

# Editorial Page

## People Are Misled

(Christian Science Monitor)  
Why were the American people systematically misled by their government about the progress of the war in South Vietnam?

The facts are now indisputably available from the military leaders of that country. They directly contradict repeated statements out of Washington. They confirm the reports of those American newspapermen in Saigon who were there long enough to uncover the facts the United States Government was trying to suppress.

There is an important lesson for the American democracy herein.

The answer suggests that Americans need to understand when their government is caught in a position where it cannot be candid. Civilians then have to turn to the press for the facts.

The answer is that a government like that of the United States cannot express nonconfidence in an allied government with which it is conducting a war — until the very last moment arrives when a break is inevitable. Nor can the United States military chiefs openly express nonconfidence in the local military command they are advising — until the last moment. All during the months, or years, when the situation is deteriorating and the government in Washington is debating about the facts and what to do, it has to go on denying any dissatisfaction and categorically declaring its support for the local regime. Anything else would at once produce a crisis before Washington was ready to face it.

Up to the very end of the Diem regime, the American military continued to say that

the war was being successfully and progressively won, despite its slow pace and the known difficulties. And that the strategic hamlet system was effective. The reporters said the contrary. Now, after it is all over:

"Nhu used strategic hamlets for political purposes rather than pacification," said General Minh in a New York Times interview. "That is why the people in the villages suffered very much. In my own village the people had to flee (from the government's police terror) and to live close to the Viet Cong."

The able General Don interpolated: "The population in the countryside feared both the Viet Cong and the government."

Of the Buddhist crisis, General Minh continued, "There was a very deep influence on the countryside. We know it because we all have relatives in the villages. The people in the villages were very sad but they could not do anything about it." He said morale in the Vietnamese Army was very low when the coup came and discipline was deteriorating. The regime had sapped its effectiveness because "political loyalty (to the Ngo family) was the basis for troop command. This lowered the quality of the officers."

All through the period when this situation was developing the facts were continually denied by the United States Embassy in Saigon, its military command there, and the various elements in Washington from the White House and the State Department to the Pentagon.

At such times Americans have to learn to listen, carefully and not without discrimination, to the press.



EDSON IN WASHINGTON . . .

## Johnson Challenges Congress To Action

By PETER EDSON  
Newspaper Enterprise Assn.  
WASHINGTON (NEA) — The big thing to watch in the month ahead is whether the United States Senate and House of Representatives can meet the challenge thrown at their feet by President Lyndon Johnson.

He calls for action where the Congress has wanted only delay. He does not set specific deadlines. But he wants civil rights and tax legislation now — not later.

This is the master political craftsman of Capitol Hill speaking — the man who is credited with believing that politics is the art of the possible but knowing better than anyone else in Washington what is possible.

Lyndon Johnson promises not to interfere with the independence of Congress. But he now asks Congress to act — to act wisely and vigorously, to act speedily.

The prevailing sentiment in Congress has been all the other way in the few days since John Fitzgerald Kennedy was assassinated.

At first there was a belief among some of the more progressive lawmakers that Congress would forget its petty political differences, unite and get on with clearing up pending business.

The hope was that all the appropriation bills could be approved to let the government till next July 1, that a compromise could be reached on a college and vocational education bill, foreign aid authorization, and all the other half-completed measures still pending in conference between the two branches of Congress.

This was the minimum program. No thought was given to passing the civil rights or tax bills this year.

But there also has been a more defeatist sentiment among some legislators to adjourn Congress as soon as possible.

The expressed excuse has been that, congressmen being only human, they are tired. They have been in session all year. The work load assigned to them has been heavy. The issues have been controversial. The men whose job it is to write the laws wanted to go

home and rest over the holidays.

The hidden but obvious excuse has been that the opponents of civil rights and tax reform and aid to education and medicare and all the other un-enacted programs of the New Frontier have deliberately clogged the congressional machinery so that there would be no action on any of these measures.

