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People's Platform Longer, Wider Autos Aggravate Traffic Woes

Editors, The News: Boston, Mass. — With the annual beating of drums — the 1958 auto models have been unveiled. Again the American public is called upon to view with breathless ad-

miration the latest achievements of the automotive industry. What are the great earth-shaking advances featured in the new models? It appears that the incomparable new cars are to 9 inches longer and not only that, also wider and lower. There is a lot of hoop-la-da about glamorous tail fins, dual or triad tail lights, exciting rear decks, artistic grills and thrilling side trimmings.

But there's a complete black-

out with references to any attempt by the automotive industry to solve the two all-important problems created by the automobile — traffic congestion and automobile accidents.

Traffic experts insist in no uncertain terms that this is the year which means all taxpayers must provide more and more billions of dollars for a nationwide road building campaign in order to avert traffic strangulation by the automobile. Auto manufacturers are urged to contribute to the campaign to spend billions of public money for adequate roads to accommodate the automobile. Why then, they wonder, do we do the same time in making their automobiles longer and wider when going so is bound to aggravate the problem?



"Quiet Bunch In The Back Seat, Eh?"

Suppose the auto makers decided to turn their plans to manufacturing some other product, say household furniture. If they then started to mass produce living room, bedroom and dining room suites, would they keep making the furniture larger and larger and then call on the public to finance a multi-billion dollar program of enlarging present houses and building ever bigger new houses to accommodate the furniture? The answer is only, isn't it just about on a parallel with what is happening in the case of the automobile?

Today's car averages to transport less than two persons. Motionless, it displaces on the road the space of more than 35 pedestrians. In motion, it takes up an inexorably large area in view of the traffic congestion that never has been a major national problem for more than a quarter of a century.

What has been done in the new cars about the still greater problem of automobile accidents? The automobile is killing 40,000, maiming for life some 100,000 and injuring more than two million others annually on the highways of our country.

The only way to solve the automobile accident problem — and it must be solved — is to redesign the automobile for safe operation.

The human being who operates the car playing second fiddle to every essential operating feature. Safe operation of every automobile depends primarily on the operator's ability to see the road and its unpredictable hazards. Today's passenger automobile is so designed and built that the driver, located halfway or more back from the front of his car and down behind a long-high hood,

can't see the road close up ahead and at the side. He is forced to guess at passing clearances and front and rear intervals. His positioning in his car gives him a sense of detachment with respect to the road. He is inflated with a feeling of power that makes him forgetful of the unpredictable hazards and dangers involved in driving. With 120 horsepower and a speedometer, no wonder he is lured on to drive too fast.

Auto makers are talking about building safety into their cars. But what are they doing? Installing safety belts and shoulder straps, strengthening door locks, padding interiors — each a very feature of which is designed to mitigate the severity of accidents AFTER they happen, not to prevent the accidents from happening. Put all the drivers in the country in straw jackets and you won't prevent a single accident from happening.

The place to look for solution of the automobile accident problem is obviously in the automobile itself. Auto makers may try to side step responsibility by claiming they build what the public wants. There is no ground for this. The public has to have transportation and the only available means to that end is the automobile as designed and built and promoted by the auto industry.

The problems of traffic congestion and automobile accidents will be made worse, not better, by the 1958 cars. These problems will be solved only when the automobile manufacturers design and build cars to fit the people who will operate them and the roads on which they will be operated. That will be best accomplished by driver-in-front, engine-in-rear passenger automobiles.

— ARTHUR W. STEVENS

'Think Of It As A Necessary Crash Program, Ezra'



Progress Tiptoeed In The Back Door

THE CONCEPT of a unified Atlantic community of nations is not as unimaginable as some would have us believe.

While the world's attention strayed to more explosive but less harmful scenes, NATO parliamentarians meeting in Paris have unanimously adopted a resolution calling for a conference to explore greater Atlantic unity.

This unusual step toward political and economic unity as well as military accord was missed by the wire services and most newspapers in their coverage of the meeting. Readers were fully informed about the more immediate, but less significant, controversy over the delivery of arms to Tunisia but they learned nothing about the success of a proposal which may save the West from disaster.

