

This Is a Billion

Since the man we will be sending to the White House next January will be handing our money to the tune of multiple billions (a \$100 billion budget doesn't really cover all federal expenses, of course) a refresher course in just what such figures mean may not be amiss.

Columnist Bob Considine has come up with these comparisons:

There haven't been 100 billion seconds since the birth of Christ; more like a single billion.

One hundred billion one dollar bills would make a stack 6,300 miles high.

We could have bought 13,000 Alaskas or 7,000 Louisiana territories for 100 billion.

Any way you look at it, it's a lot of money for one man to spend.

The Law and Psychiatry

A good many people have become increasingly concerned over the growing dependence upon psychiatry in criminal cases. As pointed example of this concern is found in one man's recent observation that because of the vagueness of our definitions of legal insanity, the areas into which psychiatric defense is being pushed are growing wider all the time. The observer went so far as to say, "without really being facetious", that persons accused of assault and battery could someday get off "by classifying themselves as 'pugnacious and aggressive psychopaths.'"

"Burglars, robbers and thieves," he added, "might get away with being 'acquisitive psychopaths' and Peeping Toms with being 'inquisitive psychopaths.'"

"Person accused of treason? 'Ideological psychopaths.'"

Is this observer some big nut? Hardly. He is Dr. Joseph Catton, an eminent psychiatrist; and his remarks were made to a group of criminal attorneys attending the fifth annual Criminal Law Seminar in San Francisco recently. He even complained that "the law has been taken away from the courts and given to us."

In his stand for bell-clear definitions of legal insanity, Dr. Catton recognizes that he is diametrically opposed to the pleas for no definitions being advanced by Dr. Bernard Diamond of the University of California school of criminology. At least he is in the good company of a great many concerned Californians.

The 'New Math'

Introduction of "new math" in the classrooms has triggered a series of near crises among the members of the adult world who have not been exposed to the subject.

Torrance has moved to eliminate some of the tension between student and parent with adult courses in the new methods — dubbed "Math for Moms" in some areas.

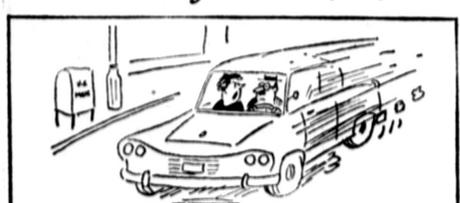
Dad and Mom find they are at an embarrassing loss to help their youngsters with their homework in this bafflingly new approach to an old subject.

In a compassionate effort to help them understand it better, we offer this quote by Buckminster Fuller, the design scientist noted for developing the geodesic dome. Writing in Saturday Review, Mr. Fuller says:

"Fortunately, our research discovery of the omnirational arithmetic of the tetrahedrally coordinate comprehensive mathematical system, employed by nature in all her transformative inter-accommodations, has now become confirmed by many scientific events. It provides a mathematical means adequate to the historical design-science task of redesigning the world's tools and services."

All clear, Dad?

The Casualty Count by Jerry Marcus



"STEP ON THE GAS—OR I'LL BE LATE FOR MY SEWING CLUB."



Speed killed 14,190 and injured 1,223,000 in 1963.



HERE AND THERE by Royce Brier

New Moscow Alignment Raises Many Questions

Let us leave it to the experts to unravel, if they can, the causes of Nikita Khrushchev's fall.

The paramount question is not what happened, but what happenings may flow from it. The paramount question before the world is what the new rulers of the Soviet Union will do with their nuclear power.

Not that it will be known soon, not that the rulers themselves may know. It is their attitude toward their potential which is of incalculable importance to mankind, and this attitude may take time to develop.

Over the past few years we had come to know Nikita Khrushchev's attitude toward the Soviet potential, toward nuclear weapons and missiles. It was somewhat ambivalent but not inasmuch as to cause more than a certain wavering tension.

First, he was an inveterate booster who loved to acquaint everybody with

Soviet might, one ever ready to say that might would be felt if any sought to attack the Soviet Union or its vital interests.

But the if was significant. In his speeches, formal or off-the-cuff, he gave no evidence the Soviet Union under his leadership intended to wage aggressive war. On the contrary he had said often in recent years that the Communist cause would win the world without war, and by the sheer logic of its superiority over the capitalistic world.

