

NEWS HENS  
TOPEKA, KANSAS  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 1966  
REMARKS OF CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE

"NOTHING"

I WAS PLEASED TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION -- WELL, ACTUALLY, I GUESS THE ORDER FROM "MAMIE" BOYD TO APPEAR ON YOUR PROGRAM. I KNOW THAT "MAMIE" WAS TRYING TO CHOOSE BETWEEN "BUS" AND "HUCK", AND I HAVE A SNEAKING SUSPICION THAT "BUS" AND "HUCK" GOT TOGETHER AND AGREED THAT THE BEST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN TO EITHER OF THEM WOULD BE TO LEAVE TOPEKA SATURDAY.

I REALLY HAVE NO QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING HERE THIS MORNING, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE INSTRUCTIONS I RECEIVED THAT MY REMARKS WERE TO BE LIMITED TO "NOTHING". I WOULD HASTEN TO ADD THAT IT'S NOT OFTEN A POLITICIAN HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK ON SOMETHING HE REALLY UNDERSTANDS -- AND THIS MAY BE THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY A POLITICIAN'S EVER GOTTEN A COMPLETELY HONEST BILLING.

PUBLIC FIGURES ARE OFTEN ASKED TO SPEAK BEFORE A GROUP ABOUT SOMETHING THE AUDIENCE KNOWS MUCH MORE ABOUT THAN HE DOES. NOT LONG AGO A WELL-KNOWN POLITICAL FIGURE WAS ASKED TO SPEAK TO A VERY SPECIALIZED GROUP OF SCHOLARS AND SCIENTISTS ABOUT AIR AND WATER POLLUTION. HE HANDLED IT VERY WELL, BY TELLING THE STORY ABOUT THE YOUNG MAN WHO WAS ONE OF THE SOLE SURVIVORS OF THE FAMED JOHNSTOWN FLOOD IN PENNSYLVANIA BACK IN 1889.

IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THIS FELLOW HAD SPENT A LIFETIME ABSOLUTELY BORING PEOPLE TO DEATH WITH THE TALE. AT EVERY GATHERING HE WOULD GRAB THE FLOOR AND RE-LIVE THE SAGA OF THE FLOOD. FINALLY, IN OLD AGE DEATH CAME AND HE TRUDGED OFF TO HEAVEN.

ST. PETER GREETED HIM AT THE GATES. AFTER REVIEWING HIS CREDEN-

-2-

JAN 2 - 1966

TIALS, HE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT EVERYTHING WAS PRETTY WELL IN ORDER AND THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO PERMIT HIM INTO HEAVEN. THEN AFTER THE APPROPRIATE CONGRATULATIONS, ST. PETER SAID, "NOW WE HAVE A TRADITION UP HERE. IN WAY OF WELCOME, WE LET EVERYONE THAT ENTERS THESE GATES CALL THE SHOTS FOR THE FIRST DAY. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO?"

THE OLD MAN THOUGHT ABOUT IT FOR AWHILE AND THEN SAID, "I BELIEVE I WOULD LIKE TO GATHER ALL THE ANGELS TOGETHER AND TELL THEM ABOUT THE GREAT JOHNSTOWN FLOOD."

ST. PETER COCKED HIS HEAD AND SAID, "O.K. BUT I JUST WANT YOU TO REMEMBER ONE THING. NOAH'S UP HERE."

HUMILITY IS ONE THING A POLITICIAN LEARNS VERY FAST. HE MAY NOT SHOW IT, BUT IF THE SENIORITY SYSTEM AND THE TREMENDOUSLY HEAVY WORK LOAD DOESN'T TEACH IT TO HIM, HIS CONSTITUENTS WILL. YOU MAY REMEMBER THE LETTER THAT APPEARED IN EMILY POST'S COLUMN. IT BEGAN:

DEAR MISS POST,

WHEN WRITING TO A CONGRESSMAN SHOULD YOU ADDRESS HIM AS "YOUR HONOR, DEAR SIR" OR CAN YOU START RIGHT IN BY TELLING HIM WHAT YOU THINK OF HIM?"

