

BLISS and THE NEGROES: THE DRAMA OF DETROIT

An Exclusive Ripon News Feature

One of the most startling developments in internal Republican politics since Ray C. Bliss assumed the Chairmanship of the Republican National Committee has gone almost unnoticed in party circles and the press. That event was the attempted intervention of a National Committee aide in the sensitive area of Negro Republican politics. The National Convention of the National Negro Republican Assembly (NNRA) held in Detroit, May 20-22d was the scene of a dramatic test of strength between Bliss-aligned forces and the independent, militant Negro Republican leadership that formed and has guided NNRA since 1964.

The outcome hung in the balance for most of the first two days of the Convention. Before it was resolved moderate Republican and civil rights groups joined in with staff and logistical support for the leadership of NNRA. The opposition, headed by the top Negro staff official at the Republican National Committee and aided, surprisingly, by elements in the Michigan State Republican organization, was unable to unseat so-called "trouble-makers" in the Negro Assembly. The incident will have repercussions that extend far beyond Detroit and the over 100 participants from almost twenty states who attended the convention.

THE NEGRO REPUBLICANS The campaign of 1964 was a traumatic experience for Negro Republicans. For a small group of them — delegates and alternates to the Republican National Convention — the defeat of the moderate Republican Civil Rights amendments and the nomination of Senator Goldwater had deep personal meaning. Before the election many of these delegates organized NNRA, composed of some 250 Negro leaders from across the country, to reaffirm support for Republican candidates whose views were "compatible with the thinking and legitimate aspirations of Negro citizens" and their unequivocal opposition to the Goldwater Republican party.

A REQUEST TO BLISS Since the election, NNRA has been an active voice for Negro Republicans who wanted to create this new atmosphere in the Republican Party. A delegation of NNRA flew to Columbus to meet with Ray Bliss prior to his election as Chairman of the Republican National Committee. An NNRA delegation also made representations to Bliss and the RNC at the

January, 1965 Chicago meeting which replaced Dean Burch with Bliss. NNRA asked the new chairman for a commitment including reestablishment and vigorous expansion of the RNC's defunct Minorities Division and Negro representation in top party councils. Bliss gave no firm reply.

A year later the Ripon Society, in a special year-end editorial report entitled *Republicans and The Negro Revolution - 1965* (See FORUM, December, 1965), described the Republican response to the Negro revolution as "largely disappointing." The Society offered a seven point program of "constructive suggestions for improving Republican posture and performance in the area of civil rights" incorporating several NNRA recommendations.

BLISS APPOINTMENTS In late February of this year Chairman Bliss finally announced the appointment of an Advisory Committee of 12 Negro leaders "to assist him in implementing a political action program designed to strengthen the Republican Party's support among Negroes." Conspicuously missing from the list, a point noted editorially by the *New York Herald Tribune*, was Mr. Grant Reynolds, National Director of Political Activities of NNRA. Reynolds, a New York attorney, was formerly counsel to Republican National Chairman William E. Miller before the Goldwater take over of the RNC. He had been a driving force in NNRA from its beginning, and his credentials as a moderate Republican leader of national stature had been enhanced by his recent election as Chairman of the Council of Republican Organizations and Vice-Chairman of Republicans For Progress. Asked why Bliss had not named him to the committee, Reynolds replied: "Bliss is used to telling Negroes what to do and not to having them tell him what ought to be done. And I refuse to wear Ray Bliss' collar."

Reynolds was not alone in criticizing the subservient status of Negroes in the Republican organization. William Johnson, an executive aide to Governor William W. Scranton who was named to the advisory panel, said the GOP should "clean out the Uncle Tom leadership that has existed for 25 years. I'm not talking just about Pennsylvania, but the whole nation."

ENTER TOWNES

On April 25th, Chairman Bliss appointed Clarence Lee Townes, Jr. of Richmond, Virginia to the post of Special Assistant to the Chairman. Townes, executive assistant to Republican State Chairman of Virginia, had an active record in Virginia Republican politics and was in 1965 an unsuccessful candidate for the Virginia House of Delegates. He was the first Negro of either party since Reconstruction to be endorsed officially by a Virginia State party organization. The press release announcing Townes' appointment, however, omitted mention that he was an officer in NNRA.

Townes' appointment concerned Negroes who wanted a vigorous program to regain Negro votes. The *Pittsburgh Courier*, one of the leading Negro weeklies in the country, reported that Townes was considered "too conservative" by many Negroes. The appointment was reportedly cleared by top aides at the RNC and Republican Conference Chairman Melvin Laird. Laird, the *Courier* said, turned down several names of other Negro candidates suggested to him as being "too aggressive and outspoken."

