

# So This Is New York

By  
NORTH CALLAHAN



The upper East Side is a place of contrasts. On one side are the avenues, Park and 5th, two of the most elegant streets in the world. To the northwest across pretty Central Park, the splendid spires of Columbia University and the Riverside Church stand out impressively against the sky. But to the right, in the edge of Harlem, is one of the worst slum districts in this country. It was here that I went to talk to one of New York's most important inhabitants — if in reverse — a member of a teen-age gang.

We'll call him Luigi, for that is typical, although he might be Pat or Mike. He stood in a half-darkened doorway, his black hair as long as a girl's, a leather jacket buttoned on, even though the weather was hot. A cigarette swung jauntily from his pursed lips, and the cuffs of his pegged pants were about half the width of the leg-size above. He smiled with a kind of wince as he nodded toward me patronizingly. I told him I would not use his real name if he'd give me readers some idea of why he was a young gang-member and why his kind had increased about 50 per cent here in the last year. He nodded without hesitation. "Easy, man, easy," and moved his head with a motion that reminded me of the current rock-in-roll.

Born on this East Side, Luigi grew up in a slum neighborhood where the playground was the dirty street and the families joined together in using the same few bathroom facilities. He learned the hard facts of life soon, about girls as well as boys. His family life was tough, he said, so he sought companionship elsewhere. "Even a roon loves to be loved," he quipped, as he blew cigarette smoke into the late summer air. "Sure, I'll admit I'm bad, but I know what good is and would like to be that way. Only we never seem to get a chance." He had quit school just

before he was 16—the law allows that—so could not qualify for a good job. For a time he lied about his age and habits and drew some unemployment compensation from the state. But that played out. Now he just sleeps and eats at home and goes out with the gang in late afternoons and at night.

"And what's wrong with a gang?" he asked firmly. "Didn't you have a bunch of pals when you grew up? Guys in your neighborhood. And didn't you cry together and put over a fast one once in awhile. Why I'm told you used to have what was called, 'Our Gang Comedies' in the old-time movies. Well, today we got Jim Dean—er had him 'til he rubbed himself out." I had to shake my head in somewhat sad agreement, but I pointed out that when I was a kid, we did not break the law — of course I did not mention snitching watermelons or pushing over back-houses on Halloween. He countered with, "What's the law? Pack o' cons who take money to look the other way—if ye have it, I've seen 'em." Yes, I admitted there were such cops, but I understood that under the present police commissioner they were few. Luigi snorted.

He explained how easy it was to break the law. Switch knives in sharp-bladed profusion glared from many a store window. Guns were a cinch to get. Dope could be had in Harlem, but he denied using any. And kidnapping—well, he considered his gang above it, but look at the way these careless women left their babies outside on the sidewalk while they shopped or just gossiped. "You tell your readers, mister," he said in conclusion as another member of his gang beckoned to him across the street and he threw away the cigarette in preparation to leave. "That guys who live like we do—why it's hard for them not to be gangsters. We gotta have fun somewhere, and



BETA CLUB OFFICERS at Crabtree-Iron Duff High School this term are (seated, from left): Stella Sanford, vice president; Azalee McCracken, president, and Betty Sue James, secretary; (standing) Bud Kirkpatrick, treasurer, and Jeanette Smith, reporter. (Mountaineer Photo.)

## Christmas Joy Worth All Of Extra Work

By DOROTHY V. WHIPPLE, M.D.  
AP Newsfeatures

CHRISTMAS is a lot of work, especially for the mother of a family, but it's an effort that pays high rewards in joy of living. Not long ago I was picking up a quick lunch at a drugstore counter and an acquaintance of mine came along and had a cup of coffee with me. I made a few remarks about how difficult it was to practice medicine 12 hours a day and find time to decorate the house for Christmas, help the children with their gifts, to say nothing of getting and preparing my own gifts. My acquaintance, who had two school-age children said in a very smug tone of voice:

"In our house we have solved the problem of Christmas."  
"Do tell me," I asked.  
"We just do nothing," she said.  
"Not even for the children?"  
"Our children already have everything we can afford to get them. They don't need presents and we can't afford to buy them any."

There was little more to say but my heart went out to those two little girls who are growing up without the joy and excitement of Christmas, without the knowledge of what Christmas is all about. Perhaps if they lived on a desert island where no one celebrated Christmas they might not know what they were missing; but living here, where all their friends were preparing for Christmas and living in happy anticipation of the big event, I knew they were cheated and I felt they probably were aware of it.

Christmas is not just a time of going out and spending a lot of money you can ill-afford for presents. It is a time of letting your family and your friends know that you love them. It's a time when we pull aside the formal cloaks we hide in most of the year. Because it's Christmas we feel free to express feelings that might embarrass us at other times to show.

The mechanics of Christmas are work and no getting around it, but the spirit behind it is one of the loveliest things in our civilization and many of us need this mass demonstration to help us throw off our inhibitions.

Help your children to appreciate the joy of giving as well as receiving. The preparations before Christmas can mean as much to the children as the big day itself.