On recommendation of the organization's political committee, headed by Sen. Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.), NATO heads of government were asked to:

"... Bring about, in accordance with the constitutional and governmental processes of their countries, a conference composed of leading representative citizens selected on a non-partisan basis and directed to convene as often as necessary in order to examine exhaustively and to recommend how greater cooperation and unity of purpose, as envisioned by the North Atlantic Treaty, within the Atlantic community may best be developed."

Sen. Kefauver, a sponsor of the 1956 congressional resolution requesting Pres-

ident Eisenhower to call such a meeting, emphasized that he was not advocating a new federation of states but merely the kind of cooperative effort foreseen in the NATO charter.

The late Eisenhower may save Sen. Kefauver some political embarrassment at home but it is perfectly clear that some system of effective political consultation will have to be devised. The senator himself said in an address during the conference of NATO parliamentarians:

"We must be explorers in the political field just as we are in the scientific field. We can expect no lasting unity of thought in military affairs, or in scientific matters, unless we establish political unity. A disunited people is like a mob—it can be dispersed by a very few who are disciplined and carry the weight of authority. We should recognize that the Soviet and its satellites are able to achieve a monolithic discipline..."

"We do not want to duplicate their system... But we do want to mobilize the great genius, the productive capacity, the moral and scientific and military leadership of which the free peoples of the West are capable when they act in unison. Throughout our history they have had this unity of action only in war. Think of how much better this world would have been if they had been exercising such unity in time of peace."

There is still time, in an age of peril, for a workable adaptation of the Atlantic Union idea. It should be thoroughly explored by representative citizens of NATO nations.

The Egghead: Rapture In The Senate

DURING the last session of Congress physicist Edward Teller would not have been invited to expound his views before Congress. Had he been and had he talked as he did before a group of solemn senators the other day, he might have been hooted out of the congressional halls. For the man known as the father of the H-bomb was urging the nation to take costly risks and gambles on such things as space platforms, trips to the moon, and research in the ocean shelves for minerals and vegetables.

The risks and the gambles would be that the money spent on these projects might go for naught. Dr. Teller would not pretend to tell the senators the specific advantages that might accrue in these projects. "Shall I tell you why I want to go to the moon? Well, I have already told you in a way I don't really know. I am just curious... but the fact is that if you make such a very big step like going to the moon, it will have both amusing and amazing and practical

and military consequences. That is how it always was in the world."

The senators sat in silent attention for two-and-a-half hours as the scientist talked. They complimented him warmly as he left the witness chair. "This is one of the most interesting two-and-a-half hours that I have spent since I have been in the United States Senate," said Sen. Levermore (R-Ill.).

It was a curiously hopeful thing — a group of senators listening raptly to a man who was asking them to spend money on conjecture. In part, it was attributable to the material results the Soviet has achieved by doing just that. But it is just possible some of them remembered the unscientific answers given by the English physicist, Faraday, when he was ridiculed for the importance he attached to his basic discoveries about electricity.

What were the specific purposes of his discoveries? the critics asked. "What is the purpose of a newborn baby?" Faraday replied.

Squirrels, Yes, But No Bum Steers

THE most flamboyant farewell to a derelict in U. S. political history has undoubtedly been penned by Sen. Richard Neuberger (D-Ore).

In the spirit of finger-wagging self-righteousness, he wrote his constituents the other day:

"I have not visited the Pendleton Round-Up, Portland Rose Festival and similar events since my election to the U. S. Senate... Politicians should not intrude on the children, cow-punchers, Indians and tourists for whom these occasions are held in a way I don't really know. I have undertaken a pilgrimage to the Senate, nor would it make me a better senator to trek to the Round-Up... Some people in public life try to cover up a lack

of familiarity with issues by exploiting events which properly belong to others... We accept with nonchalance the politician who lacks knowledge of legislative matters because he is dedicating stadiums or opening turkey shows. The important Robert Louis Stevenson mourned the fact that politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is necessary. The sooner we get away from this notion, that much sooner will we have the kind of government we expect and yearn for."

Uh-huh. The enemy of folderol is the same Sen. Neuberger who took up so much of the Senate's time championing the cause of the squirrels on the White House lawn not long ago. A real eye for issues has he.