STORM SIGNALS

Meanwhile, NNRA, which had extended an open offer of its services to the National Committee, proceeded with plans for its First National Convention at the Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel in Detroit. The Wolverine State Republican Organization, a Negro citizens organization in Michigan, hosted the convention. In early May reports began circulating out of Washington that Grant Reynolds had been using his office in NNRA for his own political purposes and that it would be "undesirable" for him to maintain any association with NNRA. The topic was discussed at a Midwest regional district meeting of State Chairmen. Soon after that and the May meeting of the Republican Women's Federation in Washington, the rumor campaign began to intensify. The Michigan party organization, headed by State Chairman Elly M. Peterson, had been out in force to hear Governor George Romney's address to the Republican Women. When they returned from Washington there was a noticeable coolness toward Reynolds and the upcoming convention. George Washington, Director of the Department of Administration, the highest Republican Negro officeholder in Michigan and a Romney appointee, voiced his concern to the Wolverine club. Governor Romney, who had originally scheduled a full morning with the convention, now had only a half an hour available. [In fact Governor Romney spent over an hour with the delegates.] A number of Negro leaders returned unexpected word that they could not attend.

SUITE 910

On the Wednesday before the Convention was to convene, Mike Wahls, President of the Wolverines, received an invitation from William McLaughlin, Assistant Vice-Chairman for the State Republican organization and second in command to Elly Peterson, to meet with Clarence Townes and himself at Townes' suite at the Sheraton-Cadillac. Wahls received no further word but was on hand at the hotel on Friday as delegates began arriving. In the late afternoon, when he learned that NNRA members were being turned away from Townes' suite, he decided to pay a visit. When he arrived the meeting was already in progress between Townes and key Michigan Negro Republicans. Townes delivered a scathing indictment of Reynolds without any evidence to back

up his charges. He called NNRA a paper organization but suggested the organization could be of service to the National Committee under new leadership. He was there to save the Convention, Grant Reynolds would bring about its destruction. Townes was introduced to out-of-state delegates at an evening cocktail party and then returned to Suite 910 for another mysterious meeting. Meanwhile the smear against Reynolds spread among the delegates.

THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Reynolds arrived in Detroit on Friday evening and learned of the attacks on him. He met with friends late into the night. The NNRA leaders expected parliamentary maneuvering and dilatory tactics at the Saturday session. The thrust of the opposition strategy, however, was to deny Reynolds the elected Presidency of NNRA, and it came close to succeeding. The nominations committee was unexpectedly nominated from the floor, catching the Reynolds forces off guard. The committee controlled by the opposition returned a report in the afternoon nominating Jackie Robinson for President, and Reynolds for the National Board. Fifteen minutes before the report Clarence Townes made his only appearance of the day.

A DRAMATIC SURPRISE

The excitement of the previous 24 hours was then capped by a dramatic statement. Robinson told the convention that he declined the nomination, that the only man he knew who could keep the organization together and give it the necessary political leadership was Grant Reynolds. Robinson accepted a post on the National Board and was later selected to serve as Chairman. The emotional response of the delegates, "the outburst of joy," Reynolds told the FORUM, "was one of the most deeply moving experiences of my life." Two members of the nominating committee expressed their personal apologies to Reynolds for their part in the efforts to depose him.

STAND UP, SPEAK UP AND ACT

That evening at the Convention banquet held in the Veterans Memorial Building, Jackie Robinson delivered an eloquent charge to the delegates. "It is not our party right and wrong," he said. "Our country and our party must be right. I am in love with truth and justice, not with the two parties." He challenged the delegates to follow through and up on the convention, not to compromise on principle. He voiced his "tremendous faith" in Grant Reynolds. "The ambition to help Negroes, including ourselves, is good. Stand up, speak up and act vigorously as Negro Republicans."

One person was conspicuous in his absence from the banquet — the Special Assistant to the Republican National Chairman, Clarence Townes.

EDITORS COMMENT

There is something terribly revealing when a national political party still thinks, in 1966, that it can win Negro support with a bottle of scotch in a hotel room. There are a lot of unanswered questions in Detroit. Who sent Clarence Townes on his mission "to save NNRA?" Who advised him in Detroit and Washington? Who financed and masterminded the wrecking operation on the only national Negro Republican citizens organization? And what possible good would have been achieved if the plot had succeeded, if "the King had been killed" and the organization captured?

The leaders of NNRA have not paused for recrimination. Armed by over twenty resolutions passed by the convention, they have pressed Chairman Bliss with new demands and a new offer of assistance. One white civil rights leader from the mid-West who watched the dramatic events unfolding in Detroit asked how these Negroes could still be Republicans, after Goldwater, after the attack on their own leadership. We share his sense of wonder — and admiration.

