

Village Administrator Plan Would Be Good For Potsdam

Village Trustee Felix Shelly has set next Monday night as the target date for initial discussion of a proposed Village Administrator plan for the Village of Potsdam.

One fact should be clear at the outset of this important discussion; the proposal is not a political move. Trustee Shelly is not, as some people in Potsdam have been saying, proposing the administrator plan for political advantage.

Shelly's main interest in this proposal—and he has spent hours and weeks in this thorough study of the administrator form of government—is that of good government. As a supporter of better government for the village, Trustee Shelly deserves the appreciation of us all, whether Democrats or Republicans or Independents.

The advantages of the proposed Village Administrator are simply overwhelming. The Courier and Freeman knows of no sound arguments against the administrator form of government.

In our population group throughout the country (towns of 5,000-10,000), 31 percent of the villages and towns now have some sort of administrator-manager type of government. The administrator plan is nothing new or original; some areas instituted the plan in 1908. The administrator plan is used throughout the world today. Only a handful of towns that have adopted the new form of government since 1908 have changed their minds. The record is clear: the manager or administrator plan is successful.

"Government is big business and no business can be run with its leaders present two or three hours a month," was a statement by Trustee Shelly in last week's Courier and Freeman. What he means is that the Trustees have their own jobs and professions, and therefore have little time to look after the interests of the village. The Trustees

attend two meetings per month, and spend whatever spare time they have on various village activities, but have serious problems in devoting the time necessary to good administration of village problems and activities. This is not meant as criticism of any individual board members; the problem has plagued all boards in the last decade.

There are two main features to an administrator plan for Potsdam:

- Political responsibility would always be vested in the Village Board of Trustees and Mayor—the governing body.
- Administrative responsibility will be given to the Village Administrator, who is appointed by the Village Board.

The appointment of a Village Administrator will not be a political move. The administrator will be educated in all forms of government, and will most likely not come from this area.

All evidence indicates that the initial expense of a Village Administrator is small when compared to the eventual savings that a full-time administrator—being an expert in financial affairs—is a requirement for the job—will build up over the years.

Some people suggest that with an Administrator, the people will not have a voice in government. Nothing could be further from the truth. Instead, the people will have a greater voice. The people will have a full-time person to take their complaints, ideas, and problems before. The Village Board will still dictate village policy.

The Courier and Freeman supports Trustee Shelly in his desire to bring more efficient government to the Village of Potsdam, as soon as possible.

In addition, we suggest that as many interested village residents as possible attend next Monday night's Village Board meeting to hear the discussion and ask questions.

Seth Fountain's Statements

We hope that Town of Potsdam Superintendent of Highways, Seth A. Fountain, regrets some of the statements he made to the Town Board last Thursday in the heat of argument.

At one point, the Superintendent said he would refuse to install a certain type of equipment if purchased by the Town Board. At another point he said he would "have to throw in the towel" if the board didn't back him up on some things. The "thing" Fountain wanted support for was a clearly illegal purchase of equipment.

Seth Fountain's job is to serve the Town of Potsdam, and the above statements sound like he's working for only himself. The Highway Superintendent made a great deal about supposed "lack

of cooperation" between himself and Supervisor Francis Healey during the recent election. From last week's action, Fountain seems to be causing the friction.

To their credit, Democratic Supervisor Healey and Republican Justice of the Peace Robert Halliday proved the issue was non-political by voting against approving Fountain's purchase. The rest of the Town Board voted in favor of the purchase, without any competitive prices, offering the opinion that the Town wouldn't save that much money anyway.

We congratulate Halliday and Healey for recognizing that there are right and wrong ways to spend Town of Potsdam funds.

LETTERS

A Defense Of Civil Defense Program

To The Editor: In your front page article in last week's (Oct. 26) "Courier & Freeman" regarding the civil defense situation in St. Lawrence County, the county civil defense auxiliary heartily agrees with your contention that the public is not sufficiently aware of the importance of fallout shelters.

However, we would like to bring to your attention that St. Lawrence County does have a very active Civil Defense and Auxiliary. Throughout St. Lawrence County 283 men are members. Chapters are located in Potsdam, Canton, Gouverneur, Ogdensburg, Massena, Star Lake, Conifer, and Hermon. The members are trained in civil defense procedures, and generously donate a lot of time to policing public events.

Of local interest, the Potsdam chapter has recently enrolled many new members, and it is hoped that all of them will soon have uniforms and equipment. This will come about when final disposition is made of the receipts of the Auxiliary's annual field day which was held last month in Colton. We might add that many Potsdam businessmen donated generously to the field day, and their help is greatly appreciated by all the members.

