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'5 PER CENTER' INQUIRY

THE results of the first phase of the "5 per center" investigation are somewhat less than sensational. Instead of shocking the nation, they have made us hold our noses.

About all we have learned so far is that among the capital's thousands of hard-working people there is an army of little men who live in an ethical twilight zone, scurrying about hither and yon to make and hold "contacts" with Government officials, and then peddling their influence to businessmen for a flat percentage of the deal.

They range from scurvy characters like John Maragon and James V. Hunt to the more polished, more influential Washington representatives of the bigger U. S. companies. The latter parade about under the respectable titles of "public relations directors" or some such euphemistic label.

They are not violating any laws, nor are the governmental officials who permit themselves to be used guilty of anything worse than extremely bad judgment. (At least, Senator Hoey's committee has not yet unearthed any deals which can be called criminally culpable.)

Occasionally, when a member of the White House entourage like that great warrior, Maj. Gen. Harry Vaughan, entangles himself in their designs, embarrassing his Chief Executive and besmirching his splendorous uniform, the thing becomes more sinister. The President is elected by all the people, and nothing less than the most scrupulous honesty is expected from him and his assistants.

It is doubtless true that the payment of a percentage fee to one of these political middle-men is cheaper for some businesses than maintaining their own Washington representatives. But that doesn't mitigate the evil.

What is needed is a system which will make it unnecessary for the small businessman to traffic with these leeches. And it is comforting that the new purchasing officer of the Government, Jess Larson, is already at work with Secretary of Defense Johnson and Budget Director Frank Pace to develop such a system. Unethical firms will be blacklisted and Federal employees warned about accepting favors. Says Mr. Larson:

"It is my honest opinion that this procedure, together with the policy of decentralizing procurement and the maintaining of adequate, courteous and efficient information centers will cause the so-called five per center to wane and die because there will be no demand for his services."

Mr. Larson may be overly optimistic; we hope he is not. The sleazy fabric of governmental integrity badly needs such strengthening.

ANOTHER INQUIRY ENDS

WHEN the highly-touted investigation of the Air Force's big B-36 bomber fizzled out last week, the news was heralded widely. The American people learned that the charges leveled against the Air Force by Pennsylvania's Rep. James E. Van Zandt in a speech in the House early in June were without basis.

The investigation had served its purpose —public confidence in the nation's air arm, imperiled by the irresponsible Van Zandt speech, was restored. The curtain of suspicion was completely lifted.

There was still another investigation which had also fizzled out, but without such highly-publicized funeral services.

The same week that Rep. Van Zandt started the B-36 fiasco, Senator Bourke Hickenlooper of Iowa was cross-examining Chairman David Lilienthal of the Atomic Energy Commission. The AEC investigation had gotten under way after Hickenlooper had boomed charges of "incredible mismanagement."

The investigation turned up (1) the loss of a minute quantity of uranium 235, (2) a couple of Communists with AEC scholarships, and (3) some information on the shipment of radioactive isotopes to foreign nations. That was about all.

Against this Chairman Lilienthal cited the record of the AEC, giving all the information he could without violating the committee's own rule on secrecy. Further he demanded that the committee invite some 30 leading scientists and industrialists to tell what they thought of AEC's accomplishments. "The real issue," he said, "is how we are going to answer these charges that shake the confidence of the people."

Senator Hickenlooper, flustered over the turn of events, promised the committee: "At this time I am not prepared to present my case in an orderly fashion. But I will in a few days."

Days passed, and weeks passed. Said *Time Magazine* this week:

"Another Congressional outcry died in an embarrassed whisper. After three months of investigation the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy was still unable to find any evidence of the 'incredible mismanagement' Senator Bourke Hickenlooper had charged up to the Atomic Energy Commission and its chairman, David Lilienthal. In fact, the Committee members had gotten so apathetic that Chairman Brien McMahon was unable to round up a quorum even to declare the hearings officially ended."

