

SENATOR TOWER AND THURGOOD MARSHALL

JOHN J. SYNON

The editor of one of my favorite newspapers, J. C. Phillips of the Borger (Tex.) News-Herald, recently wrote an open letter to one of my favorite United States senators, John G. Tower.

Editor Phillips wanted to know, in effect, why John Tower wasn't screaming his objections to the nomination of the NAACP lawyer, Thurgood Marshall, to a seat on the Supreme Court.

Now, John Tower is very well qualified to speak for himself and, along with Editor Phillips, I shall await with great interest Senator Tower's words and deeds as they pertain to this particular nomination.

Having said that, permit an observation or two that might contain the answer to Editor Phillip's question.

First off, John Tower is one of the five best senators in the congress. He is absolutely without fear, is extraordinarily intelligent, loves Texas with a sentiment that approaches the maudlin, and, in the main, votes right.

He has a fault: He has locked himself into the Republican party. He is a "ball player", is the way politicians put it, meaning that he may be expected to go along with party policy. Moreover, one begins to suspect, John Tower is lying in the weeds so far as the Republican vice-presidential nomination is concerned. And, so far as the party is concerned, he is a very valuable asset in that respect. Tower is the only gold-braided Republican in the land whom Southern people would listen to vis-a-vis George Wallace. It isn't likely the party will overlook that fact, once Wallace announces and the Republicans begin looking for some meaningful person to fill the second slot.

And if John Tower were to accept that nomination and if he were to take to the stump in opposition to George Wallace, probabilities are it would destroy Tower, not Wallace.

Unlike Tower, Wallace is not locked in to party; he is locked in to the proposition that White and Negroes live more amicably, equally, but apart. Wallace doesn't believe you can rub White and Black noses and achieve anything like social tranquility. He says so, right out. And so far as I can tell, that is the only material difference in the public posture of the two, Wallace speaks out for social segregation of the races.

Now, John Tower was not elected by Republicans, whatever the myth. He was elected by dissident Democrats. Those same dissident people, with rare exception, are Wallace all the way. So, if John Tower has his sights on the Republican vice-presidential nomination, you may look for no loud noises from him re Thurgood Marshall. Sure as shooting, the Republican party will not oppose the confirmation and, being a ball player with hope of being put on the first team, Tower in all likelihood will issue some equivocal statement, nothing more, and hope to let it go at that.

And if that day comes, it will be one of the saddest I will have known in politics. For, in doing so, John Tower will have cut his umbilical cord; he will have chosen the national scene over his Texas as his base.