Moreover, he showed a sharp understanding that a full-scale nuclear exchange between the Soviets and the free world could only result in the destruction of both, that there was no victory worth the risk. As this is the conclusion of a large share of sober Western thinkers, they could only count Nikita Khrushchev as an asset to world peace while he ruled.

Only once did Nikita Khrushchev take a real chance, and that was in the Cuba missile affair. But that was a cute trick, and when he found President Kennedy was not to be bluff, he pulled back with what grace he could muster.

He took no other real risks. He submitted a pseudo-ultimatum on a Berlin takeover, and never followed it up. He declined frontal clashes in tumultuous Africa and around the globe.

The paramount question then is: will the new rulers in Moscow continue in the Khrushchev prudence—will they exhibit the Khrushchev cunning in perceiving the pitfalls of the various inevitable confrontations between the Soviet world and the free world?

We have no present answer. We don't even know the new rulers, we identify only office holders. But we, the free men, face no more solemn question today.

BOOKS by William Hogan

Budapest-Born Novelist Has Distressing Report

The Budapest-born novelist and journalist Hans Habe is an American citizen and former major in the United States Army who makes his home in Switzerland. A movie version of his novel, "The Countess" took him to Hollywood last year—the year of the assassination—and Habe used the excuse to make a survey of his semi-adopted land (Harlem, Mississippi, waypoints). The result is a book called "The Wounded Land," or "Journey Through Divided America." (Coward-McCann; 310 pp., \$5.95)

It is a report, and a distressing one, on a dis-United States by a European-oriented mind who sought to pinpoint "reasons behind the hatred and extremism in the present American climate." The whole thing seems to me disagreeable and unsuccessful.

Habe's analysis is more niggling than perceptive; more irritating than profound, and some of his generalizations are merely stupid: "Half America sings at hootenannies and the other half listens to old American folk songs, mostly Western cowboy songs with monotonous tunes, a little like the sad and repetitive songs which Arabs sing to a drum accompaniment."

Habe's old Texas joke: "Two oil millionaires, after

lunching in a restaurant, visited a car showroom. One of them bought a Cadillac and was about to pay for it when his companion quickly scribbled on a check: 'After all, Bob, you paid for lunch.'"

Habe's poetic touches suggest a poor man's Henry Miller: "The eyes of skyscrapers are open. Office cleaners are at work, night workers are hammering away, thieves are boring their tunnels. Is all this bright light intended to protect well-filled cash boxes?"

One could go on. The point is that even if you agree that the United States is a "wounded," "divided," materialistic or a whatnot land, Habe's world-weary, pretentious view is liable to make you mad. There is no question that this country is a sitting duck for social critics these days. But if they are to be effective there should be a little tell-tale personal neurosis involved in their analyses—and there is strong evidence that just such an element has been shredded into this over-glib and unfortunate survey.

Before the end of November, his publisher tells us, "The Wounded Land" will have appeared in England, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Poland Yugoslavia, France, Italy, and Japan. Good grief!

AFTER HOURS by John Morley

Political System Faces Test As Ethics Decline

We are told that "public office is public trust." And it is for many public officials of honor and integrity.

But politics generally, and too many politicians, particularly, are in effect under the worst cloud of suspicion and cynicism ever encountered. Their public image is anything but favorable.

There are obvious reasons for this. The Democratic mink and the wool of the Republican vicuna, right in the White House in recent years, the TFX plane scandal, the payoffs of Billie Sol Estes and Bobby Baker, the recent Jenkins case, the accounting shenanigans in the disclosure of wealth among high officials, acquired while in public office—plus the real or implied peccadillos of influence peddling blazoning the headlines—all have greatly disenchanted the relationship of the public with public office.

Public and editorial reaction to today's political campaign pronouncements are being taken with a heavier than usual dose of the proverbial grain of salt. Some border on outright disgust for the surrender or compromise of traditional political ethics. The public is concerned that otherwise capable officials have degraded themselves into unethical politicians, and that in the process they are perverting our political system itself.

It is, of course, unfortunate that the sordid side of politics gets the big play and influences the public image. The wide range of morality and ethics that prevails in both parties is overwhelmed by the sensationalism of improper conduct and corrupt disclosures.

