

A WORKING SENATOR

The Rockford Morning Star recommends the election of Joseph T. Meek to the United States senate because Meek will team up with Senator Everett M. Dirksen as a conscientious and industrious lawmaker and an advocate of the interests of Illinois and its citizens in Washington.

Meek is a completely sincere man, untouched by vanity, free of any malice or pettishness, with no desire to strut. He has that serene dignity that comes from not looking down on his fellow men.

He has a conviction, and he carries it with no more arrogance than did Senator Robert Taft, that he has a knowledge of government, practical economics, and legislative processes that can be of service to his state and the country.

We know that Joseph Meek, in the senate, would be industrious in committee work, where lawmaking is largely carried out for the very necessary reason of avoiding chaos.

Meek's honesty, his lack of arrogance, his freedom from malice, and his respect for the intelligence of the voters are assurance that he will never be a demagogue, nor attempt to divide society along any class-hated lines.

The election of Joseph Meek is important to Illinoisans, for with Meek in the senate, this state will regain full representation that it has lacked while Douglas has been preoccupied with his national status.

Without reservation, we urge the election of Joseph Meek to the senate.

A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

Fitting recognition of a great community achievement will be given today at ceremonies dedicating the Greater Rockford airport. It is an achievement in which all property owners of the territory embracing the airport authority have had a part.

The presence of Governor and Mrs. Stratton will add distinction to the occasion. The governor is deserving of the community's thanks for finding the time in an extremely crowded schedule to come here and deliver the dedicatory address.

The history of Greater Rockford airport began in the early post-war days, after Camp Grant had served its purpose in world war 2. The community recognized the need for a modern airport. A remarkable record of accomplishment was written by the community-minded men who pioneered the establishment of the airport.

VOTE "YES" ON THESE

An extraordinary effort is being made over this weekend to scuttle the reapportionment amendment. We

have urged a "Yes" vote on all three issues on the blue ballot. The most vital issue provides for remapping of Illinois legislative districts, with Chicago-Cook county given a slight edge in the lower house, but with downstate given perpetual numerical control of the senate as a safeguard.

The Morning Star has expressed its approval of all bond-issue propositions to be voted on Tuesday. We earnestly recommend "Yes" votes on these issues, which are essential to progress, public safety, and public health: a \$3,000,000 sanitary district bond issue, and four municipal bond issues—\$90,000 for fire equipment; \$30,000 for police building improvements; \$25,000 for school traffic signals; and \$30,000 for renovation and enlargement of fire stations.

The Morning Star also recommends strongly a "Yes" vote on a tax levy to establish and maintain a detention home for delinquent children.

YOURS SINCERELY

To Ernest Hemingway, Havana, Cuba.

Dear Ernest: We see you've been given the Nobel literature prize, and we hope you can get the \$55,000 through the tax collectors in better shape than the old man's fish, which reached shore eaten to the bones by sharks.

An Editor's Notebook

The First Duty Of the Citizen

"It is unbelievable to me that good government cannot command as much zealous support as bad government commands opposition."

No essayist—not even Emerson—could have said it any better. The gist of the challenge in that sentence is that good citizenship consists in being for something to as great a degree, certainly, as in being against something.

This plea for good citizenship supporting good government was contained in a telegram President Eisenhower sent to Wayland Brooks, Republican national committeeman from Illinois, urging that Illinois citizens bend every effort to vote and to get out the vote next Tuesday.

His first duty? Supposing a man honestly pays his taxes, answers the call to military service if it comes, observes the law in the minutest detail—all obligations of the good citizen—aren't these more important?

But the President makes his point. The kind of government we have—to pay taxes to, to serve in emergency, to command law-observance—depends on the votes of informed and patriotic citizens. Voting is the "first duty" for upon the voters rests the decision as to what kind of country we shall have.

But the voters should be something more than "decontamination squads," rushing in to clean up situations which develop out of apathy and laxity. The voters who give good government zealous support won't have to answer the alarm bells when wreckers and conspirators and thieves get out of hand.

Maybe it's something like going to church regularly or going only during revival meetings. We'll concede that crusades are patriotically stirring; that crusade of 1952 was stirring, and it brought about a mighty change in the nation's moral climate. But there ought to be fervor for good government, just as there must be zeal against bad government when we haven't supplied the fervor that can keep the good.