I'm sure we all agree that civil defense is a vitally important subject, one that should concern everyone. We do not feel, however, that the picture in St. Lawrence County is as black as you painted it.

I might add that the Auxiliary is always looking for new members. Any able bodied man who does not have a criminal record and who is willing to donate not a little, but a lot of time is eligible to join. Such men are asked to contact any Auxiliary mem-

ber, or to phone the County Civil Defense office in Canton at FT-8518.

John H. Eustace
Associate Public Information Officer
County Civil Defense & Auxiliary Police
Canton,
Oct. 31, 1961

The fact remains, however, that the vast majority of area residents have not had any leadership in formulating plans for civil defense. The fact remains, also, that there is no central civil defense program for the Town of Potsdam, and that includes the villages of Norwood and Potsdam. It is important to have 283 men in the Civil Defense and Auxiliary Police; it is also important that the more than 14,000 residents of this Township have some elementary understanding of what is expected of them and planned for them in case of crisis. — Editor

Gives Thanks

To The Editor: I wish to thank you most sincerely for the coverage that you gave me during my recent campaign to unseat Charles Howers for the office of District Attorney of St. Lawrence County. I realize full well that without your assistance it would have been quite difficult to get the publicity that I needed. Thank you again.
Francis C. LaVigne
Massena, N. Y.
Nov. 8, 1961

Shelter Proposal

To The Editor: Governor Rockefeller's new York State should have community bomb shelters. Why doesn't

Potsdam have one? There is a wonderful location in Potsdam at the corner of Main and Water Streets where a community bomb shelter could and should be built.

We all know that we should get rid of that eyesore once and for all. But to put the lot to a good advantage is another thing. I think it would be worth everyone's while to chip in and build a community bomb shelter.

You know that near Potsdam there is a very important missile base at Plattsburgh and the St. Lawrence Seaway at Massena which might be major targets in the event of war.

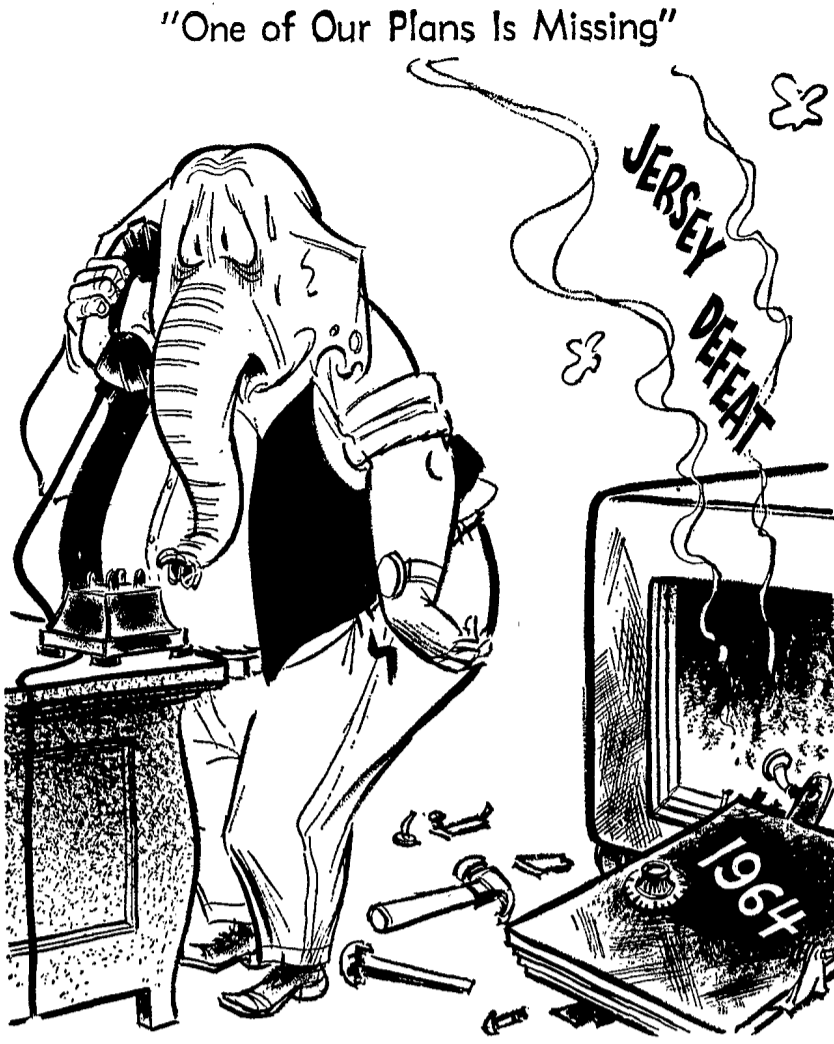
Jimmy Gotham
Ninth Grade
Potsdam High
Potsdam, N. Y.
Nov. 3 1961

Election Thanks

To The Editor: The Democratic candidates in the recent Town election in Potsdam express their appreciation for the efforts and the support given them by local party members and others sympathetic toward their campaign.