CONGRESSMEN RECEIVE A LOT OF MAIL, AND IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHAT PEOPLE ARE WRITING ABOUT THESE DAYS:

[HERE, MAKE REFERENCE TO CARDS]

I HAVE SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME IN POLITICS, AND IT IS ALWAYS AMAZING TO ME THAT THE PROCESSES OF DEMOCRACY WORK SO WELL. WINSTON CHURCHILL ONCE REMARKED THAT DEMOCRACY IS THE WORST POSSIBLE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, BUT HAS ONE PARAMOUNT VIRTUE: IT HAPPENS TO BE BETTER THAN ANY OTHER SYSTEM MEN HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEVISE.

*Good  
Jan diff  
I can hardly  
wait to  
see it*



JAN 3 1966

BACK IN THE 1800'S A FRENCHMAN NAMED ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE WROTE AN ELABORATE WORK CALLED DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA. IN IT HE TOLD THE FRENCH PEOPLE, AND I QUOTE, THAT "ON ENTERING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AT WASHINGTON, ONE IS STRUCK BY THE VULGAR DEMEANOR OF THAT GREAT ASSEMBLY."

HE NOTED WITH DISTASTE THAT "ITS MEMBERS ARE ALMOST ALL OBSCURE INDIVIDUALS, WHOSE NAMES PRESENT NO ASSOCIATIONS TO THE MIND; THEY ARE MOSTLY VILLAGE LAWYERS, MEN IN TRADE, OR EVEN PERSONS BELONGING TO THE LOWER CLASSES OF SOCIETY." THEN HE ADDED, "IT IS SAID THAT THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE DO NOT ALWAYS KNOW HOW TO WRITE CORRECTLY."

I SUPPOSE FROM AN ARISTOCRATIC POINT OF VIEW, DE TOCQUEVILLE'S CRITICISMS MAY HAVE BEEN WELL-GROUNDED, BUT THE ARCHITECTS OF THE YOUNG CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES HAD NO INTENTION OF RELYING SOLELY ON THE ARISTOCRATS. THEY INTENDED TO RELY ON THE WISDOM OF THE PEOPLE. FOR 189 YEARS, AMERICA HAS BEEN PROVING THE SOUNDNESS OF THIS DECISION. WE CAN BOAST THAT OUR GOVERNMENT IS THE OLDEST ON EARTH, IF WE MEAN THE OLDEST BASED ON A FUNDAMENTALLY UNCHANGED OR UNBROKEN, WRITTEN CONSTITUTION.

AND IT IS ONE OF THE AMAZING FACTS OF DEMOCRATIC LIFE THAT PRECISELY THE THING WHICH THE PEDANTICS OF THE OLD WORLD CRITICIZED AS PLACING US MOST IN JEOPARDY -- DIRECT ELECTIONS BY THE WHOLE PEOPLE -- HAS BEEN THE SUSTAINING FORCE, THE MAIN STRENGTH AND THE SAFETY VALVE OF OUR NATION.

WE HAVE SENT SOME INTERESTING PERSONALITIES -- AND SOME INTERESTING CHARACTERS -- INTO PUBLIC OFFICE, AND WE ARE STILL SENDING THEM. TODAY IN CONGRESS THERE ARE 535 OF US. THESE ARE MEN WITH BACKGROUNDS WHICH VARY AS FAR AS FROM LAWYERS TO BUSINESSMEN, BANKERS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, PHYSICIANS, MINISTERS, CIVIL SERVANTS, TEACHERS, HOUSEWIVES AND EVEN A MACHINIST. IT IS A WIDE CROSS SECTION OF THE WISDOM AS WELL AS THE FOOLISHNESS, THE WEAKNESS AS WELL AS THE STRENGTH, THE PREJUDICE AS WELL AS THE TOLERANCE,



-4-

JAN 30 1966

THE FEARS AS WELL AS THE COURAGE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

IT'S LIKE TEDDY ROOSEVELT USED TO SAY, "REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IS THAT WHICH ELECTS SIX MEN IN FAVOR OF A THING AND SIX AGAINST IT, AND WONDERS WHY SOMETHING ISN'T DONE.