THE TWELFTH COMMANDMENT

Republicans on the west coast this spring have heard a lot about a so-called Eleventh Commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Speak Ill of a Fellow Republican." The admonition is that of California State Republican Chairman, Dr. Gaylord Parkinson. The effect of his words was to stifle any sharp clash in the recent primary campaign between movie actor Ronald Reagan and former San Francisco Mayor George Christopher.

PARKINSON'S NEW LAW

If Dr. Parkinson's admonition meant no more than a ban on untrue or irrelevant attacks, then his Eleventh Commandment would merely repeat principles under which honorable men operate in any campaign. But when the rule discourages the exchange of information which is both accurate *and* relevant it violates the party's responsibility to itself and to the electorate. It was clearly the latter interpretation which was used in California this spring.

It is our belief that a vibrant and vital party should not shrink from a full and free confrontation of its inner divisions. Strong parties have survived, indeed they have thrived on, the sharpest sort of primary election clashes, from Eisenhower vs. Taft to Kennedy vs. Humphrey. The eleventh Commandment implies that the Republican Party in California is too weak to admit to its internal diversity.

At the very most it can be argued that the code of intraparty silence should apply to a general election campaign. To apply it to a primary election in which Republicans are SUPPOSED to be running against each other is logically indefensible and politically dangerous. The primary election is designed to provide a testing ground similar to that which the nominee will face in November. Its purpose is that of a "play off game." To change the rules, to say, "wait a minute, in *this* game you must never block your opponent's shot" destroys the validity of the test.

If the Eleventh Commandment is unfair to the candidate, it is even less fair to the voters. No electorate can make a wise choice if the issues which divide its potential candidates are not fully aired, if the strengths and weaknesses of potential nominees are not fully tested. And how can a candidate's record ever be truly tested if his opponent is not allowed to criticize it? It is much like removing the right of cross examination from the court room.

Any group must pay a high price when it bans that "sifting and winnowing" of the facts by which alone the truth may be found. To stifle the free interchange of information in a party primary is to leave the voters at the mercy of a random and accidental flow of rumor, hearsay and untested claims. Most significantly, such a vacuum can allow an outside agent, by skillful presentation of carefully selected facts, to influence unduly the Republican electorate.

BROWN STEPS IN

This is just what has happened in California this spring. April polls showed Christopher, a Republican moderate, with a large lead over Governor Brown and swiftly closing in on Reagan, his conservative primary opponent. Noting that neither Republican was saying much about the other, Brown decided to "enter into" the Republican primary through the agency of his Washington friend, columnist Drew Pearson.

In a series of articles, Pearson revived charges which Christopher had satisfactorily answered twenty-five years ago, before he ever began his successful political career. The response of many California papers was to refuse to print the Pearson charges; several others used the occasion to endorse Christopher. But the voters, many of them new to California and many reluctant to read beyond the headlines, reacted otherwise. Christopher dropped 11 percentage points in some May polls.

According to the California press, the Brown forces have admitted their part in the Pearson smear. And they add the warning that anyone who thinks Christopher was hit hard should wait until Brown opens up on Reagan in the finale. It is no secret that Reagan is politically vulnerable. His continuing support from the John Birch Society, his administrative inexperience, his checkered and unstable ideological career provide a vast source of potential criticism. Christopher used such materials only sparingly and very late in the campaign. But the powder puff Republican campaign provided Brown's opening. By choosing to hit Christopher now and Reagan later he sought to play a major role in the outcome of the Republican primary. It is hard to fault his strategy of attacking the tougher opponent first.

THE WEARY MODERATES

The Christopher forces, and California moderates generally, are not without blame, however. For at the very least, they showed considerable naivete in accepting with so little quarrel the fatal admonitions of the party chairman. The error may be the consequence of inexperience; more probably it reflects a genuine weariness with the intraparty bitterness which has touched California Republicans so often in the past ten years. An additional influence for silence came from supporters of freshman Senator George Murphy. And Murphy's senior colleague in the Senate, Minority Whip Thomas Kuchel, has for the most part kept out of the campaign after resisting intense pressures to carry the moderate standard this year himself. The sad fact is that in both their magnanimity and their weariness the moderates and the professionals are not likely to be matched by their right wing opponents. One can guess that the Eleventh Commandment would have received far less attention this spring if it had been the moderate candidate who was running ahead.

And one can predict that the price for a month of calm in 1966 will be another year of anguish in 1968. At the very least, a Reagan primary success will make him a likely conservative candidate against Senator Kuchel in the Senatorial primary two years hence. Because the Senator's great popularity lies almost as much with Democrats as with Republicans and because he is so much the target of right wing animosity, it is not at all inconceivable that the Senate career which Kuchel has so carefully protected during the past year could be ended at that time.