We want to thank all those people, of both parties, who aided us in our efforts; those who contributed time and money; those who worked with us, and especially all those who voted for us and gave us the assurance that they believed in our platform and in our wish to serve them. We were somewhat outnumbered, but even so, we can gain much confidence and encouragement from Supervisor Healey's re-election with such a satisfying margin. We are encouraged too by the gains which the Democratic party has made in this area over the past few years. Before much longer, Francis Healey

(Continued on page 6)



Old Foes Keeping Eye On St. Lawrence Seaway

(This is the last of six articles on the Seaway—Editor)

By JACK GERMOND AND DAVID H. BEETLE
Gannett News Service
Albany—The St. Lawrence Seaway must be one of very few waterways in the world to be blessed with a "watchdog committee."

This is what an organization of its competitors here—the New York-New Jersey committee for a self-supporting Seaway—considers itself.

"We're not against the Seaway itself now. That would be ridiculous. It's there, it's a fact of life," chairman James W. Danahy explained. "What we're against is the expenditure of any federal funds to subsidize it. We're a watchdog committee to see that that doesn't happen."

The committee includes the Port of New York Authority, 30 odd Chambers of Commerce in the port area, the Albany Chamber of Commerce, Associated Railroads of New York and agencies of both New York City and the New Jersey state government.

The interest of these groups can be explained quite simply:

The vast majority of the tonnage now being shipped through the Seaway used to pass through coastal ports, the largest of which is New York.

Or as Danahy put it: "We know the Port of New York is losing general cargo and that general cargo is going through the Seaway, which didn't exist two years ago. It's a logical assumption that some of the loss is due to the Seaway."

The loss suffered here cannot be computed with any precision because there are so many factors—weather, commodity prices, economic conditions here and abroad—that might affect traffic volume.

However, in a recent report the New York-New Jersey committee estimated the 1960 loss to the Port of New York at 365,000 tons of foreign general cargo, the category that is economically most important to a port. The loss represented more than 3.5 percent of the volume in that category.

THE COMMITTEE also saw signs of further trouble in the future:

"For the first time certain commodities such as rubber and cars moved in significant quantities through Great Lakes ports. Thus, it is apparent that shippers, manufacturers and forwarders are beginning to sample this route to determine its value from the standpoint of their individual shipping requirements. Although the quantities currently shipped are small, it must be recognized that they will presumably increase if experiments with Seaway routings are successful. Of particular significance to New York are the large gains in the export of iron and steel scrap and finished and semi-finished metal products."

THE NEW YORK PORT is particularly fearful of steps that may be taken to make the Seaway more attractive to shippers. Danahy recently issued this warning to his committee:

"Looking forward to the 1964 review of the Seaway toll structure, we can expect agitation by Seaway proponents for a lowering or complete elimination of Seaway tolls, or in the alternative for an extension of the 60-year de period provided for in the legislation which authorized Seaway construction."

The committee also has taken a firm stand against any appropriation of federal funds to promote the Seaway.

"Any promotion should come from the Seaway itself, not the taxpayers," Danahy said. "If they can afford it, it's all right, but they shouldn't ask their competitors to finance it through their taxes."

ONE OF THE hardest hit of these competitors, the New York Central Railroad, has taken some steps to combat the Seaway's over tolls, rates, and port subsidies that there was over the question of whether or not to build the project in the first place.

Basicly, though, the fight against the Seaway—a 50 year scrap—still goes on but on a lower key. There isn't the drama involved in skirmishes over tolls, rates, and port subsidies that there was over the question of whether or not to build the project in the first place.

Front Row Center

"Life is a theatre in which the worst people often have the best seats."
—Aristophanes

By BILL JONES, Editor

The Wayward Press

I have just completed reading "The Press", a new paperback book by The New Yorker's A. J. Liebling. The book was published only as a paperback, presumably to allow more citizens the opportunity to read about the nation's "Wayward Press" (which, according to Liebling, includes every paper).

