

EDITORIAL

People's Park

Now that all of the political flack about it has died down, Moon Lake Park can be revealed for what it truly is—one of the most astonishingly lovely parks anywhere in the Commonwealth.

The fact that it is a county rather than state park makes its existence all the more remarkable. There are 67 counties in Pennsylvania, and Luzerne is but the 15th to establish and maintain its own park—this despite the well-publicized need to preserve as much of our natural heritage as is possible.

Moon Lake Park with its rolling fields, dense forests, natural fishing pond, bird conservatory, and magnificent swimming pool is truly, to quote park director Robert Neff, a Peoples' Park. Picnickers, campers, swimmers, boaters, fishers and naturalists are all welcome, and the fees charged for use of the park's facilities are nominal.

There's still work to be done before the park is finished, most notably a second phase which will develop the park's resources more completely. We hope the County Commissioners will see their way clear to budgeting funds for this additional work as soon as possible—we can think of few county projects of more ultimate value than a well-developed and adequate park system.

Power Act

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has responded to our country's current energy crisis with what it calls the "Power Facilities Planning and Site Approval Act of 1971." Introduced by a long list of legislators, the bill, if passed would establish procedures for the development of a comprehensive long-range plan to meet the present and future power needs of the Commonwealth in an economical manner consonant with the protection of the environment...

The bill, generally, is a good one in that it requires the siting and construction of power facilities to conform to a comprehensive long-range plan drawn up by the Department of Environmental Resources. Furthermore, it requires that public hearings be held before permission is granted to begin construction on power facilities.

Behind this bill is a recognition that the use of natural resources must be carefully controlled and planned to avoid waste and pollution. There is also the recognition that public power is just that—public power, and that the public has a right to become involved in decisions affecting this basic need.

The acid test of the Power Facilities Planning bill will ultimately be in the manner in which the bill is administered. The Department of Environmental Resources must take a position independent of the power industry and remain staunchly dedicated to the simultaneous management of both the environment and public power. It cannot permit itself, like the Atomic Energy Commission, the luxury of promoting what it regulates or, like the Public Utilities Commission, allow itself to become responsible to industry instead of to the public.

The energy situation in this country will never be corrected until we come to understand the dangerous implications of the private control of public resources and other complicated issues. The Pennsylvania Power Facilities Planning Act is a good bill insofar as it recognizes some of the priorities involved in the power issue, but it is indefinite enough to require strong and independent administration for it will be in administration that the bill is finally defined.

THE DALLAS POST

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Changes

by Eric Mayer

It's too hot to write today. The air is an invisible fog that sticks in my throat when I breathe. Up the river the sky has turned yellow and purple like a vast deep bruise—promising a thunderstorm.

December sounds like a good idea right now; snow scudding in white wavelets across frozen macadam. If December came after June, January after July and February after August, winter and summer would both be more bearable.

Anyway I now have an excuse to rewrite some notes I found in my desk drawer—vintage late 1970—about a brief trip Kathy and I and a couple of friends made to New York. Pardon me if I'm irrelevant.

At 7 a.m. Public Square is dead, a concrete corpse powdered with snow, ghastly pale under ineffectual street lights. Except for a magazine stand and a few deserted restaurants, the bus terminal is the only living thing.

There, incongruous crowds scurry off incoming buses, milling about us momentarily, before scattering out into the cold calm of the city. This is Wilkes-Barre, where "Irate Taxpayers" and "Fed Up to Here's" pen Pavlovian reflexes of indignation to the Sunday Independent about the "hippies" and rowdy dance halls that paper is so fond of inventing. Little wonder we clutch our tickets so tightly.

Every so often I shiver. The cold that huddles outside against the littered sidewalks and dark buildings makes chill invasions at every opening of the terminal doors.

The bus trip itself seems more of a transformation than a journey. It consists of flickering shadows, magazines that lurch unreadably through a green tinted gloom. Outside our metal chrysalis we glimpse white highways, Howard Johnsons, endless indistinguishable hamburger factories. Only road signs indicate movement. Turnpike they inform us, Hackettstown, road ends—we are sucked into a tight, winding tube, neon lit roar and clatter, racing against claustrophobia before breaking the surface of reality again. Numb by the slow miracle of the journey we disembark, blink, breath in the stale, cloying odor of New York. Luckily the air is thinned somewhat with the cold.

Extremes tug at each other here, finding a tense, brittle balance. In a plush hotel lobby a little tuxedo man chaperones his elevators

while out on the street a couple of tired kids from Boston look for a place to crash.

Telephones and buses and toilets turn millions of gluttonous mouths toward exhausted wallets. Uncounted coins disappear into some insatiable subterranean stomach. A small victory; we blunder into a subway exit and save four tokens.