BUT IF THERE IS ONE UNIFYING FACTOR AMID THE GROUP, I BELIEVE I'D HAVE TO SAY IT'S THIS, I BELIEVE I'D HAVE TO SAY IT'S HUMOR. IF A MAN DOESN'T HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR I DON'T SEE HOW HE COULD TAKE THE STRESS AND TENSION OF PUBLIC OFFICE FOR VERY LONG. AND I MIGHT ADD THAT HUMOR EVEN HELPS A LITTLE IN DEFEAT. IT'S LIKE THE OLD WHITE-HAIRED ALABAMA EX-CONGRESSMAN, WHO RETURNED TO CAPITOL HILL FOR A VISIT. A REPORTER APPROACHED HIM ASKING, "HOW COME YOU HAVE RETIRED FROM POLITICS?"

"ILLNESS, SUH," HE SHOT BACK. "THE PEOPLE GOT SICK OF ME."

ONE OF THE TOWERING, LONG-TIME FIGURES IN CONGRESS TODAY IS THE HOUSE SPEAKER, JOHN MC CORMACK. HE'S CALLED "THE FIGHTING IRISHMAN FROM BOSTON." HE'S A TALL, ROUND SHOULDERED OLD GENTLEMAN WITH A SERIOUS INTENSENESS ABOUT HIM. WHEN HE STANDS UP TO DELIVER A PREPARED TEXT, HE IS THE EPITOME OF BOOMING ORATORICAL ELOQUENCE. IN DEBATE, HE HAS A KNIFELIKE SARCASM. HIS FIRST ELECTION TO CONGRESS WAS IN 1928 AND HE'S BEEN AN INTEGRAL PART OF IT EVER SINCE.

ONE OF THE WITTIEST CRACKS ON THE HOUSE FLOOR IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO HIM. AS YOU MAY KNOW, ONE MEMBER NEVER CALLS ANOTHER BY NAME ON THE FLOOR, BUT RATHER REFERS TO HIM, FOR EXAMPLE, AS "THE GENTLEMAN FROM KANSAS." AND IF HE GETS PRETTY WOUND UP, HE MAY REFER TO HIM IN GLOWING TERMS SUCH AS "THE BRILLIANT ADVOCATE OF THE STATE OF...." OR "THE ESTEEMED MEMBER FROM...." OR "THE GENTLEMAN WHOM I HIGHLY REGARD" AND SO ON.

WELL, ON ONE OCCASION A CERTAIN MEMBER WAS OPPOSING A POSITION WHICH SPEAKER MC CORMACK STRONGLY ADVOCATED, AND WAS VEHEMENTLY DENOUNCING



JAN 30 1966

THE PROPOSITION.

AS MC CORMACK REGAINED THE FLOOR, HE ROSE IN COLD DIGNITY AND BEGAN IN EFFECT, "AS YOU ALL KNOW, I HAVE A MINIMUM HIGH REGARD FOR THE GENTLEMAN FROM....."

LAWMAKING CAN BE A RATHER PRECARIOUS BUSINESS. YOU THROW YOUR HAT IN THE RING, BUT TRY TO HANG ONTO YOUR NECK ONCE YOU'VE BEEN ELECTED. ONE OF MY FAVORITE ILLUSTRATIONS IS THE ONE TOLD BY FLORIDA'S 8TH DISTRICT CONGRESSMAN, BILLY MATTHEWS.

