

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

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B19

Kennedy Bows to Rayburn Power

By Drew Pearson

President Kennedy last week faced a decision between a flat campaign pledge he made before election and the influence of Speaker Sam Rayburn. He had to choose one or the other.

The tug-of-war revolved around the appointment of an oil and gas man to the Federal Power Commission. Speaker Rayburn wanted Laurence J. O'Connor of Texas, a former vice president of the Goldstone Oil Corporation, appointed to the current vacancy.

Faced with this demand, Kennedy ignored his campaign pledge, appointed O'Connor.

Republicans are delighted. In the first place, O'Connor is an Eisenhower appointee. Ike put him in charge of oil imports in the Interior Department. Second, Republicans are getting ready to focus attention on Kennedy's close friendship with Charles Wrightsman, former President of the Standard Oil Company of Kansas, whom the President visits frequently over weekends in Palm Beach.

GOP strategists are waiting for the right time to accuse JFK of being soft on oil because of personal friendships and despite campaign pledges.

Tractors for Friendship

The Tractors for Freedom committee now has a certain



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amount of cash promised to buy 500 tractors to fulfill a pledge Fidel Castro has reneged on. Why not use that money to show up Castro for what he is?

Specifically, why not buy the 500 tractors and deliver them, freshly painted and draped in the Stars and Stripes, to other needy countries in Latin America as a reminder that the grandstanding dictator of Cuba, like Hitler, puts machinery ahead of human lives.

Tractors are even more needed in other Latin countries than in Cuba—and far more deserved. The gifts could be based on an essay contest in Latin American schools on the subject: "How to Improve the Good Neighbor Relations" or "How to Make Democracy Work in Latin America."

The schools are open in South America right now. In most of its countries this is the winter season. If every high school student got interested in such a contest, with the first prize a tractor for his or her family, it could really focus attention, first on Fidel's infidelity, second on North American friendship.

During the first election held by the new Republic of Italy in 1948, I suggested, by shortwave radio, an essay contest on "How to Make Democracy Live." It was conducted throughout Italy, and the first prize was a tractor, presented by Allis Chalmers. Though a Naples schoolteacher, not a farmer, finally won the tractor, he was able to auction it off with a profit, and with even more attention focused on the USA. The Communists

took quite a beating in the election.

There are all sorts of ways to make the 500 tractors, which Castro spurned, plough friendship fields for the United States below the Rio Grande.

Diplomatic Dispatches

Prime Minister Macmillan privately has suggested any East-West conference on Berlin be delayed until after the German elections in September. Any meeting before then, he believes, will get tangled in the German campaign, thereby restricting Chancellor Adenauer's ability to make concessions . . . The Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended strengthening the American garrison in Berlin as one in a series of military moves to get set for a showdown with Russia. One proposal is to move an American airborne division into Germany at the critical moment. Secretary McNamara has not yet approved these recommendations. But with General Taylor now in the White House, the Joint Chiefs can go over McNamara's head. . . . Chancellor Adenauer is delighted at the appointment of General Taylor as military adviser to President Kennedy. Adenauer knows that Taylor is tough regarding Berlin and will recommend no important concessions to the Soviet. . . . Secretary of State Rusk has told top officials they can take their wives on overseas good-will trips or to attend international conferences. Too often diplomats' wives stick closely to the American community but the secretary believes it's time for the ladies to get out and help their husbands with their work. . . . CIA director Allen Dulles knows his days are

numbered. But he is desperately hoping JFK will let him stay on the job until late this year when the CIA is scheduled to move into its palatial 60-million-dollar headquarters in Virginia.

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