The subways are fascinating, great in-senate worms racing madly through uncharted mazes. We descend into their lair, are engulfed by the roaring, jolting, hiss and screech, emerging into a world transformed and far removed from the one we left minutes ago. The city is nothing more than a series of disjointed destinations; islands of unfamiliar reality linked by a blindly passed unknown.

Bus doors snap at our heels. So many people. The city ignores them. This is fine for a day.

As night comes to leech what drab warmth the daytime air contained, we go

down to the Fillmore, the now defunct rock music, heart of the city. (Wouldn't you know it. The lowest common denominator of American culture, the great leveller, Howard Johnson's has bought the site.)

Under the unimpressive marquee, in the crowd of blue jeans by the entrance, stands a fellow with a cup. "Spare change for a ticket?" he asks then as we brush past he whispers confidentially back over an Army fatigued shoulder, "Meth! Mesc? Hash!" A few other entrepreneurs suggest acid, very politely. In New York as in Wilkes-Barre, there is no need to give drugs the hard sell.

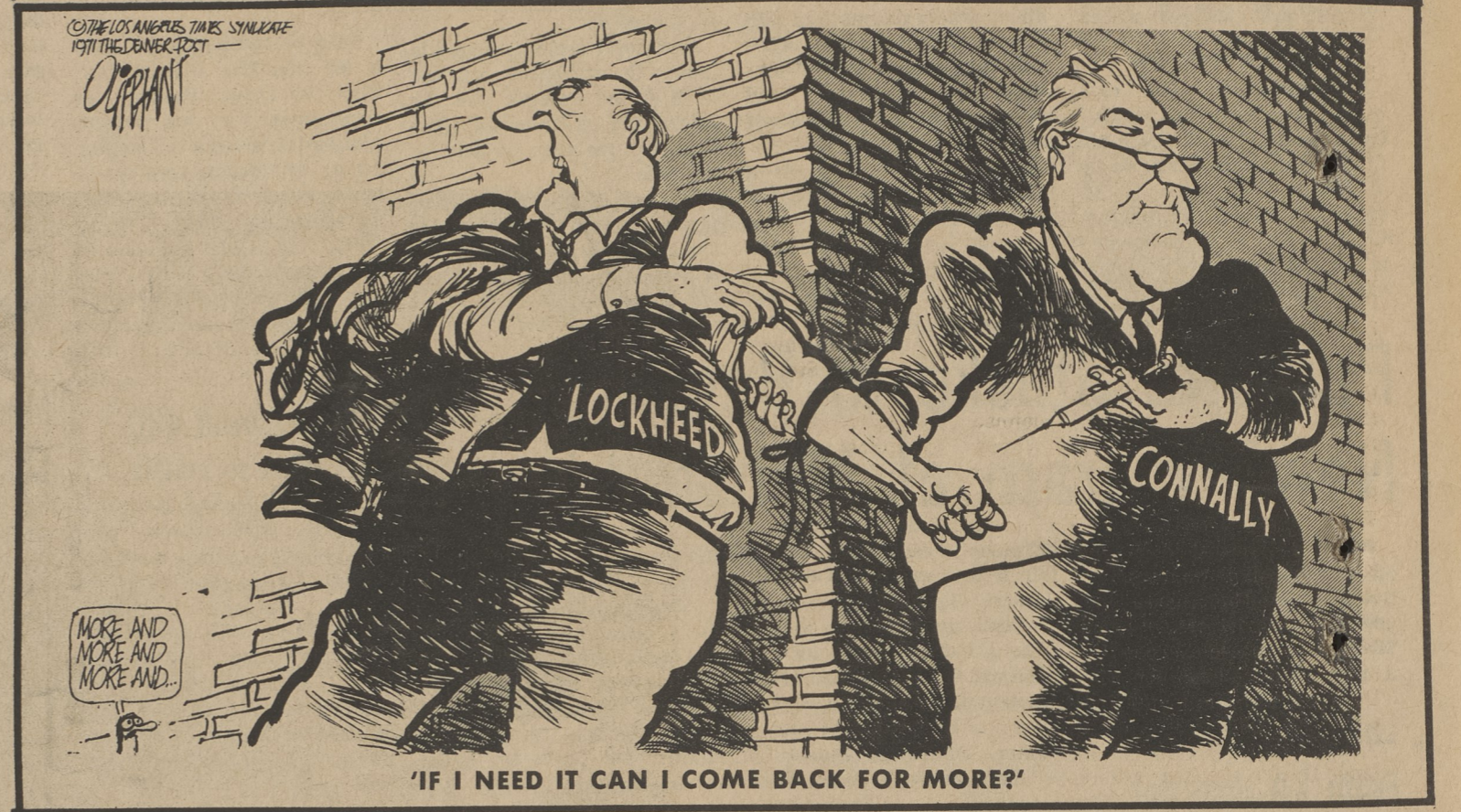
We go into the theater where green-jerseyed ushers try, vainly, to enforce the no smoking rule. When the overhead lights go out the screen behind the stage blazes into phantasmagoric life. The Fillmore light show is a work of art in itself, not a headache inducing garble of strobes.