STILL MORE CREEPING REAGANISM

On the other hand, a victorious Reagan could go on to beat Governor Brown in November. A number of experienced California observers are more than ready to admit this possibility. Pre-primary polls showed Reagan ahead of Brown. The fall campaign will probably be less troubled by intraparty strife than was that of Richard Nixon in 1962 when many supporters of his primary opponent Joseph Shell refused to give Nixon their support after he denounced the John Birch Society. Moreover, Pat Brown is considerably more vulnerable than he was four years ago. Past errors are catching up with him. His part in the Christopher smear makes him less palatable to Republican moderates and independent voters. Continued unrest in the Watts district of Los Angeles can bring him nothing but trouble. (While Christopher was losing 11 percentage points to Reagan in May, he widened his lead over Brown.)

If indeed the actor does become Governor of the nation's largest state, then what? William Rusher, publisher of *National Review*, has already spoken of Reagan for President plans. If a "liberal" Republican is nominated for President, Rusher sees "Governor" Reagan as the possible nominee of a third conservative party.

All of this may seem to be unduly alarmist, but it seems less so if one remembers the complacency of the moderates in the months and years which preceded the Goldwater nomination. The theory was always that the conservative candidate could be stopped by someone else and at some other time. The notion that "we must do it and the time is now" influenced almost no one then. The strategy which failed in 1964 is being repeated now. The GOP leadership in California gambled that it can have real progress without real debate. Moderates gambled that they could win without offending the right wing. Democrats gambled that having helped build Reagan up they could later and singlehandedly tear him down.

"JUST WHAT THE PARTY NEEDS"

All of these responses have their parallels nationally. Republican leaders in Washington herald the Parkinson leadership in California as "just what the party needs." The healing spirit of Mr. Bliss and the unity campaign of Mr. Nixon monopolize official party concern. Moderates still seek to placate conservatives, despite the lack of conservative reciprocity. And many Democrats, correctly identifying the greater challenge to their narrow partisan interests, take special efforts to damage Republicans of a moderate stripe.

We do not disagree with the Bliss-Nixon call for unity or the emphasis on harmony. But we stress that these are not the only things the party needs. With only 25% of the electorate willing to tell Mr. Gallup that they are Republicans (a figure lower than the "independent" response), the party must do something more than unify its divided forces.

To attract new voters, particularly among the young, Republicans must offer something more than unity and organization. Issues must be debated, capabilities must be tested, attractive candidates must be discovered. The time to do these things is in the primaries. It is dangerous counsel indeed which denies or limits that opportunity.

The party that seeks to discourage a full test of these capabilities, a full airing of these issues, is acting not out of prudence but out of fear. Such a strategy does not liberate a party, but paralyzes it. It is the

sort of advice more appropriate to a squabbling college sorority than to a mature political party. In its place we would offer this Twelfth Commandment: "Thou Shalt not be Afraid of the Truth."

It comes as no surprise that the Republican Party in California has turned down a man who ran 20% ahead of Governor Brown in favor of a man who ran 30% ahead. That a minority party should evidence such strange behavior is in part the fault of the Eleventh Commandment. The leaders who suggested it, the moderate forces which accepted it, the Democrats who exploited it all bear some responsibility for what has happened.

The right wing cause in America is much advanced as a result of the Reagan victory in the California primary. And the weakness of others is partly to blame.

Republicans Riot in Washington

In Washington, D.C., 85% Democratic in 1964, the Young Republicans has long been "primarily a social organization," with most of its members actually living in the suburbs. But this spring a group of insurgents, headed by Reuben McCornack, aide to Senator Carlson of Kansas, determined that it was time the YR's became involved in the problems of the District. The group campaigned on a threefold platform of involvement: political education task forces including work in local schools; political action work including precinct organization; and citizen assistance efforts including legal and medical aid. Despite the fact that the D.C. group has been intimately connected with the conservative national leadership, the insurgents were voted in by a shaky margin of 15 votes out of 617.

THE WRECKING CREW

This stirred the Conservatives to more action than they had shown in years. At the next meeting, after a speech by Governor George Romney, a resolution was presented declaring McCornack's election rigged and therefore void. Among the leaders of the shouting and tumult which followed was William Timmons, last year's "Outstanding National YR" and kingpin of the present YR national leadership. Unable to control the mob, which was surging toward the rostrum, McCornack adjourned the meeting before the podium was knocked over on him and he was forced from the hall. The Conservatives held a rump meeting, called for new elections and celebrated their victory with shouting and violence which brought security police to protect the property of the Washington Hilton Hotel.

