

# Editorial Page

## A National Disgrace

The record-breaking traffic toll over the Labor Day holiday weekend has proved one thing beyond a doubt.

Whatever is being done to prevent traffic accidents in this country isn't enough.

It doesn't even come close to being enough.

A civilized nation has to ask itself some questions when 560 of its citizens lose their lives in celebrating a holiday ironically dedicated to better and happier living.

Questions such as:  
—Is our whole attitude toward traffic safety faulty?

—Do we need a brand new concept of our individual and collective responsibility to help put a stop to this mass killing on the highway?

—Should this concept perhaps be based on plain, old-fashioned morality?

—If it's immoral to cheat, for example, isn't it immoral to fudge on a red light or to exceed speed limits imposed solely to save lives?

—If it's immoral to point a gun at someone because you've had too much to drink, isn't it immoral to point a car at someone for the same reason?

—If it's immoral to try to bribe a public official, isn't it immoral to bribe a traffic officer?

(Or is it impractical to try to induce people to drive more sanely by appealing to their morality?)

—Is traffic law enforcement in this country generally ineffective and in many instances so spotty as to be almost worthless?

—Are too many traffic judges around the country too reluctant to remove drivers from the road when it's obvious they don't belong there?

—Should the government take a stronger hand in stopping highway slaughter?

If and when the people demand the answers to those questions—and help provide the answers—the traffic toll will come down in a hurry.

## Extremists

We've been hearing a lot about the "radical right" lately.

And the Republican Party, particularly in such conservative strongholds as California, has sometimes wondered if the support of Birch Society members and others does more harm than good.

Yet, the GOP is not alone in dealing with extremists.

Take the recent conference of Young Democrats from 13 Western states that adopted such a radical policy statement that Gus Hall could well have been the author.

The Western Young Democrats passed such resolutions as these:

—That the United States resume diplomatic relations with Cuba.

—That the House Committee on Un-American Activities be abolished.

—That the United States withdraw its troops from South Vietnam (thus handing that nation and all of Southeast Asia to Red China).

—That the McCarran Internal Security Act be repealed (Gus Hall would really like that one).

The policy statement was so radical that more than one senior Democrat has privately wished he could throttle the younger generation of his party.



IN WASHINGTON . . .

## A Shift In Sentiment

By RALPH DE TOLEDANO  
For the first time since President Kennedy sprang the test ban treaty on the American people, there are doubts that it can win Senate ratification. This does not mean that the President's risky venture into an accommodation with the Soviet Union can be counted out—far from it. But the events of the past days have suddenly disclosed a growing sentiment against the treaty.

By one by one, the arguments presented in favor of ratification have been withdrawn or demolished. It will be recalled that, originally, those who favored the treaty held that it was "militarily advantageous" to the United States and bad news for the Communists. This has now been quietly withdrawn for this formulation.

Confidential reports from high American authority in Saigon say that the war can be won in nine months. They say that the border with North Viet Nam has been 95 per cent closed and the task of sealing the border with Cambodia is proceeding. The Viet Cong Guerrillas are being starved out.

Whether these reports are any more authentic than the optimistic forecasts of past years, the outsider cannot judge. With more than 14,000 Americans directly involved, it is to be devoutly hoped they are correct.

But even if the war can be won despite the growing discord and the jailing of large and influential groups in Saigon, what such a victory means will be the unanswered question.

consulted before the treaty was negotiated, he would have opposed it.

Senator Russell's defection from the ranks of treaty supporters was a bad blow to the President. Whether or not other senators go along with him, his refusal to vote ratification casts a grey cloud on the treaty.

The report of the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee was an even greater blow. Carefully and soberly worded, it made it abundantly clear that ratification would tie one hand behind America's back and gravely weaken our defense posture. These are conclusions that no American can ignore—and it was touch and go as to whether or not the Administration would be able to suppress the report.

At present, the single remaining argument in favor of the treaty is, to my mind, a chilling one. It is being said repeatedly in the Senate cloakrooms that the treaty must be ratified "because to do anything else would embarrass the President." This may be persuasive to those whose major interests are tied to Mr. Kennedy's political future. But it is hardly convincing to those thinking of the American future.

