THE GREAT MISTAKE

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I

THE PARTY

It was a beautiful time of year to drive by the sea. So I welded my way through the plush suburbs in my new sports car, I couldn't understand exactly why I had been invited to this party at the Bryant's house. I didn't have a particularly good social standing because I only made fifteen thousand dollars last year. I am not married, my father doesn't own the town, and I don't have a yacht. I am only a professor of political science at a small liberal arts college. I must say, however, that I do live well since I'm not married, and this fact releases all of my funds for my own personal pleasure. But just living well usually does not qualify anyone to be invited to one of the Bryant's "big wig" parties.

Apart from this, I had only met Mr. Bryant one time in my entire life. This was last summer at a political rally where we had the opportunity to exchange our political philosophies. I had also, at that time, hinted to him of my own political ambitions.
I was definitely getting close to Bryant's house. The houses had grown in size, probably from the forty thousand dollar size to the one hundred forty thousand dollar size. They had also moved back off of the road to their seemingly natural places, on shady hills two hundred years away.

As I turned into the driveway at the Bryant estate, I was stopped by the grounds keeper and then asked to produce my invitation.

The party was in full swing by the time I arrived. Practically everyone had a drink in his hand or was in the process of getting one. In fact, the more heavy drinkers had a drink in each hand, which affectively cut down on their verbalizing. This lack of verbalizing was a good thing, I guess. For in this crowd, it was a social blunder to get totally intoxicated, and if these two fisted drinkers didn't talk much, then the other guests couldn't discern the degree of their intoxication.

After looking around the room at the people, my attention turned to the fantastic furnishings and arrangements of the rooms in which the guests were gathered. The main party room was decorated in the Mediterranean style. The chairs and couches were upholstered in black leather, and the bar, which looked to be a permanent fixture of the room, was styled in the exact theme of the rest of the room. I was further impressed by the fact that the room was not shaped like other conventional rooms because this room only had one window and one corner. It was too bad
that none of my closer friends had been invited because we could have marveled at this room together.

The other room, and I use the term loosely, where the remaining guests were congregated was the patio where a huge kidney shaped pool was located. I thought that since most of the guests out there were men, the patio would be where I would join the party. While walking to the patio, I could see through the four sets of glass doors well enough to recognize a few of the men.

Mayor Gordon was there. I had never really met the mayor personally, but I still thought I knew him well from the many editorials in the Evening Press concerning the recent scandals in his administration. Oh yes, and standing right beside him, having a few friendly words with the mayor, was the editor of our other paper in the city. The paper which had endorsed the mayor in the last election.

When I finally got to the patio, I walked up to the bar and got a drink. It was reassuring to note that Mr. Bryant used good Scotch at his parties. As I turned away from the bar, I saw Bryant in the corner. I judged that he must have been in a heated political discussion since his free hand (the other holding a drink) was making violent gestures as fast as his mouth was moving. I further thought that it was a political discussion because Mr. Bryant had long been a strong supporter of the Liberal Conservative political party, and the man with which he was talking I recognized as being an equally wealthy and strong supporter.
of the Conservative Liberal party. I thought that the time had come for me to make my appreciation known to him for inviting me to his party. If I didn't do it then, Mr. Bryant might sneak off to one of his more private rooms and talk politics with someone. If he did this, it was possible that no one would see him for the rest of the evening. I walked over to him and said all of the nice things of which I could think. I was surprised and somewhat flattered to find out that he remembered me from our one conversation. When Mr. Bryant and I were done with the preliminaries, he told me that he expected to see me in his study in one hour. Well, I could not imagine what he wanted to say to me, but then again, he hadn't actually said that he wanted to talk to me in his study - just see me there.

For the next forty-five minutes, I walked among the other guests, meeting some and merely being polite to others. I met this one man who was, probably, in his early fifties. For some reason, he already knew me. He was very well dressed and was accompanied by a beautiful girl in her twenties who had the sheerest evening gown on which I had ever seen. His name was Tom Latchem. I was walking to the fireplace when Tom summoned me. I was really shocked because I had no idea that anyone knew me except Mr. Bryant. And yet, it could even be said that he didn't really know me. At that point, Tom said that he realized he had me at a disadvantage for he knew that I had never seen him before in my life. I totally agreed with him on this point! Seemingly he had
recognized me from the description Bryant had given him a month earlier; that after his discussion with Bryant, he too had realized that I was the man for the job.

At this point, my mind went crazy with questions. Why had Bryant talked to him? What had they said? For what job was I the man? Why me?

Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed Bryant walking toward us. My first reaction was to ask him just what the hell was going on. However, I didn't get a chance, for when Bryant finally got to us, he had already been talking for thirty or forty seconds. He asked me if Tom and I had met, and I assured him of that fact. He then told me what favored company I was in because I had been standing by and talking to Senator Latchem from the sovereign State of California. Up until this time, I had realized that I was in pretty influential company, and the favored company had come in the form of Tom's beautiful companion. But in regard to everything else Bryant told me, I was really surprised. Immediately, the questions in my head became more numerous, and I was dying to get Mr. Bryant alone to hit him with the barrage of new questions. Just when I thought I had a chance of asking him my questions, he told Tom and I that it was time to go to the study because the new President of the United States was about to begin his first nation wide speech on television.

Senator Latchem and I watched as Mr. Bryant rounded up about six other well dressed men. I realized that we were all going to his study to see the President on television.
After this, the Senator went straight off to the study, probably for some high level party meeting with someone important who was already there. As for myself, I stayed and had one more scotch and water. It was, so to speak, one for the road.

As I opened the door to Bryant's study, I was hit by a huge cloud of smoke. Smoke so dense and alive that it seemed it would engulf and kill anything which got in front of it. As I placed one foot over the threshold, I suddenly thought of all of those mystical, small, dark, smoke filled rooms where the fates of nations had been decided in the past. I saw the Senator sitting close to the television, so I went over and took a seat next to him. There were only about eight of us in the study at this time, and I couldn't find Bryant. I figured that soon enough I would find out what was going on; therefore, I lighted a cigarette, made myself comfortable, and looked over at the Senator. He seemed as calm as a waveless ocean. He looked as though he had been through these meetings many times; and, in fact, he might even have received his political impetus in this very room. It was a well known fact that Mr. Bryant liked to spawn political careers.

Mr. Bryant finally came in and made the introductions. He then moved in a manner of importance to the television and made the announcement that we were going to watch the President's keynote address to the nation. He then qualified his last statement by saying that we would watch the President
for as long as he could stand to look at and listen to our new President.

At this time, a man spoke up who was seated next to the window. He definitely objected to Bryant's stating that he might turn off the television once the President had begun his speech.

"Well, Stetson Bryant," he said. "You are really getting intolerant in your old age, aren't you?"

"I am not intolerant, Jake," replied Bryant. "I just can't stand to listen to such an incompetent and irresponsible President."

"Stetson, you and I have been friends for a long time," Jake said, as he puffed on his eight inch cigar. "And, like you, I am a strong Liberal Conservative. However, just because the President is a Conservative Liberal, there is no reason to pretend that he is a bad dream which will go away. He is here to stay, for a while anyway unless he gets shot, whether you agree with his political views or not."

"Jake," said Bryant, "I am perfectly cognizant of the democratic way of life. Nevertheless, I cannot stand to see such a political rookie make decisions which could kill us tomorrow. If he gets too revolting tonight on T.V., I'll just read what he had to say in the newspapers - tomorrow!"

"Jake", Senator Latchem asked, "do you know much about our new, distinguished President?"

"Tom, since I am not in the political arena, the only things I know about the President are the ones about which I read. And I must say, most of the things I have read about or heard about him are favorable. As the Mid-westeners say,
he seems to be quite 'down to earth'," Jake replied.

"Well, Jake, if the opportunity presents itself, I'll fill you and the rest of the people here, if they don't already know, in on a few substantiated stories about our President, Mr. Yorke," Senator Latchem responded.

"Stetson, I think you had better turn on the television now so we won't miss the President's keynote address", Jake stated.

With that little flurry of conversation over, Mr. Bryant walked to his study television and turned it on. I rather imagined at this point that he didn't care if the T.V. worked or not. When the television came on, the newscasters were just introducing the President.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen, the President...of the United States..."

With these words, Stetson Bryant took his place in front of the television. He looked like a cat waiting to pounce on the "on-off" switch.

The President began to speak about the excess beer cans in the nation; therefore, Bryant jumped up and turned the T.V. off.

"Damn it, Jake, I'm not going to insult everyone's intelligence in this room by listening to a plow-jockey speak of the tremendous menace of the average, everyday beer can," exploded Bryant.

"Tom, would you please enlighten the unenlightened in this room about our new President," Bryant said.
That must have been the cue for Jake. For at that moment, he propped his feet up on another chair and sank deeper into the chair.