The book is described as, "Caustic, informed—often hilarious—this survey of the omissions, distortions and downright fiction in our newspapers may well be the best book ever written about the American press." I'll admit that it's caustic, but it certainly is not especially well-informed. I might add that the author commits his own omissions, distortions and downright fiction. Finally, there is no doubt that "The Press" is not one of the "best" books ever written about the American press.

The main problem with Liebling is that of any pure cynic, who sees no good, knows no good and wants to find no good. His view, then, is somewhat limited. He looks only for mistakes and cannot be considered as a serious student of the American newspaper. I admit that he is quite well informed on some major press mistakes, however.

If the reader has these facts in mind as he sits down with Liebling's little diatribe, he will find himself often amused by the seemingly-impossible blunders of American journalism. Liebling makes Jack Paar look like a friend of the press.

One of the most fantastic cases that Liebling cites dates back to the Korean War in 1951. A number of Americans started to agitate for the use of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Chinese forces on Formosa. During the few months thereafter, reports on the strength of this Formosan army ranged from 450,000 to 1,000,000. Each wire service report, each columnist, each editorial, each newspaper had different figures. It was eventually discovered that possibly 130,000 would be available for ready combat.

The author also reports on the U-2 plane incident, and blames the press for its reports which were later proved to be incorrect.

What Liebling fails to understand in the U-2 case, and it was the same with the Cuban fiasco, is that the federal government issued the lies about its actions which became incorrect news stories. It seems rather unfair to criticize the newspaper reporters for accepting government statements of activities when they had been reliable in the past. On the other hand, I am sure that reporters in Washington are now much more suspicious of administration statements, and that is as it should be.

IN HIS CONSTANTLY rambling account of mistake after mistake in American newspapers, the author does make two particularly valid points which are serious newspaper problems.

First, he mentions the domination of one newspaper monopolies in almost all American communities today. This has developed over the past century as paper after paper has failed for one reason or another and one paper has remained. Few monopoly newspapers are serving their communities well because most publishers care only about profit margins. The main reason that a press monopoly is dangerous is because only one view on important subjects is ever presented fairly.

Second, the author cites the main problem of the press wire services—The Associated Press and United Press International. Most reporters for various cities and towns who have permanent positions with local papers or broadcasting outlets. Thus, when a story which makes the home town look bad develops, it often doesn't get the attention it should. Liebling discusses the case of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation, a Gestapo-type organization set up in Mississippi to "prevent violence" back in 1948. It was clearly in violation of most federal laws. The story was only reported by a New Orleans paper which Liebling happened to see. He called the New York papers and the wire services, but it was news to them. Finally, after Liebling's needless, stories were developed, the Mississippi venture into the open, and eventually, killed.

For each of the faults A. J. Liebling finds, however, any newspaperman could outline many contributions of the American press. The press needs criticism, yes, but much more informed and serious criticism than that of The New Yorker's funny man.

WHILE WE'RE ON the subject, at least one Potsdam resident thinks that this writer could be termed a "wayward columnist." I got the following postcard this week, signed simply, "An Old-Timer":

"During the past few months, I have read with increasing dismay and alarm the journeys into idocy that have characterized your so-called column. Today, after reading your adolescent gibberish concerning potential fall-out danger and the seemingly public apathy toward adequate protection, my patience was rewarded. Is it too much to hope that the first bit of nuclear contamination will fall on you and thus assure Potsdam of the permanent displacement of the least-wanted oddity of this year or any year? It is a thought to be devoutly cherished and most carefully nurtured (sic) in the dark days that lie ahead."

While my friendly correspondent is nurturing his achievement, I'll make these comments:

1. My so-called "columns" may or may not be adolescent gibberish; that is not for me to judge. However, whatever I write is at least one step above that of my correspondent's, because I am willing to put my name and life behind what I believe and write. My correspondent I must assume, is a little, common, nameless something, without any courage or conviction, maybe a man, woman, or child. And, I don't believe it (the correspondent) is an old-timer because most old-timers in Potsdam are quite proud of themselves and they are not afraid to say just what they think.

2. I'm sorry that my idocy alarms and dismays it (the correspondent). May I suggest a simple solution? Stop reading the so-called "column".

3. I believe there is apathy concerning civil defense, and the main point of last week's column was that this apathy has resulted from a lack of national leadership. This viewpoint was confirmed by Sunday's New York Times review of the week's news.

4. One person, and I know she's an old-timer (having qualified for that title by living here for more than 25 years), said that she thought last week's column was the best discussion of the civil defense problem she had seen.

5. As the nuclear contamination eats into each of us, I wonder how funny my correspondent's so-called joke will be? I think that the joke will then be Potsdam's least-wanted oddity—front row center.

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