Unscrupulous politicians who grow rich and influential from unethical practices are in effect demoralizing and destroying the vehicle of our republican form of government and subjecting it to all the ravages of public mistrust.

Increased intrusion of federal bureaucracy in the areas of traditional state jurisdiction also increases the temptations and the hazards. Distance and detachment from the local scene obviates the checks and balances of local authority.

Growing involvement in recent years of government into the private business sector... the astronomical increases in government spending, public projects, civic centers, freeways, housing, social security, unemployment, welfare, education, agriculture, tax agencies all create unprecedented temptations for favoritism, conflicts of interest, political payoffs, collusion and corruption.

Political bribery is seldom held in disrepute any more. It has even invaded our courts. Politically appointed judges are probably above bribery, but a judgeship appointment is in itself often a form of bribery, or political payoff.

Certain substantial politi-

cal contributions are also been drifting off course for too long.

It can be done only by the citizens who control the ballot box. It is they who have failed the system, too, by not voting, by careless emotional voting binges, or by participating in the political payoff itself.

It is the people who can and must demand ethics in public office until public service emerges as something distinct and distinguished, something that a grateful nation can live by with pride, self respect and with good conscience.

Our Man Hoppe

Best Wishes, You Rat Finks

By Arthur Hoppe

No, don't try to dissuade me, Al. I know the ball game isn't over until the last out. You've been telling me that all night. But I'm still trailing three to one and there's only two precincts left unreported. Besides, we've run out of beer and that crowd of freeloaders out there is getting restless.

So I'm going to concede, Al. No sense putting off any longer. We don't want to miss all the morning editions. You take down my statement, Al. Let's make it eloquent, gracious and generous. Good losers, eh, Al?

Now, then: First of all, I wish to express my deepest, heartfelt appreciation to all my supporters who worked so hard in my cause. Without their unstinting contributions of time, effort and money...

Unstinting like blood out of a turnip, right, Al? You know we ordered sixty cases of beer tonight? Sixty cases! If those freeloaders had put half the effort into ringing doorbells as they did into guzzling beer, we'd have won hands down.

Where was I? But, friends, we have not fought in vain. By waging a hard-hitting, high-level campaign, we have succeeded in placing the burning issues of the day in the glaring forum of public opinion where...

You know, Al, I still think if we'd brought out that business of his uncle being a transvestite a week earlier, we might've swung it. We underestimated the anti-transvestite bit, Al. I know the corruption bit looked better at the time. But corruption's old hat. People are tired of it. This transvestite stuff is new. Hell, look at the trouble we had explaining what it meant. If we'd had another week to get the message across... But no sense crying over spilled milk. Let's get on with it.

And so, friends, allow me to extend my deepest and most heartfelt congratulations. Did I say "heartfelt" already? Use something else... something else congratulations to my distinguished opponent in his hour of victory tonight.

Though we sometimes disagreed in the heat of battle... You know, Al, maybe I shouldn't have called him a two-bit floorfluser. Not that he isn't, but I think we got a backlash on that... rest assured he has my wholehearted support in our common cause of making this a better place to live. From the bottom of my heart, I wish him every success in the trying times that lie ahead.

Of course, Al, he may look good right now. But I can think of at least three thorny issues he's got problems with. And if we exploit them just right, next time around that s.o.b.'s going to be a sitting duck.

Let's see, thank to supports, congratulations to opponent. I guess that about does it. All we need is a line to wrap it up, Al. Something simple and to the point, a ringing line that kind of sums up the whole thing. Wait a minute, Al, I've got it: The people have spoken!

The bums.

Quote

"The manner of giving is worth more than the gift."—Pierre Corneille.

"Small service is true service while it lasts."—William Wordsworth.

Morning Report:

The Space Agency has hung out the "Help Wanted" sign. They already have enough fellows to pilot the capsules. Now they need passengers.

This looks like easy work, but be sure to read the fine print before you apply. Just as machines nowadays become more specialized, so do the people that go with them. In this case, anybody over six feet and 34 years is barred. Also a doctorate is required.

But if you can meet the specifications, it looks like a good job. The pay and fringe benefits are excellent. And Goodness knows, it's safe work. As of this date, riding a space capsule is many times less dangerous than driving to work on a freeway from the suburbs.

Abe Mellinkoff

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