Senator Tom Latchem began his story.
"President Yorky was born some fifty-six years ago. He was born in the "show me" state of Missouri, which was probably a good thing for him. It is also rather fitting that he was born in the "show me" state. I say this because, throughout Yorky's life, he has never had an instinct for doing anything; he has always required someone to show him how to do the most effortless tasks.

President Yorky was born on a rather large farm to prosperous, diligent parents. His parents expanded their farm to one of the largest in the state, and throughout Yorky's earlier life, he expressed a desire to go to Purdue University, obtain an agricultural degree, and then return to his parents' farm to run it. Eventually, he hoped to own his parents' prosperous farm.

Yorky went to Purdue and studied agriculture. Upon his graduation he returned to his parents' Missouri farm. His parents turned over the huge farm to their son. He, however, found farming much more difficult than the university books had led him to believe. Within ten years, the
once extremely prosperous farm was turned into a loosing business venture. His parents had both died during those ten years; therefore, he saw no reason to continue farming. He sold the farm, moved to Benton, and went into the business of real estate.

He must have liked real estate. He soon became a moderately wealthy and powerful man in Benton. For nine years he worked in real estate, then someone asked him to run for mayor. At this moment his political career began.

Yorky campaigned on the Conservative Liberal ticket, which was very fortunate for Yorky. During his mayoral campaign, he showed no charisma and few solid issues on which to fight his Liberal Conservative opponent. There were quite a few reasons why he was elected. None of them, however, were due to Yorky's talents.

The city of Benton, Missouri, is a good sized city. It has quite a sizeable population of blue collar workers which had always given tremendous support to the Conservation Liberal party. It was just a fluke that the Liberal Conservative party had been elected four years earlier. Therefore, Yorky had a ready made, favorable constituency.

He campaigned on city graft and ecology which have always been used by Conservative Liberals when there is little else on which to campaign.

At this point, let's stop and survey the situation. Yorky had a ready made constituency in the blue collar voters. He campaigned on "Mom and Apple Pie" policies.
And, the town of Benton had gone Conservative Liberal in every election for the last twenty years in the string of tremendous victories, only being broken once for a brief four year period of time by a fluke.

Those situations, however, cannot hold a candle to the real kicker. Six weeks before the election, a city newspaper broke a story of widespread city graft on the part of the Liberal Conservative party. There were, evidently, "take offs" and "rip offs" being manipulated by the top city officials.

From that point on, Yorky was a shooh-in. He could have been the biggest bastard in the world and still won that mayoral race..."

"Jake," the Senator said," can you see the pieces starting to fall into place? His first shot at the political process was a shooh-in. He has always been non-dynamic, and he has always avoided the issues."

"Tom, I can't see all of that yet. Up to this point, you have only told us about one political situation," replied Jake.

"Alright then, I'll go on," the Senator said...

"Yorky was elected mayor of Benton for four consecutive terms, which, I suppose, says something for the man. During those terms, the city of Benton grew in size and wealth; however, I doubt if Yorky had much to do with that. The price of agricultural products went up, thus putting more money in the hands of the consumers."
More money in the consumers' pockets meant more tax money which could be used for the expansion of city facilities. Benton, Missouri, became a model city. This brought Mayor Yorky some national recognition of which he seemingly disapproved."

"We all know what Yorky was accredited with because of his municipal office, but let's look at his policies more closely," Senator Latchem stated...

"His big campaign pitch in his last two mayoral races was based on ecology. Now, how much of an ecology problem could Benton, Missouri, have? It doesn't have enough industry to put it in the same class of ecology problem as Gary, Indiana. And, it doesn't have enough automobiles to create smog like in Los Angeles. Yorky could only rely on the major ecology problems which were affecting the nation. And since it was vogue to talk about ecology, he switched his dynamic ecological thrusts to the beer cans which were being littered and wasted in the area.

"Hell, he is still talking about those damn beer cans," Senator Latchem blurted out.

"His secondary campaign target was the wastefulness of big city government. If anything, this should have been number one. Just how bright is a man who would attack the big city government waste problem when he was, in affect, talking about his own administration since he had been
mayor for the previous eight years?

During the four years prior to his running for the Presidency, he unleashed an attack on our two party system of government as it existed at the time. If this can be imagined, he stated that the Liberal Conservative Party and the Conservative Liberal so close in their philosophies that the people, in affect, had but one party from which to choose. He spoke of the national political system as being a disgrace to democracy. And yet, four years later, he is sitting in the White House.

