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"All the News That's Fit to Print"

ADOLPH S. OCHS, Publisher 1896-1935

Published Every Day in the Year by THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY

ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER President and Publisher

JULIUS OCHS ADLER Vice President and General Manager

GODFREY N. NELSON Secretary

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1952.

OFFICES OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

New York City... Telephone Lackawanna 4-1000 Main Office... Times Building, 229 W. 43 St. (36) Times Tower, Times Sq (36)... Downtown, 220 Bway (7)

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\*One week, 95c. †One week, 50c.

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MICROFILM EDITION, by the year... \$140.00 BOUND VOLUME (Rag Paper) 375.00 (Newsprint) 160.00 RAG EDITION: Single Copies (Daily) .75 (Sunday) 1.25 Unbound by the year... 275.00

THE NEW YORK TIMES INDEX

Table with 2 columns: Description and U.S.A. Price. Rows for 24 semi-monthly issues, Annual Cumulative Volume, Semi-monthlies with Annual Cumulative Volume, and For Rates to Foreign Countries.

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POLITICAL MIRACLE

The astonishing triumph of General Eisenhower in the Minnesota primary is, without exaggeration, a political miracle. The results in New Hampshire a week ago had already indicated the amazing depth of General Eisenhower's appeal to the ordinary citizen. What has now happened in Minnesota is something unique in American political history.

What were the circumstances of the Minnesota primary? As in New Hampshire, General Eisenhower took no part whatever in the campaign. But to make things more difficult, this time his name did not even appear on the ballot. To vote for him it was necessary to resort to the "write-in"—which in the great game of American politics is an obstacle of enormous proportions. Furthermore, in this contest a so-called "favorite son" was running—namely, Harold E. Stassen, three times Governor of Minnesota and reputedly master of the state's Republican machine. Minnesota itself is in what is supposed to be the "isolationist" Midwest, and General Eisenhower is the antithesis of the isolationist.

To top it all, the General's amateur "organization" within the state began its write-in campaign literally only last week, after it had recovered from the shock of seeing his name stricken from the printed ballot because of a technicality in the new election law; and it conducted this last-minute campaign against the advice and without the consent of the national Eisenhower headquarters. Finally, primary elections theoretically call forth only the hard-bitten party-liners, and this one was so arranged that it was awkward for pro-Eisenhower Democrats to cross over to the Republican side even if they wanted to.

And yet what were the results? Out of 287,000 Republicans who went to the polls through snow and sleet the fantastic and astounding total of 107,000 violated every rule of the political book by painstakingly writing the name of Eisenhower on the ballot. They probably spelled it a dozen different ways, and many of them merely penciled in the three letters "I-K-E." But they knew what they wanted, and that was enough. Almost as many Minnesotans took the trouble to cast a write-in vote for Eisenhower as followed the incomparably easier course of marking "X" opposite the name of their erstwhile "favorite son."

Four times as many voted for Eisenhower as for Senator Taft—and this in the supposedly "isolationist" part of the United States. Four times as many voted for Eisenhower as for General MacArthur and General MacArthur's stand-in combined—and this in the "MacArthur" part of the country. In Minnesota's most populous county, in which Minneapolis is located, many more ballots were cast for Eisenhower than for Stassen.

What does it all mean? It means, we think, that the American people have an instinctive trust in Eisenhower, that he is the kind of man they want for President, and that they will go to great lengths to vote for him. Though he has not directly participated in this campaign Americans feel that they know enough about him to be sure of his integrity, his wisdom and his ability. He is no man on horseback—if he were, this newspaper would not be supporting him—but he has captured the imagination and, what is even more important, the confidence of vast masses of Americans.

The great question now is: Does the Republican party want a winner? Will the party respond to the obvious wishes of great numbers of the people—Republicans, Democrats and independents—who want to vote Republican next

November? If New Hampshire and Minnesota prove anything, they prove beyond the last vestige of doubt that Republican voters want Dwight Eisenhower to be their nominee for President of the United States. And so do a great many other Americans. It is hard to believe that the Republican party—after twenty years in the political "wilderness"—will fail to seize the opportunity that is now hammering at its door.