Thus another investigation, touched off by an irresponsible member of the Congress (who is up for re-election next year and needed the publicity) came to an end.

It is the duty of Congress to investigate the agencies of the Government whenever there are reasonable grounds for suspicion; but it is no wonder that many able and competent private citizens decline opportunities to render distinguished public service for fear their reputations may be blackened by some publicity-hungry member of the legislative branch.

VALUABLE SERVICE

CHARLOTTE lost the services of a valued official this week when Paul B. Guthery resigned as member and chairman of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Guthery had served as chairman of the board since it was formed early in 1947 and had rendered services of major importance to the City in administration of the zoning ordinance.

The Board of Adjustment was established to implement the zoning ordinance. The board hears appeals relating from application of the ordinance and recommends zoning changes to the City Council. The work is neither glamorous nor exciting and usually makes the headlines only when vigorous exception is taken to its rulings.

The importance of zoning has long been recognized as essential for the orderly development of a municipality and enactment of the zoning ordinance by the City Council was an important forward step. With the ordinance on the books the success of the undertaking depended in major measure upon the Board of Adjustment.

As chairman of the board Mr. Guthery showed great public spirit and was the key figure in handling the manifold problems created by the ordinance. He made a close study of zoning and this knowledge, together with his familiarity with all sections of Charlotte, made him a recognized expert in the field. He gave unsparingly of his time to the demands of the office—there were periods when he devoted more hours to the duties of the board than to his private affairs.

The reasons for his decision to resign are easy enough to understand but it is regrettable that he felt compelled to take the step. He has served with distinction and merits the thanks of the community.

The Clenched Fist Salute

Joseph And Stewart Alsop

The Balkan War

WASHINGTON

ALTHOUGH the State Dept. and British Foreign Office have been handing out soothing syrup, the current Yugoslav crisis is being taken very seriously behind the scenes. In fact the American and British Ambassadors in Moscow, Alan Kirk and Sir David Kelly, last week urged the two Governments to address a joint note to Moscow, sternly warning of the dangers of war in the Balkans.

No note was sent, because the State Dept. and Foreign Office believe that such an indication of Anglo-American sympathy for Tito might make the Kremlin more eager to attack the heretic. But this does not mean that the American and British experts believe there is no likelihood of armed Soviet aggression against Yugoslavia. On the contrary, there is a whole series of reasons why Generalissimo Stalin may think this is the right time for an enterprise that must be very dear to his heart.

First, the heresy of Tito is increasingly affecting the whole structure of Soviet world power. No totalitarian religion can tolerate heresy. And the Tito heresy is not only proving dangerously attractive to the Czechs, Poles, Hungarians and other satellites. The economic blockade of Yugoslavia, with which the heresy was to be punished, is also disrupting the economy of the satellite area. Czechoslovakia and Poland particularly are feeling the loss of Yugoslav copper, lead, zinc and bauxite, which they do not get any more because they will not send their manufactured products to Belgrade.

Second, Tito has closed the Greek border, and has thus brought near to collapse the Soviet-sponsored rebellion in Greece. And if this were not bad enough, Tito is also threatening to move in on the Kremlin's isolated, enfeebled puppet, Enver Hoxha, in Albania. If the loss of Albania were added to failure in Greece, the damage to Soviet prestige in Eastern Europe would be very grave.

AID FROM WEST

Third, Western aid to Tito is continually increasing. The World Bank will shortly give Yugoslavia a $20 million loan; and there may be more to come from other sources. On the other hand, this assistance for Tito has had no material results, as yet. At the same time, the rearmament of Western Europe is still only a pipe dream. The Red Army has already placed five armored divisions on the Yugoslav border and can reach Belgrade tomorrow. In short, if Yugoslavia is to be invaded by the Soviets, this is the best opportunity.