About a month after he was elected to the Presidency, I talked to Scoop Jansen, since he is one of the leading Conservative Liberals in the country, about just how a man like Yorky even got into the primaries for the Presidency. He said the top men in the St. Louis machine were dissatisfied with the current personnel in the Presidential race because there was no way they could manipulate them. So, they thought they would get a man from Missouri, who, they thought, could be molded to their wishes. They approached Yorky right after Christmas. They went to his home in Benton and found him drinking beer and throwing his cans all over the room. Yorky, at that time, was given the offer, but he flatly refused it. About a week later, the boss of the St. Louis machine invited him to St. Louis for a couple of days. Once there, Yorky was supposedly reminded of the immense power of the office. When he left St. Louis, he was in the race. He was in the same national political scheme which he
had denounced so vigorously weeks, months, and years before."

"Senator, this is a very interesting story", Jake said. "Maybe I was a little hasty with my support of the President. Nevertheless, from what you have told us so far, I cannot substantially change my views. Please continue, though."
"By the time Yorky had set up a campaign organization for the Presidential race, it was late January. All of the other Presidential hopefuls from the Conservative Liberal Party had entered the race in the late autumn of the previous year, with the exception of Senator McMillan who had declared his intentions two years before Mayor Yorky. Yorky was put at a definite disadvantage by his late arrival on the political scene because the other candidates had built up strong campaign operations by late January of the Presidential election year. Moreover, the political "fat cats", when deciding who they would back, had no idea Yorky was even running. Therefore, their campaign contributions were already pledged to the candidates whose political philosophies were most beneficial to them by the time Yorky entered.

As stated earlier, Senator McMillan was the first conservative liberal to declare his candidacy for the office of the President of the United States. McMillan had long been a critic of the war which the United States had been
supporting in the small Pacific kingdom of Venisa. This country had long been split by a raging civil war. The communist faction had been trying to take over the government for many years, but the United States had been and continued to support the quasi-democratic, legitimate government of Venisa by putting at that government's disposal American soldiers, arms, and supplies. Senator McMillan had long said that this policy was an extremely dangerous one for the United States to follow. When the Liberal Conservative President, which was in power at the time, decided to totally commit our armed forces to another country's civil war, Senator McMillan announced his candidacy. Since the people of the United States were extremely tired of having their government play the policeman of the world, McMillan's campaign totally centered on ending the war in Venisa. The war had cost America fifty thousand of its men and an undeterminable amount of resources. Therefore, he was the Conservative Liberal Party's foremost Neo-isolationist. Senator McMillan's popular base of support grew larger everyday the war raged in Venisa. The war in Venisa was going to be a major campaign issue.

Merely because Senator McMillan was the first of the Conservative Liberals to announce his candidacy did not automatically indicate that he was the most popular Conservative Liberal. Senator Trout, from Massachusetts, who had declared his intentions much later, became the man to beat in the early stages of the race for the Conservative Liberal nomination. Trout had no charisma, but he was
not a one issue man - like McMillan. Senator Trout had received the indorsement of most of the leading Conservative Liberals in the country. He, in the early stages of the race, was definitely the man to beat.

Harry H. Huberts was also in the race. He, too, was not a one issue man like Senator McMillan. In fact, Senator Huberts attacked the administration on everything it did or proposed to do. Senator Huberts was also not a political rookie. Harry H. Huberts had run for the nomination two times prior to this time. He had been a Vice-President under the last Conservative Liberal President, and he had been in the Senate, as a Senator from Wisconsin, for who knows how many years. Although, a stronger contender than McMillan, he was nowhere close to Trout's support in the early stages of the campaign because the people were tired of looking at his mousy face and weasel-like speech.

The only other candidate who played a major role in the campaign for the nomination of the Conservative Liberal party, except our man, Mayor Yorky, was the Governor of Georgia, Governor G. Cannon. Governor Cannon had won the governorship in Georgia eight years ago by a vote from the whites to keep the blacks "in their place" in Georgia. Well, Cannon had seen to the carrying out of the mandate of the people - white people that is - for eight years. Governor Cannon was a fantastic orator. He ran for the Presidency of the United States four years ago on an independent ticket.
and effectively ruined the Conservative Liberal party because he took away the votes in the South, a region of the United States which had historically thrown its support to the Conservative Liberal party.

Governor Cannon ran on a law and order platform that year. He wanted to bomb the hell out of Vietnam so those "commies" couldn't take over. His campaign appealed then, as it did this last year, to the blue collar workers. By the sceptical, thinking American he was asked over and over about what his policy toward the blacks would be if he were President. Well, his answers came off as meaning that blacks would be alright if they were kept in their places by the law, or that to dispose of the black problem the whites merely had to send them all back to, of all places, Africa.