"I FEEL," HE SAID ONCE, "SOMETHING LIKE THE LAWMAKER IN THAT LEGENDARY GREEK COMMUNITY WHO, WHEN OFFERING A NEW LAW IN THE POPULAR ASSEMBLY, APPEARED ON THE PLATFORM WITH A ROPE AROUND HIS NECK. IF THE LAW WAS ACCEPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY, THEY REMOVED THE ROPE; IF THE LAW WAS REJECTED, THEY REMOVED THE PLATFORM."

LEGISLATING THE LAWS FOR A NATION OF ALMOST TWO HUNDRED MILLION PEOPLE IS NOT SOMETHING TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. BUT OFTEN IN THE COURSE OF A SESSION, HUMOR IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR MAKING YOUR POINT.

THE FAMOUS LIBERAL FROM NEBRASKA, THE LATE SENATOR GEORGE W. NORRIS, SUMMED UP THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS FOR A CONSTITUENT IN THESE BRIEF WORDS: "WELL, YOU SEE, A BILL RECEIVES THE O.K. IN THE HOUSE AND K. O. IN THE SENATE AND VICE VERSA."

WHEN THE IMMIGRATION BILL WAS PASSED LAST YEAR, I HEARD THE STORY AGAIN WHICH CONGRESSMAN E. Y. BERRY OF SOUTH DAKOTA LIKES TO TELL.

THE MOTION PICTURE, "TOMAHAWK," HAD BEEN MADE IN THE BLACK HILLS WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF SIOUX INDIANS TAKING PART. ABOUT FIFTENN OF THE INDIANS LATER WENT TO THE EAST COAST FOR PREMIER SHOWINGS, STAGING WAR DANCES AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEATERS.

THE CHIEF, BEN AMERICAN HORSE, HAD BEEN A CARLISLE INSTITUTE



JAN 3 1966

-6-

GRADUATE AND HAD FOR MANY YEARS BEEN ACTIVE IN IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE ON THE RESERVATIONS. SO WHEN THE INDIAN PARTY CAME TO WASHINGTON, CONGRESSMAN BERRY TOOK HIM TO VISIT VICE PRESIDENT ALBEN BARKLEY AT HIS OFFICE JUST OFF THE SENATE FLOOR.

AS THE OLD CHIEF AROSE TO LEAVE, HE TOOK THE VICE PRESIDENT BY THE HAND (BOTH WERE IN THEIR EIGHTIES), LOOKED BARKLEY IN THE EYE AND SAID, "YOUNG FELLOW, LET ME GIVE YOU A LITTLE ADVICE. BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR IMMIGRATION LAWS. WE WERE CARELESS WITH OURS."

BUT THERE IS ONE VERY HAZY, GRAY AREA WHERE ALL THIS FINE INFORMATION I'M GIVING YOU DOESN'T MAKE MUCH DIFFERENCE. IT'S IN THE AREA OF PUBLIC SPEAKING. TIME AND AGAIN A PUBLIC FIGURE WILL BE ASKED TO SPEAK BEFORE A GROUP ON A SUBJECT WHICH MAY NOT BE HIS BEST BEFORE AN AUDIENCE WHICH KNOWS MORE ABOUT THE SUBJECT THAN HE DOES ANYWAY.

CARL ALBERT, THE LITTLE GIANT FROM MC ALESTER, OKLAHOMA, ~~IS~~ A POWERFUL MAN IN THE UNITED STATES AS HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER. HE STANDS 5'4" TALL AND, THOUGH IT'S NOT AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION, HE SOMEHOW REMINDS YOU OF A LITTLE RED-HAIRED FRECKLE FACED BOY FROM DOWN AT THE OLD FISHING HOLE. IN REALITY HE'S A FORCEFUL LEADER, ENERGETIC DEBATER, A RHODES SCHOLAR AND A LAWYER. HE LIKES TO TELL THIS STORY ON HIMSELF.

ONE TIME WHILE SPEAKING AT A RURAL SCHOOL BACK IN THE DISTRICT, HE GAVE THE AUDIENCE EVERYTHING HE HAD. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SPEECH, A LITTLE BOY CAME RUNNING UP TO HIM AND SAID: "MISTER, YOU SURE INSPIRED ME TODAY!"