Members of the House have maintained that they have done their work because they have cleared the tax bill and all the appropriation bills for the year except foreign aid, military construction and public works — the pork barrel bill.

The Senate has been blamed for the delay because it has cleared only four appropriation bills — Defense, Interior, Treasury-Post Office, Labor-Health, Education and Welfare.

But the House has been dilatory, too. Legislation which has passed the Senate but not the House includes area redevelopment, Securities Exchange Act amendments, transportation rate changes, the wilderness bill and job training for unemployed youth.

And the civil rights bill is now tied up in a House Rules Committee slowdown which may doom it for the year.

There are, in fact, only 15 legislative days in December before the Christmas holidays, assuming that Congress holds no Saturday sessions. It is argued that there isn't time for Congress to clear its calendar before the year-end.

The delaying tactic is to put everything off till next year. This is being attempted through a joint resolution which would enable government agencies to spend at their last year's appropriation rate until Jan. 31, 1964.

The thought is that Congress will complete action on appropriation bills after it comes back next year — seven months too late.

Into this situation the new President calls on Congress for action now. He sums it up in three words: "Let us continue." The crude translation put on that for Congress is: "Go to work."



## WASHINGTON CALLING . . .

### Truman Authored Bill

By MARQUIS CHILDS  
WASHINGTON — No one who has spent even a brief time with President Lyndon B. Johnson can doubt his remarkable vigor.

Even for the auditor a conversation with the man who was Senate majority leader and then Vice President is a physical exercise. While the visitor sits beside his desk he takes note but his telephone calls simultaneously, speaking first on one extension and then another.

He bounces up and prowls the room with restless energy. His points are made with sharp emphasis as he speaks with machine-gun intensity. By way of underscoring what he is saying he pounds the desk and, leaning forward, he grips the arm of his listener to accentuate the gravity of his words.

The drive, the pace, as the last few critical and demanding days have shown, is unflagging. Yet, when this is said, the fact remains that in the cliché so often used one heart beat separates the Presidency today from House Speaker John McCormack McCormack, who does not appear to be in the most robust health, will be 72 years old next month.

The fact, too, is that in July, 1955, Mr. Johnson suffered a severe heart attack. It was announced that he would be unable to resume his duties as majority leader during the current session of Congress. The acting leadership role was taken over by Sen. Earle C. Clements of Kentucky. Two months after the attack Johnson was discharged from Bethesda Naval Hospital after a report of "steady improvement."

When he had been in office only two months upon inheriting the Presidency on the death of Franklin Roosevelt on April, 1945, Harry S. Truman sent a special message to Congress on the Presidential succession. The succession act, which had not been amended since 1886, provided that following the Vice President the office should pass to the president pro tempore of the Senate and then to the Speaker of the House. Third in line would be the Secretary of State, with the other Cabinet officers following in the order of their rank.

The then president pro tempore of the Senate — the majority member with the longest service — was Sen. Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee. McKellar, who concealed his age, had begun his service in the House in 1911, in the Senate in 1917. His increasing irascibility and arbitrary exercise of authority in key committee posts led many to believe he was suffering from senility.

Truman proposed that the order of 1886 be reversed and the Speaker of the House put first in line with the president pro tempore. Speaker Sam Rayburn was then 63 and regarded as one of the wisest and most knowledgeable men in the entire government. One of his principal allies in the House was a rising young Texas Congressman named Lyndon Johnson.

Under the Truman plan a successor would hold office until the next Congressional election or until a special election had been called. The House, eager to endorse this tribute to Rayburn, adopted the Truman proposal almost at once, omitting the special election provision.

Not until June 27, 1947, did a reluctant Senate follow suit. Jealousy, sentiment, indifference have stood in the way of any realistic and far-reaching action on the succession. The issue has been cloudy and confused from the beginning. The Founding Fathers were unhappy with the succession act approved in 1792 when many of the authors of the American system were still in Congress or the Executive branch.