By the time this last Presidential nomination race came around, Governor G. Cannon had switched from his independent party to the Conservative Liberal party. He had mellowed much in the previous four years. His campaign speeches on law and order, political graft, high taxes, and inflation made a great deal of sense to the man with a fixed salary. By the time the first primary arrived, he was a definite contender.

And last, but not least, was our mayor, Mayor Yorky of Benton, Missouri. Yorky had a ready-made following in one state and one state only. That state was, of course, Missouri. When Yorky went to the first primary, none of the voters knew who he was since he had never been in the
national limelight.

The campaigning in the New Hampshire primary was arduous. It was the first test of the candidates' varying strengths, and each wanted to show the country that he should be the party's standard bearer in the Presidential campaign following the party convention.

However, Yorky, at this time, was still not too awfully enthused about the whole situation. This was because of the fact that he didn't have much money and that is exactly what it took. Also, although being assured many times by the St. Louis machine, that his following of supporters would grow quickly, he couldn't figure out just from where his voting base of support would come. Huberts had the liberal blue collar vote sewed up. Trout had the white collar conservative liberal vote in his back pocket. And, McKillan had the anti-war vote. Not to consider, Governor Cannon who had the conservative blue collar vote. He figured that there was no ready made segment of the population which was accessible to him. For this reason he decided to generalize and pick up a little support from all groups.

The only issue that Mayor Yorky knew anything about was the ecology problem in Benton, Missouri. He, therefore, figuring that ecology was a nice safe issue, based his New Hampshire campaign on ecology. He viciously attacked the smog problem which he figured would appeal to the good people of New Hampshire. The only problem was that most of the people in the mountain state of New Hampshire had never experienced smog. Yorky could see that he was getting no-
where with the smog issue. He, therefore, tried to turn to the poorly operated present administration. He again ran into a brick wall because he didn't know that much about the present Liberal Conservative administration, because he had always selectively avoided national politics. He tried political piracy of issues from the other candidates, but this practice seemed to get him nowhere. Also, in a desperation move, he turned back to the ecology problem. Knowing that smog was not the correct issue, he turned to the littering of the countryside. More specifically he again turned to the menace of the beer can! Incredible as it may seem, some of the more heavy beer drinkers in New Hampshire identified with the problem and began listening to Mayor Yorky.

Yorky was just too late in finding an issue on which to base his running for the nomination in New Hampshire. When the votes were counted in the New Hampshire primary, Yorky came up with only one percent of the vote. Senator Trout, who was expected to win by a large margin because of his home state's closeness, did win. Trout, however, did not win by as large a margin as everyone had expected. Senator McMillan waged a good anti-war campaign and took a close second. Trout had received forty-four percent of the vote (a shock because the percentage was not at least a majority) and McMillan received a close thirty-eight percent. Huberts'
vote percentage was a disappointing third with seventeen percent.

Yorky went away from the New Hampshire primary a disappointed man. He considered calling the whole thing quits, but the St. Louis machine reassured him that he was going to gain strength all of the time. He had been outclassed in New Hampshire by not one, but all three Senators, and Yorky knew it. He saw no way he could compete with these three prominent national leaders. For once, Mayor Yorky of Benton, Missouri, was right. He couldn't compete. Nevertheless, with the reassurance of the St. Louis machine, he moved his well staffed (twenty people from St. Louis) campaign headquarters to Florida where the next primary was to be held in just a few days.

Mayor Yorky realized he was going to have an uphill race to run. When his campaign headquarters was set up in Miami, curious people would stop in and ask him for what office he was campaigning. Yorky was not too upset at this, however, for he had dug into his vast repertoire of issues, and found an issue which would surely bring him some recognition. He would attack the political machines and bosses in the country. At this point, his chief supporter, the St. Louis machine, dropped its support. But this fact didn't bother Mayor Yorky, for he now had a concrete issue about which he knew something, and he was determined to rid the U.S. of political machines. He was no longer a
one issue candidate and he figured that this fact put him one step ahead of Senator McMillan.

The Florida primary went, pretty much, as expected it would with Governor Cannon, who had entered this primary, winning it fairly easily with over fifty percent of the Conservative Liberal vote. Senators Huberts and McMillan took second and third places respectively. However, the big story of the entire primary was in the fact that Senator Trout, the national favorite in the Conservative Liberal race for the nomination, came in fourth - only a few percentage points ahead of Mayor Yorky.

