

looting in Moosic

Late in January a freight train overturned in Moosic, splitting open a box car full of fruit juice cases. Guess what? The good people of Moosic just ambled down to the train tracks and started looting the box car. It wasn't even done in that stop, look and listen manner of Negro boys in Newark's looted stores. No sir. It was very homey and conversational, according to local news reports. Neighbors gossiped about at the train tracks while some were busy loading two or three cartons of fruit juice. Then they came back for more. "Most of the participants were teenagers, but a good number of adults also insured themselves healthy breakfasts for the next few weeks," was the immortal literature used by The Scranton Tribune to describe who did the looting. None of this, incidentally, rated much of a headline (bad for the old Moosic image) and oddly enough there was no contact with the police. It happened that the Moosic police didn't get to the wreck for two hours after the train wreck. Only 42 cars were off the track and well, you might have thought it wrecked in the middle of the Gobi Desert. In Newark and Detroit and Chicago it didn't take two hours, however. The police were right there to shoot looters, as Mayor Daley of Chicago ordered. We'd even guess that many of the people looting the fruit juice agreed with Mayor Daley on that one.

a good start

The first 20 days of the Nixon administration have been politically successful because he correctly is slowing down the process of government, taking a look around and luckily for everyone, does not yet have a crisis he has to contend with that is not of his own making. Thus the inflammatory words "mid-East" have not quite yet brought Richard M. Nixon to a test of fire in world affairs. Mr. Nixon is cooling it because for eight years the world and this country have moved ahead at a rapid pace. His predecessor got the country into a war that took a lot of money and emotion out of the country. At the same time the huge demands of the cities brought on vocal protests that put the country in a constant state of anxiety. Like any factory working steadily and hard for a long time, it is good to stop and take a look around. Mr. Nixon seems to be doing this to catch his breath and because of the political realities that made him president without much of a mandate from any one group or any one policy, thus dictating a go-slow time for the administration. Possibly this is the honeymoon period, but probably the new government is working in the right way at the right time. There is a problem that too much of this can be politically bad, or that when "cooling it" means you freeze to death. That was probably the overwhelming reason for the election of John F. Kennedy, who proved to many voter's satisfaction that the Eisenhower administration just had been too indolent in world affairs to allow Mr. Nixon to be president in 1960.

community co-operation

Two readily apparent methods of intergovernmental cooperation—or centralization as it is often called—are now in force in the Back Mountain. They are the Back Mountain Municipal Authority and an unnamed study group investigating the possibility of combining local police departments. The former has been in existence over two years (1966) and the latter was reactivated two weeks ago. The Municipal Authority, which is planning a sanitary sewage system for Dallas Borough, Dallas and Kingston Townships, is operating very successfully by any standards. The police effort, although still embryonic, is at least acting upon a conception formed by men with vision enough to see beyond the stifling confines of local autonomy. Local autonomy is an evil only when the ability to cooperate with other political subdivisions is assigned an inferior position, a practice that is often widespread when government is operated by men without vision. Had the Back Mountain Municipal Authority been formed just ten short years ago, taxpayers would have been spared the burden of having to pay millions of dollars more for a sewage system, an indisputable fact. Where local government fails to act responsibly it is inevitable that the state and federal government will force action upon them. This has been the case in the last few years. An example is sewage systems which are now mandated by the state. These are areas that undoubtedly could be handled more efficiently at the local level, as they should be, but the effort must first be made.