The president pro tempore of the Senate today is Sen. Carl Hayden of Arizona. He is 85 years old. Neither McCormack nor Hayden has had any experience in foreign policy. Surely they must both feel a sense of dread that the Presidency in a time of fearful responsibility and extraordinary peril might by some tragic mischance devolve on them.

Surely, therefore, this is the time to adopt a carefully thought out plan of succession. Congressional committees have piled up reports on the subject and political scientists galore have analyzed it. A broad range of proposals is at hand. They could be considered without lengthy committee hearings.

"You assume," a wise foreign observer once remarked, "that your Presidents are immortal. In view of the record it is a false assumption as well, in view of the need for continuity of government, a dangerous assumption."

So much is conveniently ignored, including what happens when a President is disabled. Woodrow Wilson lay paralyzed for a year and a half and the government, too, was paralyzed. The risks today are infinitely greater than they were then.

## WASHINGTON NOTEBOOK . . .



### Message Pleased Many

By LYLE C. WILSON  
United Press International

The left-wing Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) which set up to maintain the principles of FDR's New Deal, was unjustly accused by this correspondent of failing to remark the succession of Lyndon B. Johnson to the presidency with an endorsing statement or other comforting deed.

Not so, protested ADA, and provided the Washington bureau of UPI with the text of an ADA statement issued the afternoon President Kennedy died and Johnson was sworn as his successor. The text was as follows:

"ADA joins the nation in shock at the horrible tragedy which has cost the country a great leader and the world a great leader. To Mrs. Kennedy and her family we offer our profound sympathy. To President Johnson we extend our offer to cooperate in any way which will help him carry the burdens of his office in this troubled world."

That ADA offer of cooperation was not exactly a thunderous 21-gun salute to the new President. No doubt it was genuine — if also subject to a qualification that the cooperation probably must be on ADA terms. Johnson will need all of the cooperation he can get.

It is not reasonable to believe, however, that Johnson can drive the Democratic donkey both right and left at the same time. John F. Kennedy could not do that nor could Harry S. Truman nor FDR. So, therefore, President Johnson will need to hoist his colors and to call the roll of his troops. Johnson's address last week to a joint session of Congress merely postponed that difficult day.

There was something for just about everybody in the new President's message. Its most notable feature, however, was the President's call and effort for unity. If Johnson can unify the Democratic party he will have accomplished the almost impossible. His magic probably is not equal to that task. But, if any Democrat could do it, Johnson would be the man to make the party lions and lambs lie down together.

Johnson's message had more for some than for others. ADA and the party leftwingers should be content with Johnson's pledge to carry out the Kennedy program with special emphasis on the tax bill and civil rights. Sen. Harry F. Byrd (D-Va.) and his economy-minded associates found some goodies in the message. They were commitments to frugality and a due regard for the soundness of the U.S. dollar.

But these commitments were merely words. The message, overall, was in step with the big spending Democratic tradition which, itself, goes back to the late Harry Hopkins' recipe for political success. Spend and spend. Harry said, tax and tax and tax and elect and elect. It has worked well, so far.

The congressional budget balancers will await the development of Johnson's program and his new budget due in January before accepting as substantial the new President's belief in economies in government. They may find some comfort of a negative kind in the fact that Johnson did not extend his blessing nor his objectives to the wide horizons bounding the 1960 Democratic platform.

On the many extraordinary promises contained in that document, the Democratic party is as divided as it is on the best publicized issue of civil rights. But, if Johnson develops a tendency to flinch away from the platform, the Democratic lefties will tend to flinch away from him.

## Almanac

By United Press International  
Today is Tuesday, Dec. 3, the 337th day of 1963 with 23 to follow.

The moon is approaching its last phase.

The evening stars are Jupiter, Saturn and Venus.

On this day in history:

In 1818, Illinois entered the Union as the 21st state.

In 1948, the nation learned that microfilm of secret U.S. documents had been found in a hollow pumpkin on the farm of Whittaker Chambers.

A thought for the day — The British statesman, Sir Winston Churchill, said: "There is no finer investment for any community than putting milk into babies."