Luckily for Yorky, the next primary was going to be held in his home state of Missouri. The people in Florida just had not responded favorably to his new campaign, so he planned a comeback in Missouri. The Missouri primary was going to be the turning point in the Mayor's race for the Conservative Liberal nomination. After this primary, events were going to take place which would eventually put him in the White House.

All of the headrunners in the Conservative Liberal primary race decided to go to Missouri to get rid of this small thorn in their sides. This small thorn, of course, was Mayor Yorky. Senator Harry Huberts was excited over his finish in Florida which, for some reason, he called a victory. Governor Cannon was anxious to expand his power northward. Senator McMillan expected to run well because his home state was nearby. And Senator Trout, after his
disappointing defeat in Florida, was anxious to show the other candidates that he, not any one of them, still had the nomination wrapped up.

Everyone waged a good, strong campaign; however, the support poles showed that Yorky was gaining ground in Missouri and that it was possible that he could beat everyone. This fact caused the other candidates to put forth a tremendous amount of time and money in their campaigns. Yorky at this time had little money, and he made that fact known to the good people of Missouri; whereupon the people began sending their favorite son candidate much money.

Yorky's popular support grew tremendously in the month of campaigning prior to the election. This totally amazed the political leaders in the Conservative Liberal party. They couldn't figure out whether the support he was obtaining was being given merely because he was from Missouri, or whether Mayor Yorky actually had such a tremendous "down home" appeal to the common people. Everyone in the country began to look at the political battle shaping up in Missouri.

On the day of the election, more people turned out to vote than had every before turned out in the State of Missouri. Ninety-one percent of the registered voters voted. When the final election returns came in, Mayor Yorky had accomplished an unbelievable political feat. Yorky pulled in eighty-one percent of the vote. Governor
Cannon and Senator McMillan received second places with seven percent of the vote. Senator Huberts came in third with four percent, and Senator Trout was forced to realize that his poor showing in Florida was no fluke for he received only one percent of the vote.

After this primary Senator Trout, the once shoo-in for the nomination, dropped out of the race. A curious thing happened at this time. For some unknown reason to most of the Conservative Liberals in the country, Senator Trout threw his support to, of all people, Yorky! No one really knows why the Senator threw his support to a man campaigning on the evils of the political machines and on the menace of the beer can. Nevertheless, Senator Trout did just that. Senator Trout has not commented on his reasons yet, but some say it was done in hopes that if Yorky got the nomination, Yorky would remember Trout and pick him as his running mate. Yet others say that since Yorky was still on this beer can campaign, Trout saw a chance to boost his own glass bottle manufacturing plant in Massachusetts. If the beer can was discontinued as a container, Trout's increase in sales would make him a rich man overnight. The other candidates still thought that Mayor Yorky was not a viable threat. One could hardly consider a man, running for the Conservative Liberal nomination for the President of the United States a threat when he won the last primary by talking about beer cans. Therefore, they packed up their
headquarters and moved them to the next Presidential primary state, Virginia.

At this time, Yorky could not believe the things which were happening to him. After winning a primary, he was a real contender to the President of the United States. One of the strongest Conservative Liberals in the country had dropped out of the race and endorsed him. And his campaign headquarters had more money flowing into it than he had ever seen before in his life.

Yorky and Trout got together and Trout offered his platform to the mayor. After this time, Mayor Yorky even had good issues on which to campaign. Trout even became a quasi-campaign manager for Yorky. Therefore, Yorky and Trout went into Virginia with all of the confidence of another victory.

After a week of campaigning in Virginia a tragic thing happened. As Governor Cannon was greeting people after one of his speeches, he was wounded critically when shot four times by a member of the crowd. This was the fourth political shooting of a Presidential candidate in the last eleven years. The entire population of the United States was shocked by the tragic event. Cannon could campaign no more - he was out of the race. The people who had been close to Cannon went to see him in the hospital, as did the remaining candidates who were campaigning against Cannon in that primary.

However cold it might seem, this shooting of Cannon and his forced withdrawal from the race, was a good stroke of luck for Mayor Yorky and his political ambitions.
For now, two of the stronger candidates were out of the Conservative Liberal race. There were only two men left to contend with now.

Huberts and McMillan fought an extremely bitter campaign in the Virginia primary. Huberts accused McMillan as being a know-nothing candidate and McMillan accused Huberts of political graft. There was mud slinging and name calling. Their campaigns were well below the standard of a national race. Yorky set back and reaped the rewards.