The treaty is good for this country or it is bad—with gradations, of course. If it is bad—if it cannot be conclusively proved that it is good—then the benefit of the doubt should go to those who oppose ratification. The conclusions of the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee cannot be ignored.

From the evidence we are

compelled to conclude that serious—perhaps even formidable—military and technical disadvantages will flow from the ratification of the treaty. . . . It is vital to our very survival that no step be taken which in any manner would degrade the ability of our military forces to protect our security, if we should be challenged militarily by a hostile nuclear power.

The subcommittee made it abundantly clear that the test ban treaty would, in fact, degrade that ability. It has already been compromised by American inaction in previously accepting the moratorium on testing which the Soviet Union unilaterally abrogated.

Can the test ban treaty be stopped? Thirty four votes would do it. The Administration, until this week, was abundantly sure it could muster the necessary two-thirds demanded by the Constitution. It is not so sure today.

The measure of opposition against ratification will be in the courage of individual senators. I know few who do not have serious misgivings. But they are afraid of the voters. If the anti-treaty mail—already heavy—increases in volume, there may be a massive change of heart in the Senate.

## Letters To The Editor

### Keyword

When any individual or group propounds a belief that a government has a 100 per cent right to rid a city of undesirable and untenable buildings through condemnation procedures, and force citizen responsibility, what philosophy are they expounding?

Is it the philosophy of the American Constitution, 14th Amendment, Sec. 1, which says that no man may be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law? Or is it the philosophy of dictators who want to force (what they think) is the "good" Hitler thought it was good to kill the Jews. They were undesirable to him, so he confiscated their property and forced millions into gas chambers. Mao Tse-tung thought the shackles of the Chinese were untenable and forced them into communes where they are starving to death.

There is no right which protects life more than the right to property. Man's property is his capital. In a capitalistic economy, on which we are based, a man's right to make a profit is not in question. He must meet the demand of the market. The advocating of confiscatory methods by one businessman to eliminate competition of another, or to use government to shove another business around is a contradiction to capitalism. This belief does not find its base in rational morality and cannot be condoned. A belief in choice, not force, is basic to morality. Most capitalists (each a property owner) take pride in their product, and when a few do not, moral men will not advocate the elimination of a right, but encourage his fellowman through example, education, and morality to choose the good.

Not until the government planners and the big spenders decided to meddle in rights did this country (and city) experience the le-



## HOLMES ALEXANDER . . . Conservatism Rates In Mountain States

By HOLMES ALEXANDER  
WASHINGTON, D.C. — In that shoulder of the Rocky Mountain West that contains the states of Idaho, Utah and Wyoming, the six senators are evenly divided between the two parties, and they're significantly divided on the great question of whether our domestic economy goes free or goes into colonial bondage to the Federal Establishment.

For example, on final passage last June for extending and increasing the Area Redevelopment Administration, Republican Senators Jordan (Idaho), Bennett (Utah), and Simpson (Wyoming) all voted against the ARA. The matching Democrats — Church, Moss and McGee—all voted to extend the federal spending and control.

In July, the same line-up held for extending Federalized electrical power by building the Burns Creek dam on the Snake River. This sort of roundness could be continued with much the same tabulation on many testing roll-calls. It seems to show an even division of liberal — conservative representation in these typical Western States.

But such is not quite the case if we probe a little deeper. Senator Moss's liberal votes are cast by a man who was elected in 1958 by only 38.5 per cent of the total vote. He was the beneficiary of an intraparty Republican fight between Arthur Watkins and Bracken Lee, both very conservative on domestic issues. Senator McGee won election that same year by a 50.8 per cent majority, which isn't much of a mandate.

It pays to go a little further on these two Democratic Senators. In January Moss voted with the Far Left in an effort to change Senate Rule 22, which allows nearly unlimited debate. McGee voted with the Far Right and the traditionalists to keep Rule 22. He tells me that this caused him to be blacklisted by the NAACP, but that he felt a small state, or any minority, deserves parliamentary protection.

Moss and McGee divided again over support of the private enterprise communications satellite, the Telstar. McGee supported Telstar because he felt its opponents were engaged in a vendetta against the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. Senator Church went along for Telstar with McGee and against Moss.

What we seem to have is three Republicans who are solidly conservative. We have three Democrats who are predominantly liberal, but two of these are capable of supporting conservative positions on sizable issues.