WILLIAM S. WHITE . . .

## Back At GOP Compound

By WILLIAM S. WHITE  
WASHINGTON — Meanwhile, back at the compound of the old GOP elephant . . .

The Republicans have now entered a prolonged period — one likely to last in reality if not in form until after New Year's Day — of reflection and re-examination of their 1964 Presidential approach and possibilities.

The tragic death of John F. Kennedy and the succession to the Presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson have dictated a time of pause in partisan political activity of a depth rarely seen before in American history.

It is, actually, a pause within both parties and even within the factions of both parties, but in the nature of things this long armistice is a more thought-filled armistice among the Republicans.

All the principal GOP figures — and notably all the present and potential candidates for the 1964 Republican Presidential nomination — have entered this phase of hush and waiting with two motives. It is the right and tasteful thing to do; and at this juncture it is the necessary thing to do.

As a collective entity, the Republican party now needs to re-consider its whole basic campaign strategy for next year, quite apart from what is momentarily the secondary problem of the identity of its ultimate candidate against President Johnson.

Had Mr. Kennedy lived, the Republican strategy would have been, within limits, fairly well settled right now. While there was little prospect in any event of any all-party attack on him on personal grounds, nearly three years of his occupancy of the White House had in themselves established the general lines of the Republican campaign.

It was to be an attack on his foreign policy record and notably on what the Republicans saw as the shaky state of the Western alliance — this point exemplified in the recent sharp but not personally harsh observation of Gov. Nelson Rockefeller of New York. It was to be an attack on Mr. Kennedy's spending and taxing policies — this point exemplified by the whole general position of the Republican party in Congress. And so on.

Now, however, confronting not John Fitzgerald Kennedy but rather Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1964, the GOP must tear up the old blueprint, if only for the simple reason that Mr. Johnson has only barely begun to make his own Presidential record.

Any prior notions of a Republican campaign tactic based on the presumably hostile atti-

tude of business to President Kennedy, for one illustration, could not possibly be retained, for the time being at any rate, in light of a stock market's spectacular rise since President Johnson's accession.

In short, much time will be needed before any new and general Republican blueprint can be brought forward to replace the old.

The position on candidates is equally confused and tentative. There are wide early assumptions that Sen. Barry Goldwater's candidacy for the GOP nomination has been injured. They are based on the notion that Mr. Johnson will be more acceptable than Mr. Kennedy would have been in those Southern and Western areas where the Senator is thought to have his chief strength.

There have also been wide early assumptions that Governor Rockefeller's hopes have been improved — as well they

may have been. To this observer — and to a good many others — neither of the foregoing assumptions can be at all firm at this point, or even two or three months from now. For one point, Mr. Johnson has no intention whatever to draw back from the Kennedy civil rights program, and inasmuch as this program was hurting the late President in the South and West, it can surely do the new President no good there, though strictly as a person he may be more popular there.

What looks more interesting now is not the precise degree of help or harm to either Goldwater or Rockefeller. It is the clearly promoted possibility, in the new national situation, that the Republicans may now be spurred toward a decision many had in fact already been contemplating: the final selection of some such third choice as Richard Nixon or Gov. William Scranton of Pennsylvania.



## STRICTLY PERSONAL.

By SYDNEY J. HARRIS

You have to earn the right to be wrong. This statement would strike most modern ears as peculiar, if not perverse. Yet I believe that unless we understand and respect what it means, we cannot approach the works of the mind or the spirit with the proper attitude.

Two qualified historians might disagree about the causes of World War II; one might be right, and the other wrong. But the wrong one has earned the right to his opinion, for he has studied the subject earnestly and at length.

Two musicologists might argue about the respective merits of Bach and Beethoven; one might be right, and the other wrong. But here again, the wrong one has earned the right to his opinion, for he has studied the subject earnestly and at length.

And the right to be wrong can be won only in this way. The works of the mind and the spirit — history, philosophy, literature, the arts — are much more than a mere matter of taste and preference. They demand our active collaboration, our objective study, our willingness to lay aside our preconceptions and open ourselves to new possibilities and combinations.

