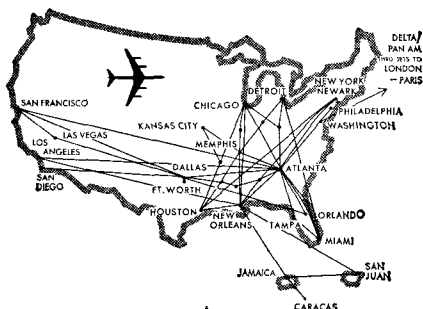


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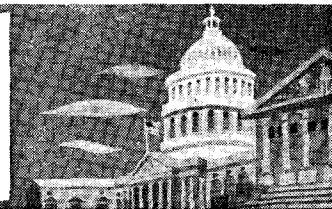
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State of Affairs



The Democratic Team

THE Kennedy era, most people had assumed, had come to an end even before the Democratic convention in Atlantic City. And they assumed, too, that in President Johnson's eyes, at least, the Johnson era had begun.

Johnson, after all, in a surprisingly short time has succeeded in embossing his own initials on Washington. But however much he has already accomplished at the Presidential desk, however much the White House has changed from a little Versailles to a breezy barbecue pit, and however peacockish his manner at times, he is too shrewd a man not to realize that he is still only something like a roof superimposed on the edifice built by John F. Kennedy, and that he entered through the back door by fate and not by popular choice.

It is not surprising, then, that the man who says he "likes to own people" does not wish to live in a structure built and still owned, at least spiritually, by someone else; that he has now changed the motto which he appropriately gave to his Administration after he became President from "Let us continue" to "Let me begin." This, it seemed to me, was the key to the Democratic Convention.

It had all the Johnsonian earmarks and yet it was still not quite his very own convention. For the moment most delegates will remember all their lives, the moment they will tell their children about, was the showing of the film album of the Kennedy years and the sixteen-minute ovation for Robert Kennedy, who stood there in the sea of applause, his head bowed under the halo of his mourned brother. It was apparent that the Kennedy name still evokes a more spontaneous reaction than Johnson's.

It is therefore understandably human that this was an uneasy circumstance for a man as proud and as self-centered as Mr. Johnson to sustain, and that he wants and needs more—a smashing mandate from the nation.

President Johnson quite shrewdly and quite naturally assumes that in times of unsurpassed prosperity, and in a world where life on the brink does not offer the kind of "peace of mind" Americans yearn for, the best bet is to offer stability and moderation, wisdom and restraint, patience and responsibility and, of course, fairness to all. And at this stage, it is better to rest his record on the achievements of the past six months

rather than try to break new ground. And those achievements, in terms of new legislation, in terms of the economy, in terms of having at least made no false move in foreign policy, and in terms of leadership generally, are impressive.

Lyndon Johnson knows he is not the type of man who can sweep the nation off its feet. And he suffers from what he considers the handicap of being a Southerner. Thus, in spite of the bursting self-confidence, the unconcealed vanity, the highflown self-esteem he must display, he is a man of many hidden insecurities. In view of all this, he must rely for his acceptance on achievements. He must play the card of long experience in government and in public affairs. And so he has come to the conclusion that the "image" he must project is that of the father figure—though he will never be an Eisenhower with a Texas lilt; for that he is too restless, too energetic, too much the doer. This attitude may not appeal to the liberals, but in a campaign against a Goldwater he probably feels they need no pampering.

Johnson's selection of Senator Humphrey for the Vice Presidency is somewhat of a deviation from his election strategy, which is to extend the Johnson political fish net as far and as wide as he can decently afford to do. Hubert Humphrey has always been considered a bit of a liberal bull in the china shop. But his horns have been blunted by years of running against various stone walls. Some have fallen before him, some on him, yet somehow he has always emerged chipper and full of optimism, ready to take on another obstacle.

When at the Democratic Convention in 1948 he shattered most of the windows with his fiery appeal for a stronger civil rights platform than President Truman was willing to concede, and when he read the riot act to the Senate in his maiden speech there, many people did not think much of his political prospects in Washington. Although I would not wish to draw any conclusions, Humphrey's progress reminds me of Britain's Ramsay MacDonald, whose political fortunes were considered nil when he turned conscientious objector in World War I. Yet he eventually made the Prime Ministership.

Humphrey's secret probably is that he enshrines the combination of the circum-spect reformer with that of the skilled

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political practitioner, and in addition he has almost limitless energies, an immense capacity to absorb facts, and an insatiable curiosity. They are rare qualities, and they help to explain his success.

None of the Vice Presidential candidates President Johnson considered would have made much of a difference to the election campaign itself, according to various polls he had made. People vote for a President. But what could influence them, perhaps, and of course the fate of the nation—especially with a man who has had a heart attack—is the matter of who would be his successor. And President Johnson saw in Humphrey the best campaigner and the best-qualified man. He has the broadest experience in domestic and foreign affairs of any member of the Senate. He knows how to manipulate Congress; he is articulate (even overarticulate perhaps); he has lately been able to establish a friendly working relationship with Southern Senators; he is very much aware of all agricultural problems; and he is a thorough work horse. He may not quite project the image of being able to serve "all our people" as Johnson does, or likes to think he does, but he may provide the kind of spark Johnson will need to get the Johnson era off the ground.