Take time and plan with each child what his gifts are to be. Even quite young children understand that at Christmas time you do

things for other people. A 3-year-old will be anxious to make a surprise for Daddy and on Christmas morning Alex is just as excited at watching Daddy unwrap the finger-painting he made for him as he is to find the big dump truck Daddy got for him.

As the children get older they make more elaborate gifts and may want to give more people presents. Help them with their ideas and

with their execution, but don't take over the job and do it yourself and by all means don't go out and buy something for "Harry to give Dad." I have a piece of wood—plain — undecorated but sanded soft as satin. George, age 7 then, gave it to me at Christmas.

"It's to cut the lemons on, Aunt Dot, when you make us lemonade," he said. There have been a good many hundred lemons cut on that board.

Last Christmas our youngsters—older now with allowances and with money they earn, all got together and bought Dad, a much-needed suitcase. It was expensive and there wasn't much left over for other

## Receiving Line Shelved By Women's Press Club

By JANE EADS

WASHINGTON — Usually every body has a good time at a Washington party—unless it's the hosts and the honored guests, who must spend a good part of the evening standing in a receiving line, shaking hands and exchanging pleasantries with many folks they don't know and likely as not will never see again.

But sometimes this formality even wears down the guests. If as many as 500 to 1,000 are invited, often the case at official functions in the capital, the line of prospective well-wishers sometimes extends to the street curb. Traffic gets snarled, feet ache, and even buffet tables are devastated ere the net arrival gets through on such occasions, after inching along for a half hour or more, just give up and go home. Others just say to heck with it, skip the receiving business entirely, and make a direct bee-line for the bar!

Officers of the Women's National Press Club introduced a happy way of helping everyone to get acquainted at their latest shindig for even new ambassadors and their wives.

The feted guests were met at the door by at least two club members and escorted to small tables where they could sit down and enjoy the champagne and sweets while the other guests came up and greeted them.

The honored envoys were among 11 newcomers to Embassy Row from countries scattered over four continents who have arrived in Washington since last spring. Assisting the club president, Alice Frein Johnson, in officially welcoming the guests were the dean of Washington's diplomatic corps, Norwegian Ambassador Wilhelm Munthe de Morgenstjerne and his wife; Mrs. John Foster Dulles, wife of the secretary of state, and the State Department's chief of protocol, John Farr Simmons and his wife. They table-hopped and en-

gaged in brief friendly chats with the diplomatic couples.

Mrs. Dulles, whose interest in and friendliness for peoples of other nations of the world is unfogging and sincere, even smoked a Tunisian cigarette offered by Mongi Slim, whose country received its independent status from France last March.

Unlike many Washington parties, people actually had a chance to carry on an uninterrupted conversation, however brief, over their cocktails. Best of all, they had a chance to sit down—a real treat for the celebrities and newsgals alike! We're hoping some of the hostesses whose parties we have to cover in the future will latch onto our protocol-busting procedure.

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## Transactions In REAL ESTATE

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William Chambers and wife to Charles G. Reed and wife.  
Theodore B. Stackpole and wife to R. L. Bradley and Joe C. Cline.  
Lem Shepard and wife to Ernest Harvey and wife.  
Leo Weill and wife to David C. Ling and wife.  
Leo Weill and wife to John E. Metzger and wife.

Pigeon Township

H. A. Osborne and others to Leeman J. Tatham.  
H. A. Osborne and others to H. P. Parker and wife.

### Happy Taxpayer

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP)—An Internal Revenue Service employee at Little Rock received a straight answer to one of the questions in a tax return. After the query "marital status?" the taxpayer had written: "Good."

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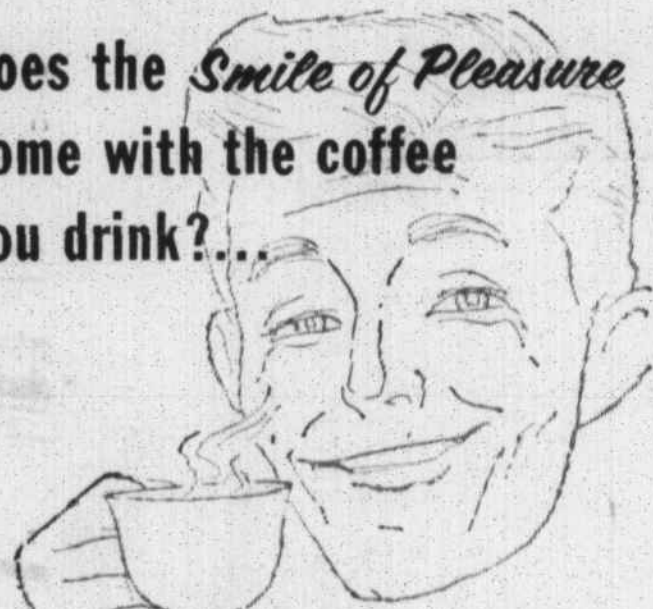


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