The most liberal of the Democrats, Moss, has the lowest electoral percentage. The most conservative Republican, Simpson of Wyoming, holds the highest electoral percentage, 57.8 per cent, among the six senators from these three states.

Although this is little more than a spot check, it does indicate something. The Mountain States, despite much temptation to take the federal dollar, are part of the conservative movement as we near another national election.



## WASHINGTON REPORT . . . 'Price Fixing' Bill Will Hurt Consumer

By FULTON LEWIS R.  
WASHINGTON — Hubert Horatio Humphrey, a graduate pharmacist turned Minnesota Senator, is pushing hard for legislation that would enable the corner druggist to make a pretty penny—all at the expense of John Q. Public.

Humphrey is by no means the only Congressman working for passage of legislation that bears the fancy title, Quality Stabilization Act. Republicans and Democrats alike are behind this bill that could cost each consumer more than \$250 a year in increased prices for brand name products.

Under terms of this legislation, manufacturers could set prices for merchandise sold at the retail level. According to Humphrey and other backers, this will protect the small druggist or retailer from the "unfair competition" of large discount stores.

The legislation would mean something else. According to Justice Department experts, the consumer will pay an additional 20 per cent for his goods if the bill is passed.

One of the country's leading authorities on "Quality Stabilization" is Washington University's Professor Joseph Klamon, who has also taught at the University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Tech, Yale, and the Harvard Business School. Dr. Klamon estimates that passage of a Quality Stabilization Act would cost consumers \$8 to \$10 billion a year. It is in effect a retail sales tax of twenty per cent on brand name goods.

Chances for passage of the bill are considered excellent as lobbyists representing more than three score influential trade associations have been buttonholing legislators for months. This arm-twisting meant approval of the bill by a 32-1 margin in the House Foreign and Interstate Commerce Committee. Only Michigan's John Dingell, a Democrat, voted no.

Dingell is one of the few members of Congress to actively oppose federally-approved price fixing. Most members are reluctant to buck the powerful interests who are, for obvious reasons, backing the legislation.

California's Tom Kuchel, Republican Senate Whip, is working for passage. So is Rep. Hale Boggs, Democratic Whip in the lower House. Indiana's Ray Madden, a member of the powerful House Rules Committee, is a key supporter of Quality Stabilization. He is pressing within that committee for the okay that would bring the bill (HR 3660) to the House floor for a vote.

Representatives of the AFL-CIO and the American Farm Bureau have testified in opposition to the bill. So have officials of the Justice, Commerce and Agriculture Departments and the Federal Trade Commission.

Many of these officials cited a government survey which showed that cities not covered by local "fair trade" or "Quality Stabilization" ordinances offer consumers a saving of 27 per cent in their purchases.

From television sets to aspirin, from prescription medicines to chewing gum, from air conditioners to automobiles, the prices paid by John Q. Public may be set—if this legislation passes.

An editorial in the New York Herald Tribune recently put the question this way:

"Every voter who has heard his Congressman praise the virtues of free competition ought to ask him two questions in the next week. One is whether he is going to vote for HR 3660, which is a devious scheme to legalize retail price fixing although the sponsors are trying to camouflage this fact by calling it a quality stabilization bill. It's the same old fair trade fraud with a fresh mask on it.

"If the Congressman says he will vote for this sneaky anti-consumer legislation, he should be asked a pointed second question: 'Why?'"

## WASHINGTON CALLING . . .

## Unhappy Precedent Exists



By MARQUIS CHILDS  
WASHINGTON—To win the war and lose the peace—that is the pattern in Viet Nam threatening to repeat the unhappy precedent of other "victories" achieved by American military and economic strength.

The events of recent days seem simply incredible in the light of the great expenditure of American manpower and money in support of the government of President Ngo Dinh Diem. Not the least fantastic is the intervention of President Charles de Gaulle.

For if this does nothing else, it recalls some of the most painful history of the tragedy of Indo-China. The French made almost every mistake possible. The end was a partition of Viet Nam that narrowly averted catastrophe and a blood bath overwhelming the thousands of French planters and business men for whom the colony had long been a source of profits and jobs.

In March, 1946, the French engineered a deal with the wily Communist leader, Ho Chi Minh. After months in Paris, he went back to Saigon expecting that he would preside over a united and neutral Viet Nam. But opposition French elements in the Viet Namese capital succeeded in killing that deal and Ho retired to the North to organize the Communist guerrillas.