Voters of this community, of the nation, have an opportunity Tuesday to show zealous support for good government by going to the polls. In vast majority, this community and the national community know that we have had good government, that the moral climate has changed for the better, that we have prosperity and jobs without the bad conscience of knowing that they rest on war and other men's sacrifice.

Coffee Colloquy— The Story of a Very Tired Man

"He stood there," began the lady of the house, handing her spouse his first cup of breakfast coffee, "holding on to the lectern and leaning against it, and he said: 'I am a very tired man.'"

"Aren't we all?" murmured the man. "Who was this particular tired man?"

"Richard Applegate," answered the lady. "The newspaperman who spoke before the Woman's club Tuesday afternoon."

"The one who was just released by the Chinese communists the other day?" asked the man.

"He was released September fifteenth," said the lady. "And here he was, not quite six weeks later, telling about those horrible eighteen months he spent as a prisoner of the commies."

"Did he explain how that boat happened to get captured by the commies?" queried the man.

"It was his boat," replied the lady. "You knew that, didn't you? He said he'd dreamed for years of sailing a boat around the world. So finally he'd acquired this little cutter, and he invited a couple of friends to take a trip to Macao with him. One of them was Don Dixon, of International News Service. The cutter's pilot was a Captain Ben Krasner, and this Captain Krasner asked if he could include his Chinese fiancée in the party. Then there were a couple of Chinese crewmen. With no special worries, they sailed out of Hongkong on the second day of spring in nineteen-fifty-three.

They were in international waters when a Chinese gunboat bore down on them. They were taken ashore, accused of invading Chinese waters, and imprisoned."

"Why?" asked the man.

"Applegate spent a year and a half asking himself why," answered the lady. "He never found out. I don't think he knows, either, why they finally let him and Dixon and Krasner go. The commies are still holding Krasner's fiancée, though. And they knocked out the teeth of one of the Chinese crewmen because he wouldn't give them the answers they wanted when they asked him questions."

"Sailing a pleasure craft out of Hongkong before the Korean war was ended was probably not the smartest thing Applegate ever did," commented the man.

"Well, probably not," conceded the lady. "But, on the other hand, he'd been a United Press man for years, and then an NBC man. He'd been a war correspondent, and he'd been in tough spots, but he probably always felt perfectly confident that between him and the United States government, he could always come out on top in an emergency. Probably just the way Bill Oatis of Associated Press felt, before the commies imprisoned him in Prague."

"I wonder how it feels," mused the man. "To sit in prison, and not get enough to eat, and try to keep track of what day and what month it is, and wonder—"

"Applegate told how it felt," said the lady. "He told it without drama or eloquence. And it all seemed more hopeless and horrible because he was just reciting the facts—filth, hunger, loneliness, despair. He didn't try to make himself seem heroic, either. Anything but. And all the time he was telling his story, I sat there and wondered how much strength of character I could have kept if it had happened to me."

"For the time being," suggested the man, "it might be wise for you to stay on this side of the Pacific. And while you're still here, do you mind letting me have another cup of that good occidental coffee?"

Frank Tripp's Column

The Circus People Don't Want To Go Home

A circus friend, a musician in a circus band for years, wrote me something a long time ago that I've kept on ice too long. It's about the good-byes at the closing of a circus season. Here's the way Phil Wright wrote it:

It is November and Daley Brothers circus is closing its season in Seguin, Tex. All day long, a cloud has hovered around the show. The pad tent (dressing tent) was quiet, even through the penny-ante sessions between shows.

The labor gangs were going about their daily chores of bringing 'em in, putting 'em up, and taking 'em down. The night show went on as usual. The last act was trimmed down. As it neared the final cue, a stiffness settled over the big top. There was a slight pause and the band broke into "Auld Lang Syne." All were relaxed; no town to make tomorrow.

Weather-beaten trouper, faces soaked like old salts, started soaking hands and swallowed like they had watermelons in their throats. Many were the guys, from the little two-bit grifter up front to the big shots in the dough, who had taken one too many—for a reason. The show was closing.

Ghost Writer



Ye Towne Gossip's Weekly Report—

Unfettered, if Not Unrehearsed

If you are not interested in progressive jazz—and "progressive" has, in this connotation, no political implications, we assure you, and thus is in no way related to Tuesday's elections—let's see; maybe we'd better start over.