insecurity and fear cause resentment of unimportant issues

By CORALIE COGSWELL

I am not a great one for ceremonies and so paid little attention to the inaugural. I knew, though, that festivities were shadowed by some demonstrations of protest. Commenting on this, a couple of young, well-educated men I know agreed with fervor that "They (the demonstrators) should be mowed down with machine guns." To me the demonstrations seemed ill-timed and pointless. But this remark nagged at my mind. What was there in this situation to bring forth such an extreme reaction? A line from Gilbert and Sullivan ran through my head: "Make the punishment fit the crime." What sort of crime, if any, deserves the punishment of being mowed down with machine guns? If any deserve such punishment, mass murder does. The architects of Belsen and Buchenwald deserved execution if anyone does. Mass murder to punish mass murder: this is nothing more than the old "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth." It is simply primitive vengeance, carried into civilized society, and as such is nothing to admire. But perhaps we are not civilized enough to go beyond this. Still, for lesser crimes, it is harder to uphold this primitive "justice." It is true that our forebears on the frontier and our cousins in the South were quite ready to use it. If they could not count on a "hanging-judge" they did the job themselves. The Westerner was more likely to pick a stranger he suspected of horse thievery or cattle rustling. The Southerner was more likely to lynch a black man suspected of rape. Perhaps demonstrating is a new crime which brings forth the same emotions, if not actions, that inspired previous lynch mobs. The question is, exactly what is this crime? The demonstrator at his worst—provoking policemen, using dirty words, and even throwing bottles and stones—does not begin to perpetrate crimes on the scale of those committed by the Mafia or Syndicate or whatever it is currently called. More people are bitten by rats in this country than are injured by demonstrators. Nor does the demonstrator begin to create the violence

which results from actions of respectable men—in our country, in England, in France, in Russia—who make a fine business of supplying arms to one side or both sides wherever trouble brews in the Mideast or Africa or Asia or South America. (I guess it is not a legal crime to sell munitions: the bigger the crime, the less likely it is to be called one.) Yet demonstrators seem to arouse far more rage than dope-peddlers and corrupt officials and gangland murderers and those who deal in genocide and in profitable wars. Why is this? There are two possible answers. One is that it is the very powerlessness of the demonstrators which makes it easy to vent our wrath on them. They have no power base; they have no wealth; they have no real weapons. Therefore we hate them. In this case, it is the old, old story of finding a scapegoat. This custom was old before Christ was born; and it continues since Belsen and Buchenwald. But the other possibility is that they are not powerless. It frightens us, it can only be their ideas which threaten us. If we were really a mature and secure people, a small minority marching around with placards could not possibly enrage us the way they do. If we were not beset by anxieties and questions ourselves, we would smile at or ignore the antics of people who had nothing to communicate to us. If we knew who we are and where we are going, nothing they said could make us so disturbed and angry and vindictive.

us by friend and foe. A warmth permeates our souls, and at last we are SOMEBODY. For the Bug has bit. It is another of those phenomena like New York in the depth of the darkness, when everybody had a feeling for everybody caught in the same trap. Everyone has a remedy from hot lemon tea to whiskey. Some say "gargle" but a lot of folks prefer to "swallow." Is it icy outside? Suddenly you've had a relapse. This really proves you had the Bug in the first place. Most convenient. So, hail to Hong-Kong and more sleep!

H. R. CONRAD Floutrtown

off the cuff stuff By BRUCE HOPKINS

"Tom," I said as I looked up at Tom McAuliffe, one of my two roommates, "if someone had told me yesterday that at four o'clock this morning I would be sitting in the bathtub with a roll of toilet paper behind my head, I would have said, 'Oh, a likely story that is.'"

Tom just looked at me and laughed. And now that I have all of you readers biting your nails in suspense wondering how I happened to be in this situation, I suppose I should explain.

It all began when I returned late that evening to the mobile home in which we three are living (we refer to it affectionately as the straight-jacket). I very nonchalantly bounced into the room attempting to look my jovial, bubbly, cheery self.

Tom took one look at me and said, "What's wrong with you? You look like you just read your own name in an obituary column." I decided my acting ability must be failing.

I flopped down dejectedly on our luxuriously couch, and was immediately impaled by one of the many lose springs. I de-

scribed to my typewriter, Richard Nixon was only 64 hours away from the Presidency, and no one I had seen that night had a word to say on the matter. Or if they did have anything to say, I had to coax it out of them. And it has been this way for weeks. Before the November election, I saw students debate, place bets, check the polls, and debate some more. While the primaries were going in the spring, bumper stickers were on doors in every dormitory, doorbells were pushed and voters canvassed, and, oh, the debates between the McCarthyites and the Kennedy backers. But now there is silence. As one student told me, "It doesn't do any good to talk now. We're stuck with him."