With the help of Trout's issues and Trout's guidance, Mayor Yorky won the Virginia primary, in spite of the strong sympathy vote for Cannon. McMillan and Huberts placed well in Virginia, but they were unable to exceed Cannon's sympathy vote. Both of their reputations had been damaged, however, by the low level campaigns which they had conducted.

One month before the Conservative Liberal convention, Yorky had another stroke of luck to keep up his, so far, unbelievable luck. The Liberal Conservative President ended the war in Venisa. Well, the impact of this announcement shook the nation. All of the people were over joyed except one, Senator McMillan. Ending the war in Venisa was his entire campaign. When the President did end the war, he was left with not a single plank in his platform. McMillan was dead as a candidate.
When the convention began in June, there were only two remaining, nationally tested, candidates. They were Senator Harry H. Huberts of Wisconsin and Mayor Yorky of Benton, Missouri.

It had been decided long before Yorky's candidacy that the convention for the Conservative Liberal party would be held in St. Louis. This gave our current President a tremendous psychological advantage. All over St. Louis, there were signs supporting Yorky. Upon the arrival of the delegations from different states, they were immediately barraged by literature and demonstrations supporting Yorky's candidacy. The credentials of the delegates were even checked by the members of the St. Louis machine which had come back to the support of Yorky after Trout had given Yorky different issues on which to campaign. There was one original issue which Yorky would not abandon, however. This issue dealt with beer cans.

The St. Louis Conservative Liberal convention began without incident and proceeded along the same course as in previous years. The Chairman of the Central Committee brought the convention to order and introduced the keynote speaker. The keynote address was like any other keynote address. It condemned the opposition party, praised its own party, and predicted victory in the Fall for the Conservative Liberal party.

With all of the preliminaries out of the way, the following day was the day the vote casting was to take place.
The first ballot went smoothly with no candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast. In the middle of the second vote there was a large disturbance at the back of the hall. Many of Hubert’s delegates were not being admitted to the convention.Mass confusion broke out, and in that confusion, men and women from the St. Louis machine sneaked in and took the absent delegates’ seats. Also, in the confusion, these same people switched State Standards so when the voting resumed again no one could find their respective state delegations. The voting continued on this ballot, and the tide quickly changed in Yorky’s favor. After Senator McKillen threw his support to him, McKillen, in all probability, did this merely out of spite. It must be remembered, at this point, that Hubert and McKillen had a “falling out” in the Virginia primary. By the end of the second ballot, Yorky was nominated as the Conservative Liberals’ candidate for President of the United States. Naturally, Yorky pick’ ’ Senator Trent from Massachusetts as his running mate.

Mayor Yorky was the Conservative Liberals’ standard bearer in the Presidential election; when only six months earlier, he was a relatively unknown mayor of an average sized city in Missouri. Up to this point, his luck had been phenomenal. He had actually won the nomination by default for, as indicated, his charisma and knowledge of national issues left much to be desired."
"The President of the United States was eligible to run for a second term of office. Therefore, having ended the war in Vietnam and having cured some of the social evils during his first term in office, he easily won his party's nomination.

President Percy and Mayor Yorky, the two main candidates for the office of the President, were stories in contrast. Their social backgrounds were different. Their campaigning styles were different. And their personalities were different. In general, President Percy was a much better man for the job.

President Percy had been born into a wealthy, urban family. He was raised in affluence. When he was old enough, Percy attended Harvard University where he graduated from the undergraduate school of political science with honors. He went on to the Harvard Law School and was graduated with the distinction of being first in his class.
of three hundred students. From Harvard, Percy went into the practice of law with a large New York firm, and he was put on a retainer by many large businesses. After fifteen years of service to the law of the land, Percy turned to politics. Being an astute and well educated man with favorable leanings toward the business sector, the Liberal Conservative party in New York quickly ran him for Senator. He defeated his Conservative Liberal opponent easily; for, Percy had charisma, a firm knowledge of the issues at hand, and large financial backing from the business sector of the economy.

Percy was Senator for only one term when he decided he would run for the Presidency. He received immediate backing from all parts of the country. He swept through the primaries, and by the time the Liberal Conservative convention came around, no one had a chance of defeating him for the nomination. He won the nomination easily and went on to wage a great Presidential campaign. He completely covered the country in the course of his campaign, meeting people in all walks of life. When the election was over, he had recorded a landslide victory.

It was four years later when Mayor Yorky challenged him; however, Percy still had those necessary qualities which made a good president. He still had the public support which he had built up through four years in the White House. When the campaign started, the public opinion polls showed Percy leading Mayor Yorky by the substantial margin of
eighty percent to twenty percent.