Hitherto, the Kremlin's menaces against Tito have not been regarded as portending war, mainly because the Western experts have supposed the Kremlin did not wish to run such risks. The theory has been that the Soviet notes were intended to shake Tito's nerves; and that at worse guerrilla forces would be sent across the Yugoslav frontier to stir up trouble. This caused no special concern, since Tito's ruthlessly efficient secret police, the Ozna, has already shown itself quite capable of handling any police problem, however large. The recent blowing up of the big oil refinery at Fiume, though a very serious matter, was the first and only solid success of the Kremlin's Yugoslav agents up to this time.

War is still considered improbable; but the definite possibility is now being weighed by the American and British experts, for two very simple reasons. The first and most obvious reason is the seriousness of the military maneuvering on the Yugoslav borders. The second, and perhaps more compelling, reason is the turn that the war of nerves against Tito has now taken. The Soviet notes to Belgrade have become so shrill and violent that it is hard to see how the Kremlin can avoid following up its words with action.

All these facts should only underline the need for a firm American policy in this crisis. Almost the only hope of an eventual settlement with the Soviet Union lies in the possibility that Russia will have to relax her grip on the satellite area. If Tito is permitted to be gobbled up with no protest by us, this hope will be gone.

Reflections Of An Editor

The Old-Time Campmeeting

(From The Gastonia Gazette)

DID you ever attend an old-time campmeeting? If not you've missed something.

This reflection is inspired by reading, in the newspapers, accounts of the recent annual gatherings at Rock Springs campground in nearby Lincoln County and Balls Creek in Catawba County also close by. Rock Springs, 130 years old, and Balls Creek, about 100 years old, are both Methodist institutions, though other Protestant churches maintain similar places.

Deserted for eleven months or a little more in the year, these camps come to life early in August when owners of the "tents," which in reality are wooden "shacks," begin to make ready for the big annual events. The straw "beds" are fixed up (they are really built-in bunks, two-deckers), wood is provided for the kitchen stove or range, furniture is moved in and, by the coming of the first Sunday of the "meetin'," everything is in readiness for the occasion.

At Rock Springs, the largest campground in this section and a typical one of the old days, there are at least three rows of tents surrounding the "square" which has in its center, as the principal attraction, the large arbor where services are held. Just how many tents Rock Springs has we do not know, though we would guess at least a hundred.

When the campmeeting was first established in this country, back in pre-Revolutionary days, there were few churches in the rural areas. The people, mostly farmers, lived hard and were tied close to home most of the time.

When August came, the crops being "laid by," there was a brief period for rest and relaxation. There were few roads and those were rough and difficult to travel. Hence it was but natural that many communities made provision for their people to get together at some central point not far from any of them for a week's rest and intensive religious feast to revive the spiritual life of the people which had been of necessity largely neglected during the preceding eleven months.

This desire of the people, common to the human race no doubt in all ages, to associate with each other, to talk over their problems, to discuss farming, politics, the schools, the church and, above all, to hear some good preaching, was the inspiration for the establishment throughout the country of these campmeeting grounds. As a matter of fact the campmeeting was the forerunner first of the Chautauqua and later of the denominational assembly grounds.

Due to the pressure of our high-tension, modern life, most customs that call for quiet, peaceful relaxation as does the campmeeting, have been relegated to the "limbo of forgotten things." But the campmeeting has, in a few places at least, survived the pressure of modern life and has continued its existence up to this good day.

A few years ago there was a movement on foot to discontinue the Rock Springs campmeeting. It was discussed pro and con in Methodist quarterly, district and annual conferences for several years. But the sentiment for it overcame the opposition. This year, as usual, there was a large crowd and interest was at a high pitch. Good sermons, good old-time singing, good meals provided mostly from the farms and barnyards of the owners, and good companionship still draw hundreds and thousands of people to this spot, hallowed as it is with the memories of years long gone by. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the founders of these campgrounds are still interested and attend the annual gathering. It is nothing unusual, at Rock Springs for instance, for 12,000 to 15,000 people to attend the final "big day" of the meeting which is always the second Sunday.