For eight years the flower of the French officer corps fought with courage and desperate futility in the ugly jungle war. As head of a so-called independent government, the French were backing a puppet emperor, Bao Dai. While he had personal bravery, charm and a sense of humor, Bao Dai lacked the one absolute essential—support of the Viet Namese people. He took long holidays in a luxury villa on the French Riviera, where he currently lives in grand style.

During the last two to three years of the French war the United States was pouring in support at the rate of \$800 million annually. Since it went through the French treasury in Paris, it had one beneficial effect: It shored up the franc and offset the threat of inflation.

This reporter has a vivid memory of one of the ploniest of the many Big Four conferences. In Bermuda in late 1953 the heads of government met with their foreign ministers to consider, among other things, the course of the war in Viet Nam. The French Premier was a large, indolent gentleman named Joseph Laniel who spent most of his time

in bed with a diplomatic illness while Georges Bidault as foreign minister gave the three allies a rosy picture of the war in far off Viet Nam. Victory was in sight, and with French courage and American dollars the war would soon be won.

But the French were losing all vestiges of popular support. By May of the following year the Indo-China conference in Geneva was frantically seeking a way out after the folly of the siege of Dien Bien Phu had shown once and for all that the war could not be won militarily. A partition rather like that in Korea, with the agricultural South separated from the industrial North was the end result.

President de Gaulle is credited with sincere motives in trying to resolve an impossible situation. The French have kept a line to Ho's regime in Hanoi, maintaining a trade mission in the Communist capital. It is not clear whether they are encouraging a union of the two Viet Nams under a neutral government or, far more important, how such a regime could be formed. Laos is a bad precedent.

The American record after 1954 is no reason for cheering. We seem to have learned little or

nothing from the French experience. Granted that the French installed Deim in the first instance, nevertheless each day's headlines reflect a growing loss of support and antagonism toward the United States.

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Whether these reports are any more authentic than the optimistic forecasts of past years, the outsider cannot judge. With more than 14,000 Americans directly involved, it is to be devoutly hoped they are correct.

But even if the war can be won despite the growing discord and the jailing of large and influential groups in Saigon, what such a victory means will be the unanswered question. In Korea the United States had a victory—or a partial victory—at far greater cost. It has meant a quarreling dictatorship supported by large infusions of American aid and the presence of American troops. That, too, is an unhappy precedent.

## BERRY'S WORLD



"Mrs. AUH20 would like to speak to you!"



By SYDNEY J. HARRIS  
Sitting in a restaurant the other day, I overheard a man remark to his friend in the course of a conversation: "It's a fact that women own 80 per cent of the wealth in America. I read it somewhere just a while back."

"You don't say so?" His friend accepted this nugget of misinformation with delighted surprise, not for a minute daring to question this impressive statistic.

It seems to me that our native disinclination for philosophy has plunged us to the other extreme—that of credulously grasping any statement that seems to be hard, specific, factual and couched in terms of percentages.

Take the field of public health, for instance. Every week the American public is bombarded with "statistics" from different sources, none of them agreeing, but all of them readily believed by the mass of people who think that anything with a number in it is a "fact."

We are told that one fourth of the nation's population is overweight; that 80 per cent of school children have trouble with their eyes; that one out of every four persons in the United States will

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be hospitalized this year; that 25 per cent of cold symptoms are due to allergy; that more than 20 million Americans suffer from impairment of hearing.

Each of these figures is given by some "authority"—and each conflicts with the figures given by other authorities. We rarely look for the face behind the fact—to determine whether it is the face of an objective tabulator, a social propagandist, a huckster, or simply an irresponsible doctor seeking some personal publicity.

Nothing can be more dangerous than a fact that is improperly understood. When a health organization tells us that 750,000 persons will die of heart disease next year, which is about half of all deaths expected, we forget that this figure includes many persons over 70, whose heart failure is induced by old age.

In our passion for the "cold facts" we overlook the most important fact: namely, that a fact is no good, and downright harmful, unless you know how to interpret it, and how to make it fit into a general pattern of knowledge. When a man throws a fistful of facts at me, I am almost always sure he is deficient in understanding.