From The Richmond Times-Dispatch

BIGWORDITIS

WHY don't people write the way they talk? Or at least in reasonably simple language?

Put the average fellow in front of a typewriter, or let him sit down with pen in hand, and he reaches into the recesses of his mind to find a vocabulary (that's one of 'em) words to replace little ones he would be using to express the same thoughts verbally.

Newspapermen, like everyone else, are susceptible to the disease of bigworditis, but most of them are able to suppress the driving urge to use a long word when a short one would do as well.

Many writers of business letters are prime offenders; if unnecessary verbiage (or should we say simply wordiness?) were eliminated from business correspondence, many stenographers could still have time to get the letters out.

Now comes criticism of the learned gentlemen of the medical profession for succumbing to bigworditis.

The critic is from within the family. He's Dr. Henry A. Davidson, editor of the JOURNAL OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY, and he's written a book called GIVE TO MEDICAL WRITING (Ronald Press, New York).

Advising his fellow physicians to avoid pretentious words, Dr. Davidson says:

A doctor in staff room or parlor

conversation talks simply. Yet when scratching that itch to write, he often develops a fondness for fancy language. He wants to be impressive. Instead, he is hard to understand.

Dr. Davidson tells his colleagues not to "show off" in Latin by using, for example, *pes planus* for flat foot.

He cites this "indigestible mouthful" from a medical school teacher who recently described Addison's disease like this:

The exact date of onset is indeterminate. The patient can rarely point with any exactness to the initiation of his symptoms. The facial features, pallid complexion, seem pallid, the ocular sclera exhibit translucency, and the patient complains of dyspnea on exertion. Compare that with Addison's own description given more than 100 years ago:

This disease makes its approach in so slow a manner that the patient can hardly fix a date to the earliest feeling of languor. The countenance gets pale, the whites of the eyes pearly, the frame flabby, and an attempting exertion here is marked by breathlessness.

If Dr. Davidson can get his colleagues straightened out in what they write, maybe he ought to turn next to how. We never have been able to read past that line with the slanted line through its left leg to find out what we're taking before surrendering the prescription to the druggist.

Presidential Disability

A Decision Must Be Made

By WALTER LIPPMANN

DEPARTMENTS are subject only to a veto, exercised in the President's name, by the insiders at the White House.

This can be made to work at times when nothing much needs urgently to be done. It is most certainly not a system which can form new policies and meet the demands of the critical time in which we are living.

The second course open to the President is to resign, basing his decision on his pledge at the press conference of March 7, 1956, that unless he "felt absolutely up to the duties of the presidency," he "would no longer be there in the

in writing that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the vice president as Acting President. This section authorizes a President to announce his own inability and allows him to do so, knowing that his powers and duties will be restored to him when he recovers."

I know of only one serious objection to this procedure. It is that the vice president who is in a hard position, not knowing how long he is to act as President and therefore compelled to guess whether the President, when he recovered, would approve of what he was doing. This might be particularly difficult in case he had to make appointments to the senior Cabinet posts.

USEFUL PRECEDENT
 Though there is weight in this objection, the question is whether the third course is, nevertheless, not preferable, on the one hand, to government by a kind of self-constituted and anonymous regency, and on the other hand, to the momentous and irrevocable act of resignation. I think it would be the best choice among choices of which none is anything but unpleasant. For Vice President Nixon, who has been maturing steadily in his post, has in the past year shown that he has the vigor and the boldness to go in the direction that Mr. Eisenhower himself would go — if he had the necessary vigor of mind and body.

There is another reason why it would be a good thing for the President to take this course. It would establish a necessary and useful precedent as to what can be done under the Constitution when the President, though disabled, is still capable of judging that he is disabled.

This, to be sure, solves only part of the problem of presidential disability. There would remain the problem of what to do if the President is unconscious or irrational. But he would meet the present situation, and in fact it would have met all the situations of decision, whether or not the President Eisenhower himself — which have in fact presented themselves.

That is to pass to the vice president — temporarily and only for the period of his convalescence — the powers and duties of his office, but not the office itself. Mr. Eisenhower would remain the President of the United States. But for a period, and at his own discretion, the vice president would be the Acting President.