Practically the same conditions prevail at Balls Creek in Catawba County where for a hundred years the people of that area have gathered each August to renew friendships and to get for themselves a fresh religious outlook on life. As an instance of how the generations cling to the old campmeeting The Lincoln County Times last week carried a story about D. Lee Setzer, prominent Newton citizen, who has missed only three annual campmeetings there in 74 years. There are many other cases of a similar nature. Balls Creek was hampered this year to a very considerable extent by heavy rains which made living in the tents and negotiating the roads in the neighborhood difficult. It seems to be true, however, that many people will undergo hardships to attend these campmeetings that would prevent their going to any other place.

There are numerous other campgrounds in this area but the two mentioned here are the largest and are typical of the manner in which the people of today cling to an old custom established by their fathers and grandfathers.

This writer recalls with vivid appreciation attending old Turkey Creek campground, in Buncombe County, an historic place perhaps long ago abandoned; and one near Athens, Tenn., (Game Creek, I believe was the name) and those recollections stand out as precious memories of our boyhood days.

Among the famous old-time campgrounds was one in Logan County, Ky., where early in the 1800s famous old circuit riders like Peter Cartwright held forth and where great religious fervor was manifest. True, people of this generation are not as emotional as they were 75 or 100 years ago, but the pulling power of sentiment is almost if not quite as strong as ever was.

Personally, we hope the old-time campgrounds are kept up and that the people in those communities which are fortunate enough to possess such institions will see to it that they are not abandoned. Just how much influence they have on the religious life of the people we do not know; though we believe it is probably stronger than many cynics would have you believe. They at least provide a stabilizing force and exert a wholesome influence on the lives of those they touch.

Long live the old-time campmeetings!

Quote, Unquote

It stands to reason that a motorist who beats the traffic light when it is changing from green to red and also jumps the gun when it is turning from red to green sooner or later will cross paths with another of his kind. —**Portsmouth (Va.) Star.**

Street scene: A young white man walked like he had one artificial leg, or at least a crippled one, pushing a legless Negro boy up the street on his roller-mounted platform. —**Greenville (S. C.) Piedmont.**

Whenever government gets "Colossal", one needn't take the adjective apart to see that 50 per cent of it is LOSS. —**Nashville (Tenn.) Banner.**

Marquis Childs

Inside Fight

WASHINGTON

WITH the House off on a vacation and the Senate about to go, leaving behind a good bit of its work, it might be well to consider the plight of a public servant with a long and honorable record who has been forced to take a vacation without pay through the whole Summer. Since June 22, Leland Olds of the Federal Power Commission has been off the payroll although two weeks earlier he was nominated by President Truman for a third term on the commission.

Not until a few days ago did Sen. Ed Johnson, chairman of the Senate Interstate Commerce Commission, get around to naming a sub-committee to hold hearings on the Olds nomination. No date has been set for those hearings and the likelihood is that the sit-down strike on the nomination will continue.

There are lots of reasons why the committee should shut the door against Olds. Through his long career he has frequently made himself unpopular with powerful interests by taking the side of the public against the private utilities. Furthermore, he knows the technique of utility regulation inside and out and with the two present members of the Power Commission, he has made a majority for stricter supervision.

BUCKED BIG BOYS

In particular, Olds has stuck by his belief that under a ruling of the Supreme Court the FPC was required to regulate producers of natural gas and fix a fair rate for their product. Olds contends that regulation in the interests of the millions of consumers of natural gas cannot be effective unless it begins with the producer. If the producer can charge what the traffic will bear, then the regulation of the distribution of natural gas would seem to be a pretty empty process.

By taking this stand, Olds has come into head on collision with Sen. Robert Kerr of Oklahoma, who is a very determined citizen. Just recently Kerr took a leading part in the fight to restore Federal funds for public power transmission lines from the Southwest Power Authority. That power will greatly benefit Oklahoma.

But he insists that the producers of natural gas, and he is one of the large producers, are entitled to many times over as a result of his oil and gas interests, have the right to sell their raw material in the free market at the best price they can get. Kerr has introduced a bill to take natural gas producers out from under FPC regulation. He has told Senate colleagues that he will do everything in his power to block Olds, who has publicly opposed the Kerr Bill.