After the first month of campaigning, Yorky knew that he was in trouble; he had not gained any new support. The opinion polls still showed Percy leading Yorky by sixty percentage points. In fact, with five months remaining in the campaign, some newspapers were predicting another landslide victory for Percy. Seemingly, Mayor Yorky's phenomenal luck was beginning to run out. He had so many issues which Trout had given him out, that he frequently got tangled in them. And the campaign issues, which he could keep straight, had gone stale. The only thing that was keeping Yorky in this race was his good old "down to earth" style.

Yorky needed a good campaign issue badly - a problem with which the people of America could associate. He couldn't find a new issue so he decided he would revert to ecology and the menace of the beer can. If it worked twice for him, it might work three times. There must be one hell of a lot of beer drinkers in America because Yorky's popularity went up. However, his rating did not go up sufficiently to challenge Percy. Percy was still firmly in the lead.

Then, all hell broke loose again; and, sorry to say, it was for the benefit of Yorky. Two months before the Presidential election, Packy Anderson, a political columnist for the Washington Worldly Gossip, exposed the largest political scandal since the Teapot Dome affair. One of Packy's employees found a memo in the office of lobbyist
Needa Beard. Needa was T.T. & I's successful lobbyist in Washington. This memo stated that if the Justice Department would not bring T.T. & I. to trial for running a monopoly after it consolidated with its last competitor, then T.T. & I. would give the Liberal Conservative party five hundred thousand dollars in the form of campaign contributions. One week after this memo was dated, the Justice Department had, in fact, avoided taking T.T. & I. to trial for creating a monopoly with its last merger.

Upon hearing of this situation, the Senate investigating committee got into full swing. When these began, high level officials in the Justice Department, including the Attorney General, resigned. The country was outraged, and the Senate began to dig into the past dealings of the Justice Department. In a time of two weeks the Senate had found five other cases which, in nature, corresponded closely with the T.T. & I. affair. Some of these other dealings involved the Specific Motor Company, Lockheed, and Howard H. Hughts.

Needless to say this scandal in Percy's administration dealt a severe political blow to Percy and the Liberal Conservative party. Within two weeks after the discoveries of the scandals, Percy was in such poor physical health that he could barely campaign. The affair had ruined him. Public opinion shifted quickly away from Percy. And who was on the other end of the scale picking up this disregarded support? Yes, it was our current President, Mayor Yorky of Benton, Missouri. Yorky could have done nothing for the remaining
month and still won that election. In fact, he did do absolutely nothing in the remaining month. He just stayed in Benton, Missouri, drinking beer and talking to the people of Benton about the menace of the average beer can. Yorky won the election. He and Trout waltzed off to Washington, drinking beer all of the way.

"Well, Jake, what do you think of our President now that you know the facts?" Senator Latchem asked.

"Tom, I'll have to agree with you on one thing," Jake said.

"What's that?" asked the Senator.

"He sure as hell lucked his hind end right into the White House," Jake said. "And another thing, Tom, he certainly isn't Presidential material."
"Stetson Bryant, I apologize," Jake said.

"Well, Jake, you just didn't know the whole story," replied Mr. Bryant.

"After hearing this, I will definitely agree with you on one thing, Stetson," stated Jake.

"What's that?" Mr. Bryant asked.

"President Yorky, is definitely a drastic political mistake which could quite easily mean the downfall of our country," Jake said. "Stetson, why don't you turn the T.V. back on so we can all see our mistake?"

Mr. Bryant walked back up to the television and turned it on again. The President was just finishing his speech.

"... and finally, ladies and gentlemen, I have, what could be, the most important announcement of the last twenty years. Today, the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's
Republic signed with the United States a treaty which provides for supervised, unilateral disarmament. All of the peoples of the world are now free of the fear of a nuclear holocaust. The human race will survive!"

With these words, the President ended his keynote address to the nation. In Mr. Bryant's study, no one said a word. Mr. Bryant very calmly got out of his chair and turned the television off. He then walked out of the room as if he did not believe what he had just heard. Senator Latchem followed him out.

Once we were all outside of the study, Mr. Bryant and Senator Latchem called for me.

Bryant said, "Jerrald, I was impressed with you the last time we talked and I was interested in your political ambitions. You also had the political science education and the lifestyle which we were looking for. Tom and I invited you to our little party this evening because we were going to ask you to run for Senator in this State. However, we now feel you are overqualified."