Later D.C. Committee Chairman Carl Shipley said indignantly that he would not stand for "a wrecking crew using the party label for its own particular cause." The Committee validated the election, finding no basis for the charge of rigging.

SCOTT'S CHARGE

Senator Hugh Scott's dramatic appearance before the Washington club struck an appropriate concluding note. "Don't waste your time fighting over control of every minor unit of the organization. The responsibility of the YR's is to advance the cause of the whole party. . . . We need you because you represent the generation that will lead this party in the near future, and if you lead it properly, our party will also lead the Nation. All things are possible here for you if you have the will to do these things, the will to make these things count."

THE STATE OF THE DEMOCRATIC COALITION:

THE MAGINOT LINE

A Ripon Editorial

It is common among analysts of American politics to regard the election of 1964 as a didactic gem. This election presents the classic case of a political figure pre-empting the middle-of-the-road while interest groups of all descriptions flock to his banner. Indeed, in his book, *The Future of American Politics* (Harper & Row, third edition, revised 1965), Samuel Lubell states simply that "for the first time since 1936 the Roosevelt coalition has been substantially enlarged."

A NEW DEMOCRATIC ERA?

Lubell attributes Johnson's strength at the polls to his ability to add to the old Rooseveltian coalition a number of important new groups: big business, middle-class Catholics, and voters of the burgeoning suburbs of our large urban centers. Johnson also reaped the full political benefits of the "Negro revolution." By adding these sizeable groups to the Democratic Party base, says Lubell, Johnson has achieved a breakthrough which has opened an era of one-party consensus government.

Thus Lubell writes: "The instrument that Johnson wielded with truly revolutionary political impact was the federal budget. No previous budget had ever been so contrived to 'do something' for every major economic interest in the nation — medicare for pensioners, tax rebates for business, loosened production controls and a subsidy boost for farmers, antipoverty grants for Appalachia and for Negro slums, educational aids for a generally school-conscious public."

Indeed, this is how American politics operates. A Party can win the whole by winning the constituent parts. But Lubell and other writers on American politics have missed a basic point.

A FALSE COMPARISON

The coalition of Roosevelt's era and the coalition of the present day are made up of quite different groups. Groups which had some relevancy or political power in the past are no longer "the cutting edge" in today's politics.

An accurate analysis of American politics must take account of the impact of new generations of voters on old voting trends — even those apparently set in the last Presidential election. To interpret the coalition of 1964 in terms of the coalition of 1936 is like trying to fit the square pegs of a new demography into the round holes of a group analysis outmoded from the start. The result is a fiction, and to a large extent so is the "grand coalition" it has spawned.

A LACK OF ENTHUSIASM

How stable is the Johnson coalition? The 1965 elections showed that progressive Republicans could break off substantial parts of the urban and Negro vote (see "Election '65," FORUM, November, 1965). The May 1966 Harris survey showed the public rating of Johnson's performance down to a new low of 55%, a drop of 12 percentage points from January. A recent Gallup poll reveals that on the cost of living issue, 60% of the Democrats, 81% of the Republicans, and 70% of the Independents disapproved the Administration's

efforts to curb inflation. On the Vietnam question, in the same poll, 53% of the people questioned expressed dissatisfaction with the President's handling of that aspect of America's foreign affairs.

An even more dramatic sign is the attitude of young voters, who supported Johnson and the Democrats overwhelmingly in 1964. A recent Harris survey for *Newsweek* showed that younger Americans identified themselves with John F. Kennedy (50%) and Abraham Lincoln (20%) rather than Lyndon Johnson (5%) or Franklin Roosevelt (3%). This lack of enthusiasm for Johnson-Roosevelt suggests again that the coalition of 1964 was not the result of outstanding Democratic success, but rather the dismal failure of the Republican Party.

Although the Republicans purported to offer the electorate "a choice not an echo," most voters seemed to regard the election as presenting no choice at all. When it came time to cast ballots nearly every distinct group felt it had more to preserve with the Democrats than it could afford to risk losing with the Republicans.

THE REPUBLICAN FAILURE

That the demise of an effective Republican Party should come so suddenly was surprising and shocking to many. *But what has not been seen with clarity is the fact that the Goldwater candidacy merely hastened an inevitable day. The GOP was headed toward defeat at the hands of a huge "coalition" as far back as the 30's, when the Party first refused to recognize the demographic trend of urbanization.* Refusing to come to terms with a changing America in the 30's, though, was excusable; a small lag in adjustment should be permitted to any political party. But when 1964 arrived the GOP was still fighting to preserve a political mythology which had lost its appeal before the Second World War. The advent of Barry Goldwater provided the *coup de grace*, the impetus for a breakthrough by the Democrats which finally breached the weakening defenses of their sorry opposition. When the smoke cleared, a great coalition dominated the middle of the American political spectrum and the hopelessly antediluvian Republican Party had slipped with barely a whimper to the edge of obscurity.