What is involved here is bigger than most people realize. The use of natural gas in cities throughout the country has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years.

By the last accounting, count of the FPC there were 4,755 towns and cities using natural gas and this means 34,577,000 consumers. Since that date at least 250 communities have begun to use natural gas.

For the first time in its history New York City is getting natural gas and mixing it with manufactured gas. The Washington area with its greatly increased population now uses nothing but natural gas. An increase in the field price of gas would be felt immediately by consumers in almost every part of the country.

Chairman Johnson named as head of the sub-committee Sen. Lyndon Johnson of Texas. Coming from a state that produces large quantities of natural gas, Johnson of Texas could hardly be expected to favor regulation of the producers or the confirmation of an appointee who advocates that regulation.

In spite of strong pressure on him to reconsider the nomination of Olds, President Truman has indicated he will not back down. If, as now seems probable, the Senate does not act before adjournment, President Truman almost certainly give Olds a recess appointment and he will go back to work after an enforced and payless vacation of several months.

That was the procedure followed by the White House last year when the Senate adjourned without acting on the nomination of Thomas C. Buchanan to be a member of the Power Commission. In June of this year Buchanan had served nearly a year without benefit of the Senate blessing, that chamber finally got around to confirming him.

The least that Olds has a right to expect in the way of his Government service, it seems to me, is reasonably quick action on the nomination. If he were to be turned down, then with his broad background and knowledge he would undoubtedly find employment outside the government. And we who are consumers have a right to expect that in this submerged controversial point of view of millions now dependent on natural gas is fairly and thoroughly presented.

From The New York Times

ECONOMY IN DEFENSE

IT is impossible for the average citizen to grasp all the intricate details of defense planning and defense spending. At some point he must repose his confidence in the judgment of specialists. But the citizen is vitally interested in two aspects of the problem. He wants to know that his defense is adequate and that it represents a dollar's worth of value for each dollar spent.

Secretary Johnson's announcement of a curtailment of civilian and military positions to effect economies is, we believe, likely to inspire confidence rather than to impair it. The Secretary and his associates and advisers are certainly not interested in a second-best defense establishment; but they are determined, says Mr. Johnson, to see to it that the nation gets value received for its outlay. The citizen will concur heartily in that.

The amount of economy possible, according to the Secretary's estimate, is considerable. The present cutback program, he believes, will ultimately make a saving in itself of approximately one-third of what has been asked for foreign arms aid. If some of the other economies projected in the Hoover recommendations are likewise carried out it may be possible to reach the total saving that the Hoover group suggested.

There may be reason for some apprehension over taking away some 135,000 jobs at this time. But all military expenditure is, in the last analysis, non-productive, and if a substantial part of those persons can be absorbed in productive enterprise the nation will be the gainer, not the loser. Furthermore, it has been indicated that some of these jobs are not merely technically non-productive but practically so. Duplication, waste and over-staffing are no gain to the national economy.

Possibly the most important aspect of the defense cutback, however, is its relation, not to the defense establishment, but to government economy as a whole. There has been much talk of saving, but so far none of it has been reflected in the national budget. There has been sound planning for reorganization but in the meantime the pay rolls have, according to Senator Byrd, actually been increasing. A start at saving has to be made by saving and not merely by giving lip service to the idea of a more efficient government. The Defense Department has begun a move in the right direction. It should be followed in other departments as well.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

The Amazing Maj. Robert T. Lincoln

WASHINGTON

THIS is a long-merited tribute to a fabulous American who, although unknown to his own countrymen, is a legendary hero in the Middle East.

He is Robert T. Lincoln, U. S. intelligence officer.

It is particularly fitting to acclaim him today because exactly ten years ago Russia hurled its first blast at him. The Soviets were then the new allies of Adolf Hitler, and in a furious broadcast denounced Lincoln as an "American spy and saboteur." Both the Nazis and Russians put a big price on his head, but he is still alive and still annoying the gall out of the latter.