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The Empty Pew

BY REV. W. JENE MILLER

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At the peak of our Marshall Plan aid, America was giving two percent of its gross national product to foreign aid. It is now three-tenths of one percent, and due for more cutting. Perhaps no enterprise of America since the Civil War has been surrounded by so many false myths as our foreign aid program. No one who looks at the recovery of Germany, Japan, England and France can doubt the wisdom of our attempt to rebuild those nations which can help us stem the communist ideology. The question is why we now want to stop. What are these false myths? One myth is the idea that only America is giving foreign aid. The fact is that in comparison to size of income, America is fifth in rank. Another myth is that the funds are poorly administered. Our workers had much to learn. The fact is that they did learn. Our employes are often the envy of other nations. Our technical skill and careful application of resources is admirable. (If you let the right-wingers do your thinking and interpreting for you, you never appreciated these soldiers of peace for their courage and devotion, because few of them come home in flag-draped boxes!) Our disillusion is perhaps most evident in our expectation of immediate results. We can see in the struggles with poverty and deterioration in our own cities that progress comes slowly. We can see the desert of incentivelessness and hopelessness, when it is in our backyard. We forget that overseas we are dealing often with those who do not ever see affluence, much less hope for it. But the greatest illusion is that we are being generous. With 85 percent of our own money returning to our own industries, we think we are doing others a favor to loan them money to buy from us. There is no objection whatsoever with the request that they support our own industries. The objection is that we look upon such programs as "give-aways." They are as shrewd an investment as any AT&T makes with its great indebtedness.

I made a quick survey of three college bull sessions last Friday night, just 65 hours before the inauguration of President Richard Nixon. In one, a science major was grieving over a laboratory class he had been to that afternoon.

"I forgot to smear my rat." He was disgusted with himself. Evidently, one does not go around forgetting to smear one's rat. Those present offered sympathy and then sat back and listened to what would have happened to some poor rat, had it not gone unre-membered. I left in mid-sneer.

In another room, they were talking about why the Baltimore Colts had lost the Super Bowl and why Joe Namath was such a hot dog. In a third, a sophomore was reading from his notes. He was unhappy with his United States history class, where he had spent a recent hour learning: 1. That after the Civil War many things were invented, including the dynamo, vulcanized rubber, and the cash register, which was thought up by a Milwaukee man.

2. That a worker can turn out fifteen million pins a day in 1968, while he could only produce one a day in 1865, and 3. That God was very nice to put the Great Lakes where he put them because they were a great aid to commerce. "Is that what I came to college to find out?" he asked. Everyone agreed that it wasn't. As I left the bull sessions and

Pillar To Post

A highly significant piece of work was presented over the NBC television network last Wednesday evening. To anybody who has ever had intimate contact with a retarded child, it was an eye-opener. It was called "Teacher, Teacher."



by HIX

To those who take in the Today Show in the mornings, the characters were already familiar, for they appeared that same day as part of the show. The thirteen year old boy who took the boy's part, was, in reality a genuinely retarded child, but with a frank and open smile and a healthy approach to life. The mere fact that he could have followed directions so faithfully, reacted so well, and thrown himself into a part which at times must have been repugnant to him, emerging from the filming the same youngster without mental trauma, could be of tremendous value to parents who are faced with problems of like character. So much depends upon the mental attitude of parents and teachers, so infinitely much depends on home environment, playmates, expectations, misunderstandings. So much can be done to build a life, and so much can be done to discourage development, frequently unwittingly, and with the best of intentions. Two kinds of teachers in the film, one a brilliant teacher who knew how to instruct but lacked the all-important ability to get close to a pupil; the other a compassionate black man who realized the importance of instruction by enlisting cooperation on a lower level, and the all-important human friendship angle. Both teachers working toward a common goal, each in his way, each achieving results but by different paths. For centuries the retarded child has been kept in the background, his very presence in a family considered a disgrace. During the past twenty years, retardation has been recognized as something which frequently yields to treatment, frequently can be avoided, and frequently educates a family in undreamed of concepts and enlarged horizons. The film "Teacher, Teacher" is a production which hopefully will not be lost, but presented again and to an even wider audience, perhaps a special sponsored by a number of network at the same hour to insure maximum coverage. Too many youngsters in the past have been labelled as unteachable, which frequently meant that the key was lacking.