The person who says, "I know what I like," almost always stigmatizes himself as an ignoramus. We like what we are used to; what we expect;

what reassures us and makes us feel comfortable; what massages our egos and confirms our good opinion of ourselves. That is all that "I know what I like" really means.

Every man, we say, is entitled to his opinion. But "opinion" is a tricky word; it should mean a "reasoned view" or a "judgment," and not just a prejudice. When a judge hands down an opinion, it is based on something more than his personal preference; it rests upon a tradition and an organized body of knowledge in the field of jurisprudence.

Not everyone, of course, can be or should be, an expert. But all of us have an obligation to refrain from passing off our prejudices as "opinions." If we go to a football game, and do not understand what is happening on the field, we will not pretend to judge the teams or the players; but if we attend a play, a concert or an opera, we are quick to ventilate our prejudices, defending them as our "opinions."

They are not opinions, because in most cases they are not based on anything but subjective preference, like choosing vanilla over chocolate ice cream. And it is the most profoundly unconscious arrogance of the common man that he can evaluate uncommon works without even the minimum of expertise he would bring to a sporting event.

## Letters To The Editor

### States Stand

Permit me to reply to your recent editorial taking the Attorney General's office to task for "obstructionism," and stating that we "appear to rejoice in the role of being an 'obstructionist.'" You fail to tell your readers that these various opinions to which you object were requested by seven different state officials and legislators plus the Emergency Board.

Under the Oregon Constitution the appropriation of money is the sole responsibility of the legislature. In making appropriations the Legislative Assembly determines the amount needed by each department and considers each department to be equally entitled to its particular appropriation to carry out its functions during the biennium. There is no indication that the allotment of one agency is entitled to a higher priority or greater dignity than that of another. This was the basis for the ruling that under existing law cuts by the governor in state department budgets must be at a uniform percentage rate instead of by singling out certain departments for cuts and exempting others.

Thereafter I personally assisted in redrawing the bill to make it constitutional and issued a legal opinion approving the bill which was thereupon

passed by the legislature and signed by the governor. I would like to point out also that I have made suggestions for avoiding the impasse on the bill involving the Boardman lease.

Wherever possible I have always endeavored to offer constructive suggestions to make the conduct of state affairs legal and constitutional in all respects.

Robert V. Thornton,  
Attorney General.

### Prayer Support

Ironically, the tragedy of our President's death fell almost upon Thanksgiving. This day is set aside for prayer and gratefulness to God, commemorating the Pilgrims and their fierce struggle.

Freedom of religion was their first objective and the cornerstone of the foundation of our nation yet there are those chipping diligently away to destroy this.

We have "In God We Trust" printed on our money. We have saluted "under God" to the flag salute. We claim one great "God" despite denomination.

There is an increasing laxness in religious practice and training. Statistics show a large percentage of children have no religious training.

A furor has been created over prayer in the schools. What ex-

actly is wrong with listening to a prayer and learning reverence, even if only an outward show? There are probably thousands of short prayers suitable for reading in schools that will offend no creed.

It certainly could not hurt anyone to hear, each morning, a passage read from the Bible, which has long been accepted as one of the finest works of literature. There need be no interpretation, that is the job of the individual denomination to teach this. Even the most primitive recognize the need for a God in their culture.

It is time we re-evaluate the foundation of our liberty and stand firm for the basic principles upon which our nation was founded.

Ethel E. Zevely,  
3003 Austin.

### BARBS

It spoils the fun of finding a quarter in the pocket of a real old pair of pants when you realize it has lost half its value.

If you have two phones in your home and want to get some laughs, listen in on the conversation of teenagers.

A music instructor says that about two per cent of the people can really sing. That leaves 98 per cent who don't know it.

## BERRY'S WORLD



o "I've got an idea, George . . . I'll stop writing memos to you if you'll stop writing memos to me!"