To the awed Middle East, Lincoln is more extraordinary than Britain's late famed "Lawrence of Arabia." Tales of Lincoln's feats are even more numerous and astounding than those about Lawrence.

Pentagon chiefs depend on Lincoln as they do on no other intelligence officer. Yet they never discuss him. Questions about him are always answered with a blank stare. His whereabouts, his missions and his reports are so secret they are known only to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

But this much can be said about him: He is the eyes and ears of democracy in an explosive outpost of the world, and his services to his country are probably more hazardous and thankless than those of any other single individual.

* * *

THE rare few who know Lincoln describe him as tall, rangy, with brown eyes and black hair that is beginning to grow gray at the temple.

He is a superb horseman, a crack marksman, and a versatile linguist. He speaks Russian, Arabic and a number of other languages. He operates wholly alone, with no confidants and no friends, but mingles freely among Nomad tribes, particularly in the remote mountain areas of Iran.

The natives say Lincoln married the daughter of a Kurdish chief. There is no known proof of that. It is one of the many stories told about him.

Another is about his feat of acting as a native guide for a Russian armored patrol that made a raid into Azerbaijan, Northwest Iranian province, early this year. Lincoln obtained highly important military information as a result of this exploit.

Still another story credits him with buying food from pursuers who were trying to capture him. Also, there is a story about a mission he performed in Bagdad while posing as a British tourist.

How many of these stories are true, no one knows. But they are all over the Middle East, and new ones are constantly cropping up. In fact, Lincoln has become so legendary that some have begun to cast doubt on his existence.

THERE is one high U. S. civilian, however, who can personally attest that there is a Major Robert T. Lincoln.

The official is Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas.

He met the mysterious intelligence officer during a recent mountain-climbing trip in Inner Iran. The meeting was as brief as it was startling.

Douglas, his sixteen-year-old son, and Terry Dosher of the U. S. Embassy in Teheran, were camped in the Bakhtiari country in Western Persia. The Bakhtiari are great horsemen, and always ride at full gallop. One evening, they invited Douglas to ride with them.

He accepted, and was soon racing at breakneck speed across the plain with a Bakhtiari on each side of him. Not speaking their language, Douglas rode in silence. Finally the party halted near a small stream to rest and water the horses.

Douglas offered a cigarette to the "native" standing on his right, and was nearly bowled over when he said in perfect English: "Thank you, Mr. Justice. How are you enjoying your trip?"

It was Major Lincoln, dressed like and looking like a Bakhtiari.

Lincoln was taciturn even with Douglas. He asked him to thank Ambassador John Wiley for a personal favor and also to deliver information to Wiley for the transmittal of funds for a certain mission.

The two men talked not more than ten minutes. Then, as other Bakhtiari crowded around, Lincoln appeared to vanish. One moment, he was standing by Douglas. The next, he had disappeared. On the return trip, Douglas spoke to a number of the party but all shrugged their shoulders uncomprehendingly.

WHEN he related the experience to Dosher, the latter was not surprised. "I envy you," the young career man said. "I wish I had been with you. I have never met Lincoln myself. I have always hoped something like this would happen to me. That's the way he operates. He slips in and out of an area like a shadow. He leaves no trail. He is welcome in every village and camp. He is the all-time mystery man of the Middle East. We are very fortunate to have a man like him."

When Douglas transmitted Lincoln's message to Ambassador Wiley, he, too, was not surprised.

"I've been expecting to hear from Lincoln," Wiley said, "but it never occurred to me that you might be the medium. If I had thought that likely, I would have told you to inform him that he has been recommended for promotion. He deserves it rightly."

NOTE: When the Iranian colonel, who accompanied Douglas, learned about about his meeting with Lincoln, the Iranian immediately ordered out a large cavalry detachment to scour the area. They rode all night but found no trace of Lincoln