It was Humphrey's panache, his ability to lift the spirit of an audience, that brought the focus of the convention back to Johnson after it nearly drowned in nostalgia from seeing the Kennedy film. He changed the mood almost with a flip of his fingers, and in a few seconds he had injected into the mass audience before him a new gusto for the present.

THE President's problem is that he is so much better a leader than he sounds; and I am not of course referring to accent, but to style and presentation, content, and the ability to convey how deeply engaged he feels in the welfare of this nation and the world. At the convention Johnson generously admitted that his program is still the Kennedy program. The methods, the style, the techniques, of course, are unadulterated Johnson. They must be, and the President's wish to eliminate anything that could divert attention from him is therefore not surprising.

Under the American system it is vitally important for the President to establish himself as the dominant authority. Feeling that he really deserved to become President, and not having Truman's modesty, he obviously finds it painful, in a way it never was to Truman, that fate rather than the ballot box opened the door to the White House. His yearning to see the Johnson Era ushered in is the more understandable in view of his deep urge to prove to history that a Southerner can unite the American nation.

—HENRY BRANDON.

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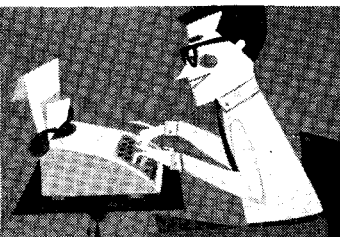
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Top of My Head



Somewhere Over the Rainbow

A LETTER came this morning from the RCA Service Company of Camden, New Jersey, personal physicians to my TV set for many years. And not a moment too soon, because all summer my set has suffered an agonizing siege of the re-runs and now must be put into shape to receive all these new goodies the networks have been promising us.

What's needed most for more enjoyment of my TV set, the letter says, is a program of better-planned maintenance. Actually, what is really needed is a maintenance of better-planned programming. But the RCA Service Company promises only to give "complete protection to the parts and tubes of your color TV set." It does nothing for the parts and tubes of the vice presidents in charge of what we see on TV.

I've been doing business with this nice company a long time—about ten years, if my otiose memory serves me—

even before color came into our spectrums. Every season this letter came, the bill for a year's service was paid in advance, and the parade through our apartment of the service men with their little black first-aid kits was constant. Skilled of hand, quick of eye, they turned a screw here, tightened a nut there, and breathed new life into our TV set. Then came color and I must say that nothing seems to help.

Oh, the men still come! Many of them think of our living room as their home away from home. The little lady plies them with colas and matches and entreats them not to lay their black tools on the white vinyl flooring. But their interest is color. And they fiddle and faddle with hidden knobs and tubes until they are satisfied that the color is in order again. Little do they know that when they leave and slam the door, even ever so lightly, the knobs and tubes fall back into disrepair and

the color is drained from the cheeks of our set.

And do you know how their letter refers to this furniture phenomenon? "One of the miracles of the electronic age." Honest. I quote from their letter:

"Dear RCA Victor Color Television Owner," it begins. I've been doing business with them for many years. Wouldn't you think by now it would be simply "Dear Victor"?

To continue: "For some time now you have been enjoying one of the miracles of the electronic age—color television!"

The exclamation point is theirs.

"We trust that during that time you have enjoyed many fine months of great entertainment."

Now what channel do you suppose they've been watching?

"Naturally, you'll want to make some definite provision for the future serving of your color receiver. Much more enjoyable than black-and-white TV, your color set is a prized possession."

Now hold it just one darned minute, fellows. In the first place, I think we should stop referring to them as "color" sets. These days the word has an unpleasant connotation. In my home there are two TV sets. One is black and white. The other is red and green. Those are the only two colors we can depend on with our set. No matter how many times you come to the house, no matter how long you fool with the set, by the time the *Tonight* show comes around everything is either red and green or green and red.

I take that back. There are times when the colors return unexpectedly. The other night while watching the Yankees I saw Mickey Mantle chase a fly ball across a field of the most beautiful orange grass you ever saw.

There is one other place I get nice color on my red and green set. And that's while watching a show that is in black and white. During this show there is a lacy border of rainbow colors on the right side of my picture. I get the feeling they're waiting in the wings for a show in color to come along and they can do their stuff. Needless to say, most of them fail to show up. Red and green, of course, are always there, and sometimes mauve. But mostly just red and green—neither of which is my favorite color.

And even sometimes one of those colors fails me. While watching *Meet the Press* the other evening on my red and green set, I heard Lawrence Spivak and Frank McGee ask some rather pointed questions of Robert Welch, of the John Birch Society. When he answered and didn't blush I knew my red was gone. On the other hand, the set probably felt Mr. Welch's antipathy.

—GOODMAN ACE.

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