BEAMING, ALBERT PURSUED THE MATTER A LITTLE FURTHER. (IF HE'D SAID SOMETHING THAT INSPIRING, HE OUGHT TO FIND OUT WHAT IT WAS SO HE COULD USE IT ON ANOTHER AUDIENCE.)

"WELL, IT WASN'T ANYTHING YOU SAID," THE BOY REPLIED. "I JUST FIGURE IF A LITTLE SQUIRT LIKE YOU CAN BE ELECTED TO CONGRESS, I CAN BECOME

-7-

JAN 30 1966

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!"

WITHOUT A TOUCH OF HUMOR, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT DEMOCRACY WOULD BE ABLE TO EXIST FOR LONG. IT'S THE ABILITY TO LAUGH A LITTLE THAT TAKES AWAY THE TENSION AND THE STRAIN OF THE VERY REAL PROBLEMS ON THIS EARTH OF OURS. IT'S LAUGHTER THAT PROVIDES THAT ALL IMPORTANT SAFETY VALVE WHEN TEMPER GET TOO HEATED. AND MAYBE THE WORLD WOULD SEE FEWER BLOODLETTING REVOLUTIONS IF MEN COULD REMEMBER THAT HUMOR CAN WORK AS WELL ON AN OPPONENT AS THE FINEST PISTOL.

AND JUST IN CASE YOU THINK I'VE BEEN PRETTY LONG-WINDED, LET ME RELATE TO YOU -- IN WAY OF EXPLANATION -- THE WORDS OF A VETERAN NEWSPAPERMAN:

"A POLITICIAN MIGHT HAVE TYPHOID FEVER AND RECOVER; HE MIGHT HAVE PNEUMONIA AND RECOVER; HE MIGHT HAVE CEREBRAL MENINGITIS AND RECOVER; HE MIGHT HAVE YELLOW FEVER AND RECOVER; BUT -- IF THE SON OF A GUN EVER HAD LOCKJAW, BY GAD HE'D BURST."



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Congress of the United States  
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COUNTIES:		
BARBER	HODGEMAN	RAWLINS
BARTON	JEWELL	RENO
CHEYENNE	KEARNY	REPUBLIC
CLARK	KINGMAN	RICE
CLOUD	KIOWA	ROOKS
COMANCHE	LANE	RUSH
DECATUR	LINCOLN	RUSSELL
EDWARDS	LOGAN	SALINE
ELLIS	MEADE	SCOTT
ELLSWORTH	MITCHELL	SEWARD
FINNEY	MORTON	SHERIDAN
FORD	NESS	SHERMAN
GOVE	NORTON	SMITH
GRAHAM	OSBORNE	STAFFORD
GRANT	OTTAWA	STANTON
GRAY	PAWNEE	STEVENS
GREELEY	PHILLIPS	THOMAS
HAMILTON	PRATT	TREGO
HARPER		WALLACE
HASKEL		WICHITA

NEWS HENS  
TOPEKA, KANSAS  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 1966  
REMARKS OF CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE

"NOTHING"

I was pleased to accept the invitation -- well, actually, I guess the order from "Mamie" Boyd to appear on your program. I know that "Mamie" was trying to choose between "Bus" and "Huck", and I have a sneaking suspicion that "Bus" and "Huck" got together and agreed that the best thing that could happen to either of them would be to leave Topeka Saturday.

I really have no qualifications for being here this morning, particularly in view of the instructions I received that my remarks were to be limited to "nothing". I would hasten to add that it's not often a politician has an opportunity to speak on something he really understands -- and this may be the first time in history a politician's ever gotten a completely honest billing.

Public figures are often asked to speak before a group about something the audience knows much more about than he does. Not long ago a well-known political figure was asked to speak to a very specialized group of scholars and scientists about air and water pollution. He handled it very well, by telling the story about the young man who was one of the sole survivors of the famed Johnstown Flood in Pennsylvania back in 1889.