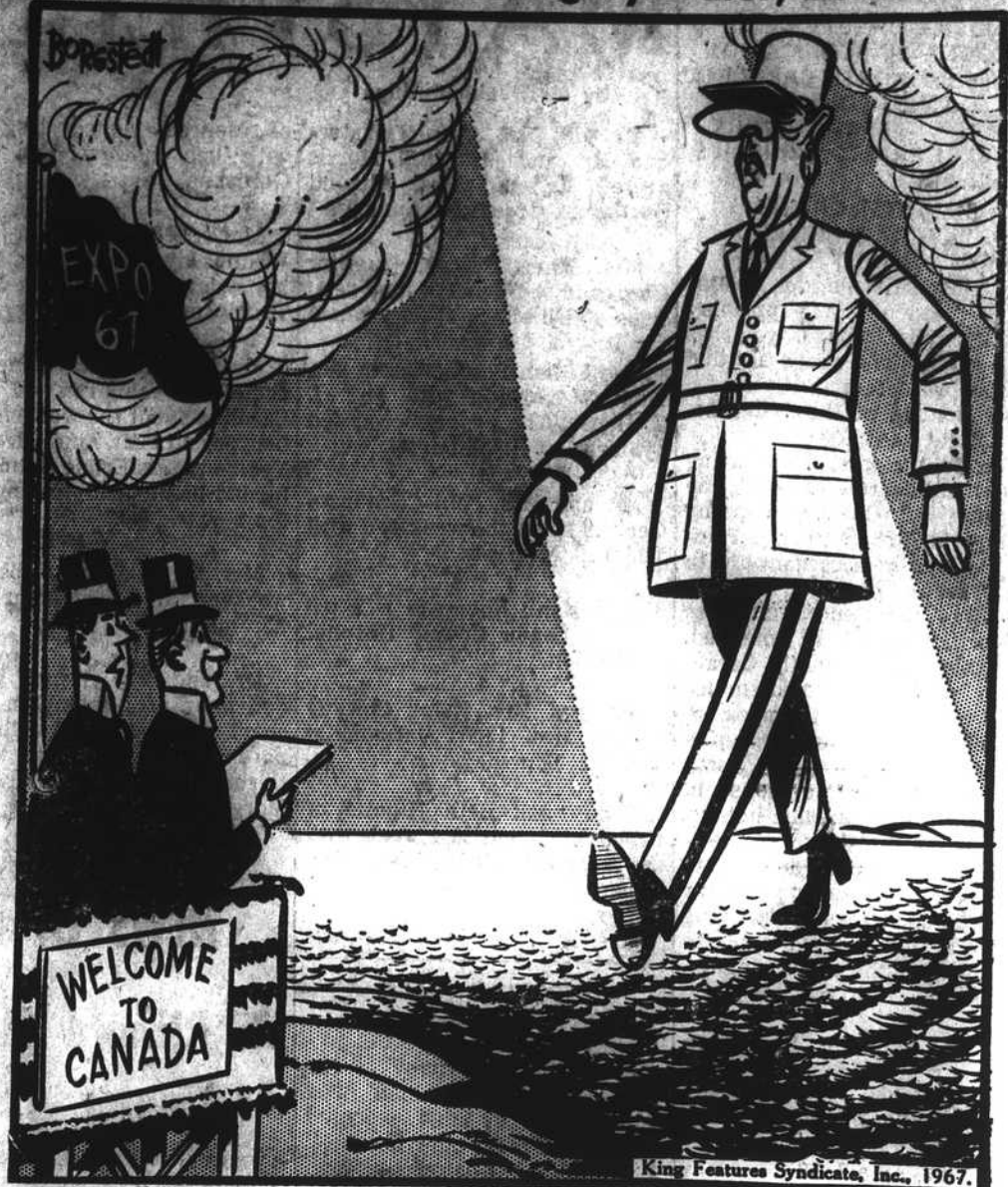
will have made the classic political mistake: He will have forgotten where he came from, from whence springs his strength. He will learn, thereafter, that Texas conservatism is as unforgiving as it is strong. It will choke out Tower's political life. The only thing that could save him would be election as vice president, a most unlikely occurrence since, as a winning force in presidential elections, the Republican party is dead.

It is not conceivable that John Tower does not realize this. As I imply, he is brilliant — and I don't use that word in connection with politicians, not very often. That being so, and the choice being his, what John Tower does as it pertains to Thurgood Marshall will be done after careful consideration. He will either remain a Texan, that is, clobber the NAACP mouthpiece, or he will become a calculating gambler, risking everything on a single throw of the dice, the Republican vice-presidential nomination.

If I were to hazard a guess as to Tower's ultimate decision — this presupposes of course that he is considering the situation as outlined — I would guess he will remain what he has been all the days of his life, a Texan.

A person who has Tower's well being at heart would suggest that decision. John Tower is young, still very young and, if he gives himself a chance, he will — to return to the original

'I knew he was coming by water, but...'



metaphor — go to bat many times in the years to come and against pitching more to his liking than this.

Being a political "ball player" is, in most instances, the way to get along. The trick lies in not striking out.

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

by Henry E. Garrett, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus, Psychology, Columbia University
Past President, American Psychological Association

Q: Dr. Garrett, what do you think about the uses of the terms, prejudice, bigotry, and racism?

A: Prejudice means pre-judgment. In those cases where we dislike a man for what we consider to be good reasons, there is no prejudice unless the object of our disfavor is disliked because he is a member of a class or group of related individuals. If I dislike Paddy O'Brien, say, I may be very wrong, but I am not prejudiced unless I dislike Paddy because he is Irish. Often the equalitarians use the word, prejudice, to include all who disagree with them. They have done this so often and for so long, this perfectly legitimate word has come to carry a distasteful overtone.

Bigotry describes the attitude of a man who clings tenaciously to a belief. This is not necessarily bad, either, unless the belief can be shown to be false.

Racism, as a word, is usually

employed as a term of opprobrium: One who despises a race other than his own. If it describes a person who believes there are material differences, it is an honorable description.

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