We've come to see the Kinks, an English

group that has advanced too far to get much radio airplay. They do a lot of satire, tend to depend on melody rather than loudness. Their last two albums, one criticizing the music industry, the other wryly chronicling the rise and fall of the British empire were song cycles. They lack the BOOM BOOM BOOM and insipid lyrics that make for hit records.

The girls buy flowers to strew on the stage before the second show. (Beating a rather hasty retreat back up the aisle while singer Ray Davies grins around the gap in his teeth.) After the show we wander around the village trying to find a bus, which we finally do. No one kills us. As a matter of fact most of the "freaks," "trash" and so forth that give so many of the tourists the creeps look pretty much like us.

So much for the trip. Since than nothing much has happened, and then again a lot has happened. I think that December has never been so far removed from June.



TRB

from Washington

A test of the moral stature of the United States will come in the next few months when we cannot conceal from ourselves any longer the stark reality that we have lost a war. All our airpower and puissance have not been able to enforce our will on a small backward jungle nation in Southeast Asia. Will this gathering realization finally produce a primitive knee-jerk demand for a scapegoat to bear the blame? Or will the ugly episode help the world's most powerful nation and, at heart, one of the most splendidly idealistic, to wisdom and maturity? Who can say.

Not later than 5 p.m. this Wednesday the Senate is scheduled to vote on the McGovern-Hatfield amendment to the draft extension bill to force a withdrawal of all U.S. forces in Vietnam by the end of this year. A year ago the amendment got 39 votes. Almost certainly it will fail this year and the vote will be called a "defeat." Nonsense! It is a victory just to have the measure voted on. What has happened, very simply, is that all the street protests, the campus turbulence, the sneered-at hippies and long-haired objectors of the past five years have finally had their effect on Congress and that, mostly without admitting it, the legislators are carrying on from there. This war has got to end. Even those who vote against McGovern-Hatfield know it.

World War I was one of the most popular in American history while it lasted and one of the most unpopular when it was over. There was the bad taste in the mouth after Ver-

sailles, and so "Merchants of Death" was invented and a generation grew up thinking the war was all a plot by arms manufacturers.

After World War II there was the loss of China and another scapegoat was needed and provided by Joe McCarthy, those Commies in the State Department. Always after war there is reaction in America and a move toward isolationism, and the charge, "We were betrayed" Since the United States is obviously omnipotent (look at all our motor cars!) anyone can see that nothing can go against us in the world unless it is caused by a conspiracy. President Kennedy was no traitor no Johnson, nor Nixon. If we are to have one somebody else will be needed and we can foresee a political drive to blame our failure in Asia on Pacifist intellectuals, on subversives, on softies who got a "Ph.D. from the Acheson college of Cowardly Communist Containment." (No, that has been used already; we must invent something new).

It will be a sad business if this happens again. There is something important for America to learn from Vietnam if we are mature enough to face reality and it is not too early to think about it even while the troops are coming home.

Vietnam was not a betrayal, it was a mistake. We did not go into it for selfish gain but from bad judgment. When we saw our mistake we tried to pull it out by going in deeper. War was a momentum of its own. We

lost prisoners so we had to fight to extricate them. The consequences of earlier military action became the causes of later military action.

What will we remember about Vietnam? Well, there is My Lai. And the tiger cages. And the phrase, "We had to destroy the village in order to save it." There was the make-believe about the Tonkin Gulf "attack" and two brave senators, both defeated, Morse and Gruening, who alone in Congress voted against the war resolution based on it. There were those military phrases like "protective reaction," and the two that bracketed the Cambodia "incursion," first that the United States couldn't act "like a pitiless, helpless giant," and after it was over that it was "the most successful operation of this long and very difficult war." Well, well; after that the Gallup poll reported in February that 7 of 10 queried thought the government wasn't telling them all the facts.

John Graham of the London Financial Times wrote that the United States "has bombed four countries and invaded two to withdraw from one."

The United States has done its duty by Vietnam. It has set up an army of a million men, well-armed, well-trained, fighting an army perhaps a quarter that size. In our generosity we have laid waste a nation, and contributed more than \$100 billion and 50,000 American lives. We have made subtle but no less real sacrifices. This combined recession-inflation at home comes from the refusal of

Lyndon Johnson to apply the taxes needed to pay for the war; erosion of Congressional power in the face of the presidency is due to mistaken delicacy about supporting the troops in wartime; these 30,000 GI dope addicts returning to plague the nation are a sacrifice too, with a terrible cost to us, to their mothers, and, of course to them.