It seems as though this fellow had spent a lifetime absolutely boring people to death with the tale. At every gathering he would grab the floor and relive the saga of the flood. Finally, in old age, death came and he trudged off to heaven.

St. Peter greeted him at the gates. After reviewing his credentials, he said that he thought everything was pretty well in order and that he would be able to permit him into heaven. Then after the appropriate congratulations, St. Peter said, "Now we have a tradition up here. In way of welcome, we let everyone that enters these gates call the shots for the first day. What would you like to do?"

The old man thought about it for awhile and then said, "I believe I would like to gather all the angels together and tell them about the great Johnstown flood."

St. Peter cocked his head and said, "O.K. But I just want you to remember one thing. Noah's up here."



-2-

Humility is one thing a politician learns very fast. He may not show it, but if the seniority system and the tremendously heavy work load doesn't teach it to him, his constituents will. You may remember the letter that appeared in Emily Post's column. It began:

Dear Miss Post,

When writing to a Congressman should you address him as "Your Honor, Dear Sir" or can you start right in by telling him what you think of him?"

Congressmen receive a lot of mail, and it occurred to me that you might be interested in knowing what people are writing about these days: (REFER TO LETTERS TYPED ON INDEX CARDS)

I have spent considerable time in politics, and it is always amazing to me that the processes of democracy work so well. Winston Churchill once remarked that democracy is the worst possible system of government, but has one paramount virtue: It happens to be better than any other system men have been able to devise.

Back in the 1800's a Frenchman named Alexis de Tocqueville wrote an elaborate work called Democracy in America. In it he told the French people, and I quote, that "on entering the House of Representatives at Washington, one is struck by the vulgar demeanor of that great assembly."

He noted with distaste that "its members are almost all obscure individuals, whose names present no associations to the mind; they are mostly village lawyers, men in trade, or even persons belonging to the lower classes of society." Then he added, "It is said that the Representatives of the people do not always know how to write correctly."

I suppose from an aristocratic point of view, de Tocqueville's criticisms may have been well-grounded, but the architects of the young Constitution of the United States had no intention of relying solely on the aristocrats. They intended to rely on the wisdom of the people. For 189 years, America has been proving the soundness of this decision. We can boast that our government is the oldest on earth, if we mean the oldest based on a fundamentally unchanged or unbroken, written Constitution. And it is one of the amazing facts of democratic life that precisely the thing which the pedantics of the Old World criticized as placing us most in jeopardy--direct elections by the whole people--has been the sustaining force, the main strength and the safety valve of our nation.

We have sent some interesting personalities -- and some interesting characters -- into public office, and we are still sending them. Today in Congress there



-3-

are 535 of us. These are men with backgrounds which vary as far as from lawyers to businessmen, bankers, labor union officials, physicians, ministers, civil servants, teachers, housewives and even a machinist. It is a wide cross section of the wisdom as well as the foolishness, the weakness as well as the strength, the prejudice as well as the tolerance, the fears as well as the courage of the American people.

It's like Teddy Roosevelt used to say, "Representative government is that which elects six men in favor of a thing and six against it, and wonders why something isn't done."

But if there is one unifying factor amid the group, I believe I'd have to say it's this, I believe I'd have to say it's humor. If a man doesn't have a sense of humor I don't see how he could take the stress and tension of public office for very long. And I might add that humor even helps a little in defeat. It's like the old white-haired Alabama ex-Congressman, who returned to Capitol Hill for a visit. A reporter approached him asking, "How come you have retired from politics?"

"Illness, suh," he shot back. "The people got sick of me."

One of the towering, long-time figures in Congress today is the House Speaker John McCormack. He's called "The Fighting Irishman from Boston." He's a tall, round-shouldered old gentleman with a serious intensesness about him. When he stands up to deliver a prepared text, he is the epitome of booming oratorical eloquence. In debate, he has a knifelike sarcasm. His first election to Congress was in 1928 and he's been an integral part of it ever since.

