

VOICE READERS COMPRISE a \$30,000,000 MARKET

EDITORIAL

Who's Trying to Kid Who?

WE WONDER if it was "inspired" or merely "wishful" thinking on the part of a former Carson City political commentator, now "experting" on the local scene, when he started a recent column with, "LAXALT-SAWYER EVEN MONEY," and then went on to suggest, "At this moment, it appears the big spenders on the Strip will split campaign donations equally between Lt. Gov. Paul Laxalt and Gov. Grant Sawyer if the two clash for the state's top spot" next year.

The fact that this pretended political pundit violated normal "diplomatic protocol" and journalistic usage by twice mentioning the Lieutenant Governor's name ahead of the Governor's -- when coupling them in the same sentence -- in his very first paragraph makes him suspect of either or both types of thinking right off the bat.

It is also significant that after subtly planting the impression in the reader's mind that Laxalt will be an "even money" bet to defeat Sawyer if they are opponents for the governorship in 1966, this "expert" carefully avoided actually making any such statement anywhere in his column. He also failed to offer any authority for his suggestion that "the big spenders on the Strip" intend to split their campaign donations equally between Sawyer and Laxalt.

In regard to the probable betting odds on such a contest, we seem to recall that the most highly respected oddsmaker in this area recently predicted that Sawyer would "open" at 2 to 1 over Laxalt if and when they square off against each other next year. And we have been emphatically assured by one of the smartest gaming bosses on the Strip -- a man who must be included on any local list of "big spenders" when it comes to political donations -- that Grant figures to wind up a 3-1 or better choice to take the Bounding Basque with the same dispatch his military namesake "took Richmond" a century ago.

Our friend on the Strip, who -- along with his fellow "big spenders" -- has never been known to throw away his money on an almost certain loser, firmly believes that Laxalt's strong showing against Sen. Howard Cannon last fall is far from indicative of what the fair-haired-boy of Nevada Republicanism can do against a Democratic opponent of Sawyer's stature. He makes the following points:

1. CANNON WAS at a distinct disadvantage in his battle for reelection to the Senate due to the national administration's strenuous efforts to extricate itself from several embarrassing situations -- efforts into which Cannon found himself inexorably drawn. Ironically, Cannon's loyalty to Pres. Johnson not only left him extremely vulnerable to attacks from Republicans, but also spurred his Democratic rivals in the primary (reportedly buttressed by funds from anti-Johnson sources) to heights of bitter invective seldom equalled on an intra-party level in the history of Nevada politics. This internecine warfare naturally worked to Laxalt's advantage in the general election campaign that followed Cannon's nomination. As a result, Laxalt, who was not subjected to the same strength-sapping ordeal in the primary, was able to pick up hundreds, perhaps thousands, of "protest" votes in the general election. In other words, many Nevadans who voted "for" Laxalt in the final showdown actually were voting "against" Cannon.

2. Cannon's duties and obligations in Washington forced him to wage an "absentee" campaign in Nevada to a large extent, whereas Laxalt never had to leave the state during the entire campaign except on a few, short occasions such as the Republican national convention in comparatively nearby San Francisco. And Laxalt was careful not to identify his own campaign too closely with the Goldwater-Miller ticket.

3. Sawyer's administration has been singularly free of scandal and the state's economy obviously is one of the soundest in the country. We have had our share of labor troubles (few, if any, attributable to malfunctions of the state

government), but per capita income remains high and extreme poverty practically nonexistent. In spite of growing uneasiness throughout the nation, undoubtedly due in some measure to the uncertain course of our foreign affairs, all available statistics of a trustworthy nature indicate that Nevada's principal industries -- gaming and tourism -- are flourishing. All these factors combine to impose a severe handicap on anyone who would challenge Sawyer's bid for another term as Governor -- especially a Lieutenant Governor who has offered only token opposition to the administration's policies and who, however reluctantly, has tacitly supported the Sawyer administration on such a major issue as enactment of substantial civil rights legislation.

4. IN REGARD to civil rights, Sawyer's sympathies and progressive policies in this sensitive area have contributed toward keeping Nevada free of the violent demonstrations by minority groups that have racked other states, not all of them in the "old South" by any means. The comparative tranquility of inter-racial relations and conditions in Nevada has placed this state in a most favorable light and undoubtedly has helped sustain our high-level economy. There is considerable doubt whether this happy state of affairs would continue with Laxalt in the Governor's mansion.