If Mr. Eisenhower does this, he will be putting into effect the relevant part of the plan, which Attorney General Brownell with his approval, laid before Congress last April. Section 2 of the Eisenhower-Brownell plan meets the present situation exactly. It reads as follows: "If a President declares

job." This would be an unavoidable decision, were it not that there is a third and much less drastic and tragic course open to him.

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A Spot For Nixon's Desk?

Handwriting On A Wall

By DORIS FLEESON

WASHINGTON
 THE Nation's desperate need for leadership colors the mood of Washington in the past few days. In the third crisis in the health of President Eisenhower.

The sympathy and kindly feelings toward the President are not diminished though the emotional impact has been lessened by repetition. The lines which are different and so recognized by even the most shallow thinkers.

In striking contrast with his earlier illness, the present disability lays the President low in a period marked by economic uncertainties at home and a stark reality that a degree of supremacy has been achieved by the Soviet Union in the future weapons of war.

ACTION DEMANDED
 Where the country was relaxed and confident on previous occasions, it is today apprehensive and anxious to achieve.

How people here feel personally about possible steps to meet the demand for decisions depends largely on how they feel about Vice President Richard M. Nixon. In this area there is no middle ground.

It is widely recognized that present encouraging bulletins constitute at best a Scotch tape operation. Perhaps they always did in spite of the fact that so many people were able to persuade themselves to the contrary.

As doctors of sturdy common sense pointed out on the other occasions, even the most eminent practitioners cannot give the President a new set of arteries. His arteries proclaimed their damage in the heart attack. They have again betrayed him with a disconcerting series of undetermined severity and duration.

Again some experts feel the next move. We have to decide what we will do to counter these moves. This will require a firm, clear-thinking brain in the White House. Vice President Nixon has been firm, clear, and right in his policies. President Eisenhower, for all his kindness and good intentions, has been slow, vacillating, timid.

Unmarried Authors
 THE perfect hostess will see to it that the works of male and female authors are segregated on her book shelves. Their proximity, unless they are married, should not be tolerated. — Lady Gough in "A Book of Etiquette," 1863.

Ike's Pledge
 If the President listens to his own good conscience and his own realization of the serious trend of world events, he should carry out his own pledge of March 7, 1956:

"Unless I felt absolutely up to the performance of the duties that I would be on the job. I have promised them (the American people) that."

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON
 IN the opinion of this writer, who has observed many presidents in office, the best interests of the nation would be served if President Eisenhower retired in favor of Vice President Nixon.

I write this not in criticism of Dwight D. Eisenhower, or in praise of Richard M. Nixon, but because of the dangerous course now facing the United States.

It is a crisis just as serious as that which we faced 160 years ago minus one week, when on Dec. 7, 1841, the Japanese Navy sent the backbone of our Pacific fleet to the bottom of Pearl Harbor, leaving the West Coast completely unprotected. Japan followed up on that time, she could have taken over and occupied the entire Pacific coast, from Canada to Mexico.

Likewise today, our strength in mis-

Ike Should Retire In Nixon's Favor

siles, submarines, and air power has so slumped compared with Russia that she could wipe out our major cities, lay waste our industry, and cripple us as a nation. Our long-range bombers could knock out some Russian cities in retaliation, but not many. The odds are heavily in favor of Russia.

This is a crisis which has drifted from bad to worse. It has been fully known to the White House for some time.

Nixon's Vigorous Stand
 Vice President Nixon, on the other hand, has seen the danger, has been vigorous and vocal in alerting the public to the danger, and has been in constant conferences. This writer has not been an admirer of Mr. Nixon's political operations, particularly his unfair, un-

derbalanced attacks on Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas and on such statesmen as Dr. Edward Condon. It was Nixon who actually initiated McCarthyism four years ahead of the late senator from Wisconsin. It was he who first drove out of government some of the scientists we need today.

However, the United States now faces a crisis requiring quick, firm decisions. If Russia should go into the Near East, which seems more likely, we face the difficult, crucial decision of whether to back up the Eisenhower Doctrine. This could mean war.

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