One of the wittiest cracks on the House floor is attributed to him. As you may know, one Member never calls another by name on the floor, but rather refers to him, for example, as "The Gentleman from Kansas." And if he gets pretty wound up, he may refer to him in glowing terms such as "The Brilliant Advocate of the State of ..." or "The Esteemed Member from..." or "The Gentleman whom I highly regard" and so on.

Well, on one occasion a certain member was opposing a position which Speaker McCormack strongly advocated, and was vehemently denouncing the proposition.

As McCormack regained the floor, he rose in cold dignity and began in effect, "As you all know, I have a minimum high regard for the gentleman from....."

Lawmaking can be a rather precarious business. You throw your hat in the ring, but try to hang onto your neck once you've been elected. One of my favorite illustrations is the one told by Florida's 8th District Congressman, Billy Matthews.

"I feel," he said once, "something like the lawmaker in that legendary Greek



-4-

community who, when offering a new law in the popular assembly, appeared on the platform with a rope around his neck. If the law was accepted by the assembly, they removed the rope; if the law was rejected, they removed the platform."

Legislating the laws for a nation of almost two hundred million people is not something to be taken lightly. But often in the course of a Session, humor is one of the most effective tools for making your point.

The famous liberal from Nebraska, the late Senator George W. Norris, summed up the legislative process for a constituent in these brief words: "Well, you see, a bill receives the O.K. in the House and the K.O. in the Senate and vice versa."

When the Immigration Bill was passed last year, I heard the story again which Congressman E. Y. Berry of South Dakota likes to tell.

The motion picture, "Tomahawk," had been made in the Black Hills with a large number of Sioux Indians taking part. About fifteen of the Indians later went to the East Coast for premier showings, staging war dances at the entrance of the theaters.

The chief, Ben American Horse, had been a Carlisle Institute graduate and had for many years been active in improving the condition of the Indian people on the reservations. So when the Indian party came to Washington, Congressman Berry took him to visit Vice President Alben Barkley at his office just off the Senate floor.

As the old chief arose to leave, he took the Vice President by the hand (both were in their eighties), looked Barkley in the eye and said, "Young fellow, let me give you a little advice. Be careful with your immigration laws. We were careless with ours."

But there is one very hazy, gray area where all this fine information I'm giving you doesn't make much difference. It's in the area of public speaking. Time and again a public figure will be asked to speak before a group on a subject which may not be his best before an audience which knows more about the subject than he does anyway.

Carl Albert, the Little Giant from McAlester, Oklahoma, is a powerful man in the United States as House Majority Leader. He stands 5'4" tall and, though it's not an accurate description, he somehow reminds you of a little red-haired freckle faced boy from down at the old fishing hole. In reality he's a forceful leader, energetic debater, a Rhodes scholar and a lawyer. He likes to tell this tale on himself.

One time while speaking at a rural school back in the District, he gave the



-5-

audience everything he had. At the conclusion of the speech, a little boy came running up to him and said: "Mister, you sure inspired me today!"

Beaming, Albert pursued the matter a little further. (If he'd said something that inspiring, he ought to find out what it was so he could use it on another audience.)

"Well, it wasn't anything you said," the boy replied. "I just figure if a little squirt like you can be elected to Congress, I can become President of the United States!"

Without a touch of humor, I don't believe that democracy would be able to exist for long. It's the ability to laugh a little that takes away the tension and the strain of the very real problems on this earth of ours. It's laughter that provides that all-important safety valve when tempers get too heated. And maybe the world would see fewer bloodletting revolutions if men could remember that humor can work as well on an opponent as the finest pistol.

And just in case you think I've been pretty long-winded, let me relate to you -- in way of explanation -- the words of a veteran newspaperman:

"A politician might have typhoid fever and recover; he might have pneumonia and recover; he might have cerebral meningitis and recover; he might have yellow fever and recover; but -- if the son of a gun ever had lockjaw, by gad he'd burst."