5. Finally, and most important, Laxalt could never expect to come to the Clark County line with the 13,500-vote edge he accumulated over southern Nevadan Cannon in the northern part of the state last fall if and when he tangles with Sawyer. The present Governor not only is a popular northern Nevadan himself, particularly strong in his home county of Elko (where he was elected district attorney), but his long residence in Carson City, Laxalt's own bailiwick, and frequent appearances in nearby Reno, have led the citizens of Ormsby and populous Washoe counties to accept Sawyer almost as "one of their own." As far as heavily Democratic Clark County is concerned, Democrat Sawyer figures to do as well or better than Cannon against Republican Laxalt. Especially in view of the fact that Sawyer is considered a "warmer" personality than Cannon both in personal contact with the electorate and on television. Sawyer also should be able to devote just as much time as Laxalt to wooing the voters of Clark County in person.

Although the foregoing analysis does not give a complete picture of the situation, and differs from our own prognosis in some minor respects, it most certainly comes much closer to portraying the hard facts of practical politics than the purely conjectural tripe served up in his recent column by the would-be expert on the local daily.

This mischievous malpractitioner in the art of political prophecy became even more deeply mired in his mishmash of misinformation when he predicted that "both Sawyer and Laxalt face problems on the Westside" because "the Negro leaders closest to Sawyer have declined in the Westside power structure" and "Laxalt was clobbered in his race against Sen. Howard Cannon."

There is no doubt about this cunning "half-truth" being "inspired" and a classic example of "wishful" thinking. We intend to set the record straight next week.



AFRICA in Today's World

IF EAST AFRICA'S magnificent wildlife is not exterminated within the next generation, that happy circumstance will be due to the far-sighted labors of a few dedicated men according to Orville Prescott, writing in the New York Times.

Prescott cites officials who set aside a few large tracts of land in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika (Tanzania) as game parks and wildlife reservations; the wardens who manage them (including Ernest Hemingway's son, Pat, African politicians who have been persuaded of the inestimable value of the animals, both as a tourist attraction and as a source of beauty and joy, and the fervent champions of conservation.

Among these last, none is so persistent in the "good cause" as Bernhard Grzimek, director of the Frankfurt (Germany) Zoo, who is described as "an author, a superb professional photographer and a tireless propagandist" in Prescott's review of Dr. Grzimek's most recent work -- "Rhinos Belong to Everybody." Prescott continues:

THIS IS DR. GRZIMEK'S third book about African animals and their uncertain future. The first, "No Place for Wild Animals," was the by-product of a prolonged venture that produced a motion picture of the same name. The second, "Serengeti Shall Not Die," was also taken from a movie. I do not know whether "Rhinos Belong to Everybody" is part of a similar double-feature system. It might be. Its 135 photographs are among the finest ever taken in Africa.

Sixty-two of these photographs are in color, 73 in black and white. All are outstanding and many are remarkable, either for their beauty or for their documentary authority. American tourists fortunate enough to have taken amateur photographs of African animals should find Dr. Grzimek's pictures humbling as well as fascinating.

This is what can be done with professional equipment and professional skill, with time, patience and opportunities not granted to the ordinary tourist -- such as flights in helicopters with their doors removed so the photographer can be seated with his legs hanging out into space.

AS ART CRITICS have long known, pictures cannot be described satisfactorily in words. All I can do is say that Dr. Grzimek's pictures are intimate, natural, often of difficult subjects (a leopard snarling from a tree, a lioness leaping at a fleeing impala), and often rarely lovely compositions of animals, dramatic scenery and evening light. To look at pictures like these should be enough to make anyone enlist in the crusade of animal conservation.

The text of this book is not in the same class as the pictures. Scappy, disorganized, a trifle confused in chronology and geography, it is a mixture of personal anecdotes, interesting information and accounts of the various circumstances that threaten the survival of African animals.

Chief dangers are the increase of the African human population and the vast rise in the cattle population, which means over-grazing and cattle-made deserts; droughts; poaching (rhino horns are prized as aphrodisiacs in the Orient and there is still a black market for ivory); hunting for meat to feed protein-starved Africans, who will not eat their cattle, symbols of wealth and prestige.

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