Okay. Here we go again. If you're not interested in progressive jazz, perhaps you'd better tiptoe quietly out of this page and step over into the more genteel premises of the sports pages. As you have already discovered, our neighbor over in the far-right-hand column is talking this morning about progressive-jazz practitioners; and we're going to talk about them, too.

The reason for all this preoccupation with uninhibited music is that last Wednesday night our neighboring city of Beloit began its 1954-55 series of entertainments in the Beloit college field house; and the opening entertainment was a show that had been presented at midnight in New York City's Carnegie hall only 10 days earlier. It was a Duke Ellington concert, with Dave Brubeck and Gerry Mulligan's quartets assisting.

We'll just assume you weren't in that audience of 3,500 or more people last Wednesday night (although why we should make that assumption, we don't know, because we saw several hundred of our Rockford neighbors, acquaintances, and friends; and we'll present you with a once-over-lightly-freehand sketch of what you can expect to see, hear, and perhaps feel, when and if you ever attend an Ellington-Brubeck-Mulligan show.

In the first place, you must not expect to settle back and relax while people play recognizable tunes to you. Rhythm, you'll get in abundance; tunes will be given you very sparingly, indeed.

Going to a progressive-jazz concert isn't very different from going to an art gallery to see an exhibition of non-representational paintings and sculpture; except, of course, that an exhibition of

non-representational art usually doesn't attract 3,500 paying customers at one time.

Nor is a progressive-jazz concert very different from a concert of—well, say the later works of Arnold Schoenberg; except that the jazz concert is louder, and more fun.

Come to think of it, a progressive-jazz concert isn't too different, either, from a bout with the late James Joyce's "Finnegans Wake"; except that many people fall asleep over "Finnegans Wake," and practically nobody falls asleep at a jazz concert.

During the first part of Wednesday's program, while Dave Brubeck played the piano, Paul Desmond played the alto saxophone, Joe Dodge played the drums, and Bob Bates plucked the strings of a big bull fiddle, we wondered whether Bass-Player Bates really belonged with the progressive-jazz boys, because he was the only one of the four who wasn't wearing horn-rimmed specs.

Subsequently, during the playing of the Mulligan quartet—young Mr. Mulligan on the baritone sax, John Eardley of Altoona, Pa., on trumpet, Keith ("Red") Mitchell on bass, and Frank Isola on drums—we decided that you can be extremely progressive in your jazz and still wear no blinkers. With only one spectated member—Trumpeter Eardley, the Mulligan outfit is as progressive as a jazz quartet ought to get, at this stage in our country's evolution.

There are very few musical conventions that inhibit serious young jazzmen; but there is one sartorial convention that, apparently, all serious jazz drummers observe meticulously: a jazz drummer must not wear garters. Drummer Dodge and Drummer Isola were both as ungartered as anybody we've ever seen.

We ought to report: That Mr. Brubeck is a dazzling pianist; that he played a little solo passage which sounded like some of the best and purest Bach we've ever heard; and that he has an engaging personality.

That Mr. Mulligan's haircut was identified for us by Director Kirk Denmark of the Beloit college student theater and of Beloit's summer Court theater, as a French crew cut: it's close-cropped bangs in front, and modified duck-tail in back... that the Mulligan hair gleams in chromatic harmony with the polished brass of his sax, which he plays with imagination and impressive virtuosity... and that this same Mr. Mulligan can also play piano with verve and a high degree of skill.

The important man in the show, since he is not only piano virtuoso, composer, and band leader, but suave, witty master of ceremonies as well, is Duke Ellington.

The Duke permitted himself the luxury of kidding the "romantic" jazz fanciers a little. He said he knew that the purest jazz is believed to take sonic form when members of an ensemble get together and just play—unfettered and unrehearsed. Then he shrugged his broad shoulders and drew down the corners of his mouth in a funny grimace; "but there are fifteen of us," he said. We might add that the 15 men in the Ellington band, which presented the entire second half of Wednesday's concert, don't seem too rigidly conformist when they play, even if they're not completely unrehearsed.

