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Golden Image Of Eisenhower Dims In The Farm Belt

By STEWART ALSO

THE American voter is a remarkably hospitable and unsuspecting fellow, who is very likely to ask the inquisitive stranger point-blank into his living room. But he is also a mysterious fellow.

It is possible to tell, from the way people talk to a stranger, how they really feel about politics, and how they are going to vote. And why do they feel as they do? What is it that determines their reactions to issues, their mental image of a candidate?

These things are prompted by a just-completed pulse-feeling expedition with the able public opinion expert, Louis Harris through two hard-hit Iowa farm counties, ending up in this Illinois industrial town.

Throughout the expedition, the connection between politics and the pocketbook has been evident. Many farmers are in real trouble. Because they are in trouble, they are not buying the agricultural machinery which is Moline's chief industry, and there is serious unemployment here—so serious that, on the main side streets of Moline, talking to men with worried faces, you sometimes get a sudden, acrid sniff of old days gone by.

Both among the worried farmers and the worried city workers there has been a real erosion of President Eisenhower's popularity. But the pocketbook is clearly not the main reason why people feel as they do, not by a long time. Take, for example, the richest farmer, young man in the bean field, who had voted for Stevenson in 1952, but said he would vote for Eisenhower this year. Eisenhower has taken the farmer into consideration hardly at all, but he kept the farm to peace, and that's the big thing.

Most people are self-conscious to the point of shyness about their lack of political information. Again and again you hear the same phrase—'Well, I don't know too much about politics'—and it is often an understatement. Yet many other people seem to have a definite mental image of the leading candidates (except for Averell Harriman, who is almost totally unknown in these parts).

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The Inquiring Reporter Was Always Asked In

them uncomfortable. Whatever the something is, Stevenson must at all cost overcome it, if he is to have a ghost of a chance of exploiting the political opportunity which unquestionably exists in the farm belt.

The Eisenhower magic (which this reporter found operating with remarkable power on a previous pulse-feeling expedition with Harris) operates only dimly and fitfully in these parts. Some farmers, of course, deeply admire the President ('He kept us all together when we were going apart,' one wind-faced old farmer said thoughtfully). No one dislikes the President. But there is surprisingly little of the personal affection for him which is found elsewhere,

Letters should be brief. The writer's name and address must be given, but may be withheld from publication in the discretion of the Editors. The News reserves the right to condense.

Because of this profound effect upon youth, Optimist International, viewing its aim and objective to be to influence the development of youth throughout the world, in convention at Houston, Tex., in June, 1954, did adopt a resolution that urged the enactment of severe penalties including the death penalty for the illegal sale of narcotics. This resolution, phrased in the most definite and uncompromising terms, was unanimously adopted.

Since then the Optimists everywhere have worked continuously and vigorously to influence legislators and law enforcement officials to effect the enactment and passage of such legislation. Obviously it is with a sense of real pride that Optimists recognize the achievement of the goal they sought so hard to accomplish.

Now, of course, it is important that our judiciary have the strength and courage to use these new laws and punish narcotic violators in the degree necessitated by their horrible crimes.

It is our sincere conviction that this legislation will do a great deal in removing and eliminating the most vicious and degenerate criminal alive today, the illegal vendor of narcotics.

—TOM HATFIELD
President, Optimist Club,
of Charlotte

It Takes But A Few Minutes To Be Nice

NOT ALL, but some will understand the well-measured grief of a nine-year-old boy and his heart-sick parents whose dog has become another of our highway fatalities. The young man who had the misfortune to hit our 'Little Tobe' stopped, came back and offered every assistance possible; but the tenseness of the moment and the rush to get Tobe to Mabel's previously alerted hospital, I did not learn the boy's name. His stopping and trying to help did nothing to alter the situation; but you have no idea what a consolation it is to us to know that even in his final hour, 'Little Tobe' was discerning enough to stand in the way of the wheels of the car of a true gentleman.

It takes only a few minutes to remove the bitterness from someone's day. It takes only a few minutes to give someone's pet, won't you stop too?

—IRENE FORTER

The Incomplete Obituary Of A Yankee

THE reporter was dramatic but not accurate.

'All that is left,' he wrote about the death of the last Union veteran, 'is the rows of white crosses in military cemeteries and the stone and bronze statues on such battlefields as Gettysburg, Bull Run, Shiloh and the Virginia Wilderness.'

There is much more than that left, and most of it is dramatic but not accurate. There are occasional burning crosses, but they are lit for reasons different from those of the first Ku Kluxers.

There are stainless steel statues of generals that rise god-like in the mind but they are nothing like their models were.

The flags remain but one is an article of merchandise mass produced for the decoration of cars and auto aerials.

There is the stuff of books and some are good but none quite good enough to tell the story adequately.

There are inheritances of personal hatred against events of a war that, like all wars, was basically impersonal.

There are divisions in politics that exist long after the reasons for the divisions are dead.

There are war songs, but with words changed, and scored to a lively beat the soldiers never knew.

There are things in the attics of houses, unbound letters that have lost the fervor and loneliness that attended their writing.

There are things in the attics of the mind that strangle logic and misrepresent facts in speeches and writings addressed to the race problem the war did not solve.

There is, wihal, an eager, aimless fascination with an old world that charges phantom-like in the blood after all the charges are over and the bugles are hushed.

These things are left after the death of Albert Woodson, Union drummer boy, at the age of 109 at Duluth, Minn. They will be left after the last three Confederates are gone.

Memories are dramatic, if seldom accurate, and they die even more slowly than centenarian soldiers.

Where Nobody Knows What Time It Is

NOTHING could be finer than being in Carolina where people don't tinker with the time of day.

After a spring flirtation with Daylight Saving Time Charlotte wisely gave up. Sack with Eastern Standard and things have been going smoothly ever since. What we mean is that if you look at a clock that says 9 a.m. that's what time it is.

Not so in Nashville, Tenn., where the time is what anybody wants to say it is. The city is on two different times at the same time. When it's 9 a.m. to the NASHVILLE BANNER, the trains, intercity buses, airlines, state offices and the schools, it's 10 a.m. to the hotels, movies, radio and TV news, downtown stores, local buses, the telephone company and the NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN.

The Bad Humor Men Of The Suburbs

THE heyday of the BHM (bad humor men) is about over in Charlotte's suburbs. As autumn comes they will disappear entirely, leaving behind them hundreds of tree stumps, scores of peniless but wiser householders, and disappointed-dreams of leafy landscapes.

We have all this from our man Stanley, known in his neighborhood as Treeless Stanley, former patron of the bad humor men and wanted for the killing of millions of glutinous tree borers.

Six months ago, on a day tinged with spring, Stanley stood on his quarter acre of mortgaged gale surveying a runty assortment of pine saplings. He was grateful for the smallness and usefulness that had saved them from the bulldozers that graded for the house. Mired in pride Stanley gently stroked a poke weed he thought was destined to grow into a great oak.

The bad humor men hit that exposed pride with a scythe of sadness. Unannounced they walked to and around the trees, shaking their heads. Stanley had that sinking feeling—first in the stomach, and then as the BHM announced that half the trees 'had the bugs and oughta go.' In the pocketbook Stanley paid 60 bucks and watched the specified half of his Lilliputian forest.

A month later Stanley was admiring the scraggly beginnings of his lawn. The BHM approached sadly, shaking their heads. 'Wrong kind of grass,' they said. 'Be dead in a month,' Stanley had the sinking feeling again, but watched hopefully a few days later as the bad humor

The confusion