The "coalition" of 1964 obscured an important fact — neither party has kept pace with the growth of America. Few have grasped the character of this time-lag or seen in the static perspective of Democratic coalition the instability that flows from its growing irrelevance to a dynamic American society. Congressman Charles Weltner, a young Democrat from Georgia, is one who has warned his party of the shifting foundation beneath its walls. "We have gained criticisms for putting money in this pocket and in that pocket," Weltner said in April. "We have lost the general appeal to the uncommitted Americans." It may be that a Southerner who is trying to build a modern Democratic Party in his state has seen at the grass roots what

Republicans have refused to see all along: that American society is no longer made up of narrow interest groups and down-the-line straight-ticket voters. The American electorate wants government by a party that can grasp and shape the future.

The first test of the Johnson coalition will come in the Congressional elections of 1966 and the storm warnings are up. The labor movement, Negro leaders, intellectuals and the press have all shown growing disenchantment or disgust with the Democrats, but what have they been offered as an alternative? The Democratic organization is in an advanced state of disarray — with campaign funds hard to find, the National Chairman reduced to a figurehead, the House and Senate campaign committees complaining that the National Committee gobbled up funds raised by and for Congressmen, and Democrats in both houses feuding angrily with their leadership. The prospects for the Democratic Party never looked bleaker.

GOP HOPE IN '66?

These signs have encouraged Republican leaders to hope for substantial gains in the 1966 election. Everett Dirksen, as early as February predicted a Republican gain of 50 seats in the House; Ray Bliss too predicted in May a strong showing for the Party in the coming election including "substantial gains" in the Senate. House Minority leader Gerald Ford sees forty new Republicans in his future, and Melvin Laird has gone even higher. To put all this in perspective, the GOP would need a pick-up of 78 seats to gain control of the House of Representatives — a feat of no mean quality for a Party that has done precious little to deserve this kind of success.

Since the election of 1964 the GOP has stumbled along without direction or leadership, failing responsibly to criticize the Administration for the conduct of the war and political reform in Vietnam, for the causes of the current inflation, or for the inadequacies of civil rights or poverty program policy enforcement. Instead, the Party has relied on the dubious principle that there is always a bounceback for the minority in an off year (there was virtually *none* in 1962), that Barry Goldwater would not be around to drag candidates under, and that dissatisfaction with Vietnam and inflation would drive the harried voters to vote *against* Lyndon Johnson and the Democrats — although it has not been considered necessary to show why they should vote *for* the Republicans. Republican gains in 1966, like Democratic gains in 1964, would be the result of the failures of the other party. Once again the American people are the real losers!

THE THIRD FORCE

Meanwhile, a "third force" — as the *New York Times* recently described it — is making steady gains from the disintegration of the erstwhile coalition. The only real opposition Lyndon Johnson has had to face is not the Republican minority but Bobby Kennedy. Where Johnson failed and the Republicans stood by with their mouths agape, Kennedy has moved in to pick up the pieces. He has become the early favorite of the groups who have grown disaffected with Johnson, and once again the hapless Republicans are left with their old slogans, their old indecision, and their old leadership.

Speaking of Kennedy's sudden rise to prominence, columnist Bruce Brossat remarks that while part of Kennedy's popularity is a transference from his brother, "it also seems to reflect a wide conviction that John

Kennedy's election signalled the Rise of the Young," and that this interrupted revolution must be resumed as quickly as possible.

A recent national television poll showed that Bobby Kennedy was running a close second to Lyndon Johnson *right now* as the man most voters would like to see as President. No Republican — though the usual names were used — even came close to either Democrat. Thus, in spite of the fumbblings and unpopularity of the Johnson Administration in recent months, Kennedy has taken the lead.

THE NEW POLITICS

But note how the Senator has been acquiring his following. He hasn't had a federal budget to distribute as Samuel Lubell would predict; nor has he sat on his hands and awaited Administration errors as the Republican leadership has done. Instead, he has staked out positions on Latin America, on Vietnam, on Civil Rights, and on other areas where the Administration has been subject to legitimate criticism. And the American people have responded, not to economic incentives, not to "say-nothingism," but to new ideas and new concepts which have caught the imagination of a new electorate. It is this group — a large, articulate, concerned, educated majority — which holds the key to American politics. The Republicans in mid-1966 have once again passed up their chance to make inroads into the future.

