first quality, the new rules seem aimed at opening the doors to second-raters.

As Our Readers See It

Capitalists Are Destroying Nature

AMERICA'S NATURAL environment and resources are rapidly being destroyed. Our atmosphere is choked with poisonous gases. Our water systems are dying of industrial pollution. Our watersheds are being dried up by the razing of our forests. Our soil is being contaminated and our food affected by the indiscriminate use of toxic chemicals.

Who is responsible for the suicidal destruction of our natural heritage? It is the rapacity and greed of the class that owns American industry.

Driven by a hunger for profits, and by the pressure of competition, capitalists operate with a wanton disregard for our health and safety. To lower their production costs and boost their profits, they willfully use our air and water as their private sewer.

It does no good to blame particular capitalists. It is the capitalist system which is at fault. The laws of economic survival inherent in the system dictate the actions of the capitalist class.

A. SIM

Warren

Reading, Writing and Sex

I AM a student at Grosse Pointe North High School. I know many people whose parents wouldn't take the time or effort to explain sex.

Letters to the editor must be signed, and address given. Names will be withheld only for good reasons.

Sex is as much a part of growing up and getting educated as learning how to read and write.

So why can't the schools stand up and educate us? Isn't that what schools are for?

BETSY WHIPPLE
Grosse Pointe Woods

Tiger Stadium Adequate

YOU ADVOCATED building a sports stadium in the Civic Center. Others have proposed the Fair Grounds, Pontiac, Taylor or Southfield.

Why a new stadium? It would be used 100 days or nights out of 365?

The Tigers play 90 home games with an average attendance of 20,000 or less (in a good year). The Lions draw probably 45,000 for nine games. I believe that Tiger Stadium is adequate for these teams.

And furthermore baseball and football are out-

door spectator sports and not to be played properly under artificial conditions.

If Messrs. Felzer and Ford aren't happy with Tiger Stadium, let them build one whenever they choose—with their own money.

DOUGLAS A. MCGREGOR

Maintain Separation

I READ YOUR editorial, "State Can't Afford the Luxury of Aiding Private Schools." I agree with your sound viewpoints. The church and the state must remain separate.

I enjoy reading your great paper.

HOWARD STODDARD
Lansing

Boys Being Slaughtered

HOW LONG are the American people going to sit still and let the politicians slaughter their boys in Vietnam?

Any nut knows that we can never win a land war on the continent of Asia. This war has made more communists than it deterred.

CARL LEE

Intercepted Letters

MAYOR DALEY
In the Maelstrom

Dear Chief:
WHO would have thought you'd get a chance to rewrite the conclusion for the re-run?

Pipeline Pete