LOUDER THAN WORDS

After Capt. George Ward, British Under Secretary for Air, reported to the House of Commons that the Royal Air Force was inadequate either to defend the country or play its part in the defense of Europe on the Atlantic lifeline, the air estimates were approved without a dissenting voice. Although the figures Captain Ward presented for the year beginning April 1 were nearly a third higher than the 1951 appropriations, and although his speech was punctuated with objections and protests against the "ruinous" cost of armament, when it came to the point not a single member of the Opposition dared to vote against the increase in expenditure.

In France the story is the same. Clamor against the military program sounds like a thunderstorm. No one watching the swift succession of wobbly administrations needs to be told of the weakness of the French political machinery or the impotence of the National Assembly to form a working majority out of the irreconcilable parties of which it is composed. From a distance it seems as if parliament and people are united in nothing except complaints of the impossibility of carrying on the never-ending struggle in Indo-China, which costs them more than they receive in American aid, while fulfilling the quota demanded by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. As the chorus of complaint swells, however, France agrees to increase the NATO quota by \$500,000,000 and to raise her total military budget to \$4,000,000,000.

This discrepancy between words and actions is a warning to Americans, and particularly to the Congressional committees debating appropriations for the Mutual Security program, not to take too seriously the blown-up echoes of the gripes of our overseas allies. Of course the British and the French, the Belgians and the Italians, cry out loud against the new burdens superimposed upon an overstrained economy. So do we though the pain we suffer is like the mild headache of a healthy man compared to an invalid's relapse into the state of anemia from which he has just recovered. They don't really mean what they say, these grumbling and irritable convalescents. They mean what they do; and in almost every case the parliaments end their noisy debates by voting by large majorities for the biggest military budgets they have ever accepted in peacetime.

MOSCOW CALLS THE ROLL

The current world-wide Communist effort to exploit figures like Victor Hugo, Leonardo da Vinci, Nikolai Gogol and Avicenna for Stalinist propaganda verges on the comic. Within the contexts of their times and cultures, these great figures were free men using the light of reason to help humanity toward a better future. They have nothing in common with the new slavery which is contemporary Stalinism.

We can realize this most clearly if we speculate even briefly on what these men would have felt about the Soviet system in the light of their own actual achievements. Hugo, the friend of the poor and the oppressed, could well have applied the title "Les Miserables" to the life of the hunted fugitives from Stalin's secret police. Da Vinci, the epitome of the free inquiring human mind, could have felt nothing but revulsion for the fetters of ideology which bind Soviet science. What rich material for his sharp satire Gogol would have in the antics of Stalin's bureaucracy, and how appropriate is his title "Dead Souls" for the unfortunate inmates of Soviet slave labor camps! And how could a modern Avicenna be anything but an implacable foe of Lysenko's genetics nonsense?

The concoctors of Soviet propaganda seem to be showing signs of strain.

TO STUDY OFF-TRACK BETTING

We note with approval that the New York Senate and Assembly have unanimously approved extension of the Joint Legislative Committee on Racing to study the question of legalizing some off-track betting. The measure does not require the Governor's signature.

This committee, headed by Senator Arthur H. Wicks, made an interim report March 1 and included a neutral discussion of the question. It remarked that "a large volume of correspondence has been received by the committee urging it to sponsor legislation which would permit some form of off-track betting." It added that, since publication of editorials in this newspaper last fall and an editorial in Life magazine in January, "agitation for off-course betting legislation has greatly increased."

Findings of the British Royal Commission on Betting presented to Parliament March 16, 1951, have been studied by the committee; this commission stated that "we agree that off-course betting requires measures of control, but we can see no justification on social grounds for prohibiting it completely \* \* \*"

As a result of its preliminary study the committee "entirely concurs in the view that off-course betting is a subject which now calls for a comprehensive study by the Legislature," a step that the Legislature has in turn approved. It does not necessarily follow that the committee will approve off-track betting. The committee specifically "reserves the right to draw its own independent conclusions after it has made a full study."

For fifty-five years, until Jan. 1, 1940, the State Constitution prohibited