A LAST CHANCE

What hope is there then for the GOP? For a little while yet, the Johnson consensus will afford Republicans a Maginot line — outdated and vulnerable. If Johnson runs again in 1968 the GOP will get at least one more opportunity.

By nominating a candidate with fresh ideas and new proposals, who can appeal to Americans as a man who understands and is part of the new generation, the Republican Party will have opened its first breach in the wall that fences it out of America's future.

BEYOND THE ABSURD

Back in January, the *National Review* spotted a Ripon ad in the classified column of *The Nation*. In a fit of winter pique, they called us "the Free Speech Movement" of the GOP and invoked their formidable powers of free association. Because we, like *The Nation*, endorsed Mayor Lindsay, they linked us with the "Free Lunch Movement in American journalism," "the Marx on the rocks crowd," and the "adamantine left."

On April 16th, after the publication of our China paper and its favorable reception by such notorious mouthpieces of the far left as the *New York Times* and the *Herald Tribune*, *Human Events* labelled us a "modern Republican creature" and, raking up an old cliché from the ashes of Mr. Goldwater's crusade, implied that we were "soft" on China. A week later, the *National Review* reported that a certain "one-man mimeo shop in Cambridge — purporting to speak for the Republican Party's 'moderate' faction" had joined the London *Economist* and General Gavin in the "Pecking Lobby."

On May 7th, *Human Events* warned that "leaders of the Ripon Society, the ultra-liberal GOP splinter group," were "worming their way into several campaigns throughout the country." Still distressed by our China paper, the *National Review* renewed hostilities

on May 10th. Now we are the "think tank of Liberal Republicanism" and our publications, "although the handiwork of a couple of assistant professors at MIT — are treated by the Liberal Press (e.g. the *New York Times*) like deliberations of the Constitutional Convention."

We confess we're staggered by the variety of these labels and charges. We have no idea what the "Free Lunch Movement in American journalism" is. Perhaps someone on the *National Review* could enlighten us. We can only assume that the "Marx on the Rocks crowd" is an "ultra-liberal splinter group" of the "In Crowd" and, therefore, none of our concern. The "adamantine left" is no doubt the national antithesis of the *National Review* and considers the *Times* a right-wing rag. As for our being the "Free Speech Movement" of the GOP, we really must admire the editors of the *National Review* for their vivid imagination. Only they could create a political liaison between Mario Savio, Bettina Aptheker, Joan Baez, a "one-man mimeo shop in Cambridge," and the Mayor of New York.

What, pray, is a "modern Republican creature?" Perhaps *Human Events* was struggling for a science-fiction metaphor: "The Attack of the Modern Republican Creatures," "I was a Teen-Age Modern Republican," "The Modern Republican Creatures From the Red Lagoon." There are limitless possibilities.

If looking for new ways to deal with 800 million people who will soon have nuclear weapons is being "soft" on China then we're happy to join any lobby which includes the last American general to parachute into combat.

We're naturally pleased that some of our members, including one of our several MIT professors, have important campaign posts in Ohio, Illinois, Maine, and Massachusetts. If the *National Review* had some constructive proposals, it too could be a Republican "think-tank" although we hope it finds a less barbarous term. Its reference to the Constitutional Convention betrays a longing for the world of 1787. Things would be somewhat less complicated but the *National Review* would soon be demanding the restoration of the *Articles of Confederation*.

THE YAF BASH

The cheers at the YAF anniversary dinner in early May were warm and encouraging. Like a thousand Humphrey Bogarts, the young conservatives seemed to be saying "Play it again, Sam." And Sam, in the person of Barry Goldwater, played it again, and again, and again.

"I could sit on my hill in Arizona," said the former Senator, "but I'm concerned about freedom." The lily white audience cheered at this courageous stand, knowing in their hearts that Lyndon Johnson was taking away their freedom. Senator Strom Thurmond, who sat at the head table, knew it too.

It will be recalled that at the time of the Negro march on Washington in 1963 Senator Thurmond remarked on national television that he could not understand what these folks were getting so riled about. After all, he said, our Negroes have more television sets, more cars, more washing machines and refrigerators than they have over in Africa. This is freedom to Senator Strom Thurmond.

But that was only the first contradiction. Later, former Representative Katherine St. George, who lost her seat in the 1964 disaster, declared that "only one man could be considered the head of the Republican Party, and that is Senator Goldwater." And the Senator, dutifully exercising this leadership, enjoined the young audience: "If you work to support a Republican, more power to you. But if a Democrat in your area is more toward your ideals, he ought to be your man."