His band includes a number of stars, including a drummer, Dave Black, who performed an endurance-contest solo which sounded like a cross between Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture and the first battle of the Marne, and which induced an ecstatic hysteria—or maybe it was hysterical ecstasy—in the young woman seated in front of us.

There is also a small man named Ray Nance who plays the trumpet, plays genuine jazz violin, and sings and dances in a spirit of simon-pure zaniness. The song he sang (and danced to) was an exalted ballad entitled Just Squeeze Me, but Please Don't Tease Me. Not the least of Mr. Nance's amazing talents is his ability to resume, after being the funniest man in the hall, a stolid, morose expression that could almost convince you he'd never grinned in his life.

Well, now you know about progressive jazz. Next superstellar attraction at Beloit: "Bernadine." Mary Chase's comedy that had a good run on Broadway. Kirk Denmark's dog, Polly, has a role in "Bernadine"; appears in three scenes, no less.

While we're reminding you of things—Christmas isn't very far away. The Jenny Lind society's annual pre-holiday bazaar, which raises money for Swedish-American hospital, will be held Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; and the Rockford Memorial Hospital auxiliary invites you to an old-fashioned Christmas bazaar next Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Rockford Woman's club.

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Looking It Over with Hal Nelson— The Duke Gets Hot Reception

There's a beat-up old record in our jazz collection. It's entitled "Otto Make That Riff Staccato." The artist? Duke Ellington.

We've hung onto this record, even though it's cracked. Wednesday night we began to understand why. We saw and heard the Duke in person. Now we know why the Duke's records—old or new—are so popular.

The Duke kept plugging his new long-playing album. Better than half of the numbers his band played Wednesday night in the Beloit college field house are in this one. We've a hunch that quite a few copies were sold before the end of the week. We were practically sold out.

We don't claim to have an excess of musical awareness. There are a lot of kinds of music we can get along with-out.

And we'll confess right here that the first half of Wednesday night's program left us somewhat baffled. Those were the offerings of the Dave Brubeck and the Gerry Mulligan combos. The Duke said that Gerry and his boys were real cool. But at times they left us a little cold. Mulligan's last number was something called Utter Chaos. For the first time, we were in accord.

We weren't alone in our bafflement. We heard one Beloit college student muttering, "I wanted to see Bob Hope. Now I'm stuck with this." (Note: Bob Hope is next on the program of the Beloit college series. He's due Friday night, Nov. 19.)

As we were pushing our way to the soft-drink bar, we met up with our neighbor, Lee Fetzter. We thought he looked puzzled, too. So we asked him what he thought about the first half of the program. "I won't talk," was his reply. "You might quote me."

And as we were munching an ice-cream bar, we heard one usher say to another, "All the cops wanted to come in before the concert started. Now they're fighting to get out."

Kirk Denmark, Beloit college dramatics instructor, who was sitting with us, had some kind words to say, however, for Leader Brubeck. But then, Kirk likes to experiment himself.

By the way, Brubeck's drummer, Joe Dodge, was born in Monroe, Wis. Didn't stay there long, though.

The Brubeck combo did play Duke Ellington's "A Train." Didn't sound much like the Ellington band recording of the number. We wouldn't have recognized it, except that Dave announced that that was what it was.

After intermission, there came the Ellington outfit. Most everybody in the band was wearing a pink necktie. Some bows; some stringbeans. On them, the pink ties looked good. On us? We wonder.

After the music started going 'round and 'round and coming out real smooth and hot and fine, the audience got into the groove. There were handclaps and cheers and whistles.

It was something like a football game. The team—your team—did all right and played a fair game in the first half. But after intermission time, they all made like all-Americans.

The Duke is quite a showman. And he gave an excellent demonstration of how to get the best out of the members of his band. We all had a chance to see and hear the Duke. But Ellington didn't hog the limelight from his bandmen. They all had their moments in the spotlight—and some of them drew as much applause as the Duke himself.

But that's the way the Duke likes it. We made a date with Kirk Denmark for another upcoming Beloit college event. That's his first student production of the season—Mary Chase's "Bernadine." Kirk has been learning jittersbugging since he started rehearsing this one. His students teach him to jittersbug—and then he teaches them how to combine jittersbugging with acting. It looks like some laugh-filled entertainment in Scoville on Nov. 5, 6, 8, 10, and 12. See you there.

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