In four months, on Oct. 3, comes the South Vietnamese election. It could be the last graceful way out of the quagmire. Recently before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, elder statesmen Averell Harriman recalled that President Thieu tried to wreck the Paris peace conference and will do so again if re-elected. He got only 34 percent of the vote in the 1967 election, with strong U.S. support. Harriman thinks the Vietnamese people want a coalition government and would throw Thieu out if given the change. They aren't likely to get it. Thieu has one political adversary in jail, Deputy Tran Ngoc Chau, contrary to two Supreme Court rulings. His rival for the presidency in 1967, Truong Dinh Dzu, is in jail. And now a new piece of slick legislation may have eliminated Vice President Ky from the race. It is still possible that General Duong Van ("Big") Minh may run.

Any reasonable appraisal shows that we have met our obligations in Vietnam. We overestimated our capacity. We made a mistake. If we can squarely face that hard and gritty fact we shall be an even greater nation that we are now.

The Hard and Gritty Facts

The Empty Pew

by W. Jene Miller

It was when a business man thanked me for my witness in behalf of bringing our boys home alive rather than dead that I first heard the terrible word.

That word is: The most powerful force in American life today is not even elected, nor does it answer to any elected authority. The most powerful force in American life today is the power to take a man's son away from him through the draft board!

The business man told me he was afraid to do certain things because his son was of draft age and his competition was represented on the draft board.

And before you sit down and write that vitriolic letter about patriotism, etc., let's get a couple of things straight: 1) I volunteered for service during the Second World Massacre, so I got no kick about the draft from that angle. 2) Any nation which could whitewash the cold blooded massacre of mothers and babies in literally thousands of cases, is perfectly capable of producing the kind of citizens who gladly use their power on a draft board to exploit, just like they use power on the real estate boards, zoning boards, church boards and tax boards.

So, if you want to bring peace to this tired old world, one more thing you can do is elect draft boards.

I suggest you hurry.

Did you catch Mr. Nixon's appeal to hurry

up and bring about the day when prisoners of war could be free to go to the land of their choice?

That was the gimmick which kept the Korean war piling up blood-profits and dead bodies for so long. We wanted to refuse to sign until the communists could agree that if we had their boys brain-washed enough to

want to stay on our side, like they had the chance to brain-wash our boys enough to want to stay on their side, then the boys could choose which country they would live in after the armistice was signed.

I have no sons in this war, but I do know that peace will be dallied about until 1972 unless direct and relentless pressure is put on

Congress and senate powers. Mr. Johnson had been president more than a year when he promised to get us out, and he knew how, but lied about doing it. Mr. Nixon won my vote saying he had been vice-president, so he knew how to get us out quickly, but a political promise is a political promise is a bunch of baloney.

Letters to the Editor

To the Post:

Perhaps I am wrong in assuming that Mr. W.A. Shilling has never had Bruce Hopkins as a teacher. But if not, I would like to express the opinion that Mr. Shilling should not prejudice Mr. Hopkins in the area of teaching solely on his editorial views.

As a former student of Mr. Hopkins, I have experienced the real meaning of teaching, his teaching. He is an intelligent, sensitive, and very fine teacher.

You are wrong, Mr. Shilling. It is very sad that Mr. Hopkins is not presently teaching. He has left a gap hard to fill.

TERESA STEINBURG
247 Hampshire Dr.
Chalfont, Pa.

To THE POST:

Re: "Grade School Conservative," Dallas Post, June 3, 1971

I'm afraid Mr. Eric Mayer should have

defined "Conservative" before he used the term wrongly as the subject of an article which was essentially a combination of psychoanalysis of himself as a child and an echo of statements made before and which are no longer effective.

Since there will probably be no rebuttal to Mr. Mayer's article, the readers of *The Post* will have to take everything at face value without recognizing or analyzing the rhetoric.

Mr. Mayer asked a lot of questions in his article without so much as a hint of formulating an opinion that would justify the overall article. Point one.

Point two: The sentimentalizing in the last few paragraphs of the article sounded like the never-ending and predictable, may I say, antics used by people who are, at least, left of center politically.

Come on, Mr. Mayer, a young fellow like yourself should be able to innovate when writing rather than using examples that have been driven so deep into the ground that it

would take one of the sewer authority steam shovels to dig them up.

Just a few observations; Centerville and Dick and Jane have nothing to do with Conservatism. And as for American justice I believe Mr. Mayer would agree that ours is best form anyone, world-wide, has come up with so far.

I am not going to pursue the subject any further, i.e., addressing myself to each of Mr. Mayer's statements. I don't want to burden the individual who will initially read this letter.

All I ask, as do many conservative-thinking people, is that any type of media, no matter what the size, give an honest and factual view of each side and let the people judge for themselves.

Sincerely,
JIM BALAVAGE
Shavertown