And so it went on, contradiction after contradiction; Goldwater accused Senator Fulbright — who differs with President Johnson — of "lending comfort to our enemies" and "downgrading our country," and YAF's National Chairman attacked President Johnson for hamstringing our Marines in Vietnam and hindering the war effort. Then Goldwater was presented with an ivory yo-yo with a picture of McNamara on one side of it, while the audience chuckled at this closing of the ranks in the face of the Communist threat.

But Conservative columnist James J. Kilpatrick really summed it up: "It was old-time religion. . . . Doubtless the Goldwater view, as they say, is 'simplistic.' Perhaps it smacks of 'outmoded nationalism' or of 'super-patriotism,' or of 'flag-waving.' But it was good to hear the old bells rung again, and good to see these youngsters' hearts leap up."

And so shall it always be with our conservatives — long after those old bells — "soft on Communism," "appeasement," "socialism," "encroachments on freedom" — have ceased to summon, long after the audience of the curious and bemused have drifted away.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

In the least logical, most untimely, and — sadly — the funniest political analysis of this or any year, M. Stanton Evans proceeds in the May 28 issue of *Human Events* to present "The Vital Arithmetic of Conservative Victory." For anyone who does not yet believe that conservatives of rigid stripe have lost complete touch with reality this article is the clincher. Of course, this may all be a satire; one can never be sure in the subtle world of high camp. Nevertheless, Evans' article counts "Conservative" states [which may generally be described as all those without Republican governors - editor], "Liberal" states [those where the GOP has elected the Governor or has a chance of doing so - editor] and "Undecided" states.

After this *ad hoc* categorization, Evans adds up his score and, why looky there, the Conservative team wins! After the election of 1964 — where the Conservative team was a little smaller than the proportions Evans has in mind — this type of analysis bears a striking, not to say frightening, resemblance to proving the world is flat. Mr. Evans said the same things — maybe word for word — in May of 1964 that he is saying now. Will Rogers once observed, "I only know what I read in the papers." Apparently Mr. Evans didn't read the Indianapolis *News*.

POLITICAL NOTE

● Who says Republicans can't get the Labor vote? The influential (900,000 member) Machinists' Union recently had good things to say about six Senators and twelve Congressmen — all GOP — who had voted "pro-labor" on 14 (b) and other enumerated roll calls.

RIPON SPOTLIGHT

The Party That Lost Its Head

by George F. Gilder and Bruce K. Chapman (Alfred A. Knopf \$6.95).

The young men of Harvard who inspired the all too brief publication of *Advance Magazine* have returned to public view with a new book on the Republican party. While there have been a host of books on the subject in recent months, we strongly recommend *The Party That Lost Its Head* to all readers of the FORUM.

The book will not be comforting for Republicans who feel the party has made substantial progress since the election of 1964. Gilder and Chapman observe that "the repression of the trauma of 1964 and the recurrence of the syndrome which led to it is endemic in the party across the country. In short, the Republican party is still in civil war, still cursed with the incubus of extremism and undermined by the incompetence of a timid national headquarters. Most of the supposed moderate leaders, such as Richard Nixon, who failed the party from 1960 to 1964, fail it still and the right wing is eager for the party to perform yet another self-immolation."

These are not just "angry young men" chiding their party. The authors' account of Republican politics and their insights into the leading personalities that have guided the party are accurate and at times brilliant. For the Republican party merely to have returned to the status quo - ante 1964 while the nation is moving into the next phase of the civil rights revolution, beginning to experience the legislative impact of the Johnson 89th Congress, and questioning our foreign policy beyond Vietnam, is ill-advised to say the least. If *The Party That Lost Its Head* sounds too bizarre to be believed it is only because the authors have been willing to face the truth.

Is there any hope for the G.O.P.? Gilder and Chapman place great stress on the need to build a progressive Republican ideology that can give the Republican party a unity of purpose and a new relevance to "the three most neglected and decisive targets: the metropolitan voter, youth, and the intellectual." A constructive Republican approach in domestic policy for

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—Clare Boothe Luce

instance should be based on such themes as: 1) a revitalized federalism based on a rational balance of responsibilities between the states, localities, and the federal government; 2) the regeneration of the nation's metropolitan areas; 3) a more flexible and imaginative use of the private enterprise system to treat human problems; 4) a new concern for the special problems of youth — such as education and military service; 5) a conservative approach to technological progress emphasizing the primacy of individual liberty; and 6) the conservation of natural resources — their use to enrich the nation's leisure and their protection to enhance its beauty.

The question, of course, remains *who* will give new ideological leadership to the Party. Gilder and Chapman, by the very fact of their book, have given one answer. The efforts of the Ripon Society represent another. Yet, no matter how compelling the facts of the Republican situation may be they are only the beginning. The hardest work is still ahead.

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