Teaching such a child requires expert skill and a warmth of human nature which can somehow get into that closed mind, closed frequently because of unfortunate treatment at home or by playmates. It is far from being an academic problem only. Unless a child is a complete vegetable, there are avenues of entry into a closed mind. Helen Keller could easily have been crossed off as a lost cause. It takes time, it takes patience, it takes money. The father in "Teacher, Teacher," was well endowed with this world's goods and he was deeply concerned that everything should be done for Freddy. But he had no faith in anyone's ability to reach through that mental fog and find the key to instruction. As he said, "The boy can dress himself, he's toilet trained, he will do what you tell him to do... if he can do it." NBC has presented a classic, a "White Paper" in fiction form, which could be of vital importance to thousands of parents and teachers, and to uncounted thousands of children who wear the label "dumb," or more recently, "retarded."

registration for May primaries

Dates for local registration in advance of the May primaries have been released: Hunlock and Ross Townships, March 3, at Hunlock Fire Hall, Hours 11 to 3. Lake and Lehman Townships, March 3, Lehman elementary school, 11-3. Kingston Township, March 3, Shavertown Fire Hall. Dallas Borough and Townships, March 18, Borough building, 11-3. Franklin and Exeter Townships, March 18, Harding fire hall, 11-3. Jackson Township, March 18, fire hall, 11-3.

in college bull sessions, Nixon ranks behind Namath

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conventions always smell a little. And then he asked for Spiro Agnew as running mate, which needs no comment, but we've had questionable vice presidents before. When Mr. Nixon blew it was when he started to campaign the way he did. He swore that he had taken positions on 168 substantive issues, and the reply to that became, "All right, but how many have you taken on each one?" Pollution? Discrimination? Urban Decay? Birth Control? He was a blur on these, and if you don't think so, try to remember precisely what positions he took on them. What would he do about Vietnam? He would bring new faces, which is a promise that didn't exactly get to the core of the matter, and one he didn't keep. (Replacing Ellsworth Bunker in the Nixon administration is Ellsworth Bunker, with Sargent Shriver replacing Sargent Shriver in Paris. And even though Henry Cabot Lodge is stepping in for Averell Harriman, it must be noted that his is the oldest, hawkiest face of them all.) When the new President did talk at length, he talked of Law and Order, but even on this he stayed clear of the meaningful. He kept saying things like it isn't safe to walk down the streets of New York anymore, which is silly because it never has been, and his speeches never did wander far from this level. So far, so bad. But even so,

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guest editorials

(The comment, "who said war is hell?" from The News Observer, Crossett, Ark.)

It is a shame that the Congressional Record is such an unattractive and boring journal. It is difficult to research, let alone to read. But those who pore through it frequently are rewarded with some gems. One such appears in the July 17, 1968, issue. It has been brought to our attention and we want to pass it on to you. Senator Stephen M. Young, Democrat of Ohio, was holding forth on the Agency For International Development operation in South Vietnam. "We'll have space for only a portion of his remarks, but the story is clear in only a few short paragraphs. Said Senator Young: Last January while in Vietnam, I encountered many hundreds of civilian officials. They were all over the place enjoying high salaries and al-

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only yesterday

FORTY YEARS AGO

John Russell Curtis' frozen body was found in the woods near Centerville. The 32 year old man was pronounced a suicide. The front page bristled with items on a coming dance at Irem, notes from Florida, activities in the churches, a surprise party, a meeting of the Girl Scouts. Republican employees got the axe, 45 of them dismissed at the county level. Corresponding number of Democrats were hired. Commissioner Rosser was outvoted by Commissioners Harrison and Conway. Used car bargains and specials on Atwater Kent radios were advertised on the front page. First quality silk pongee, imported from Japan, was 3