

July 26, 1968

Editor, the NEWS-POST
Frederick, Md. 21701

Sir:

The not inexpensive 3/5-page ad in today's papers, part of Harry Simms' perennial campaign to "get" Mac Mathias, prompts questions I hope you, as the editor of the papers in our community, will seek and publish answers to.

It is Mr. Simms' right to oppose Mac, to run for whatever office he chooses, which always happens to be the one Mac has or seeks. Were Mac to run for dog-catcher, no doubt Mr. Simms would find the money to seek his defeat, promising he'd make a better dog-catcher; for, no matter what Mac runs for or how little Mr. Simms is qualified for any elective post, he always has the money, always makes the race, and endlessly assures us he is better qualified.

The ad in today's papers is not factual, neither honest nor fair, and is the kind of cheap political propaganda that eliminates the meaning of elections. Both the concept and the expression are of blatant dishonesty.

In not a single one of the unrepresentative issues Mr. Simms' handlers select, and in Mac's long career he lists but 17, does this "I'll-do-it-better" character tell us what the majority of the House of Representatives decided, what the people of the country, through their representatives, decided. And in not a single case is there a fair summary of the legislation or a headline that even a politically-twisted mind could consider an honest or fair description. To this, one has no difficulty adding trickery. For example, Mr. Simms, or rather, those who speak for him, tries to say that Mac voted for higher taxes for the self-employed, of whom I am one. He says the bill required self-employed people "to pay Social Security and Medicare taxes four times a year". He adds that Mac voted for "increases", implying we paid the same taxes four times, which is false. It was actually a bill for increased benefits for older people.

These are fraudulent headlines, the kind that corrupt politics, deceive the electorate, and make impossible the proper functioning of a representative society, which can come only from the understanding of issues by the electorate:

"Mathias Votes Against Foreign Aid Control." He did no such thing.

"Mathias Votes for Chief Justice Warren Pay Raise." This is likewise an imposition on truth and an indication of the source of Mr. Simms' money. The bill was to increase the pay of whomever is Chief Justice, not Earl Warren.

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"Mathias Opposes Increasing Police Power to Combat Rising D.C. Crime." This, even for so treacherous and irresponsible a mind as drafted this ad, is a whopper from which the uninformed reader would never dream that the vote was on the simple issue of upholding the Constitution and its freedoms. There is no one in Congress, regardless of his party, who is for crime or opposed to fighting it.

"Mathias Votes Against Equal Treatment for Southern States." Here is a gross misrepresentation and a blatant racist appeal. This was not the issue and no man of honest intent could so phrase it.

"Mathias Ignores Republican Charges of Corruptness (sic) in O.E.O. Poverty Program." Voting for a program to alleviate poverty and an effort to prepare citizens to be self-supporting, thus lowering taxes, is hardly described in this false language or the chaotic distortions under it.

"Mathias Votes Against Anti-Communist Intervention by U.S. to Protect Americans from Communist Domination or Control." Well, even for a nut, this is hardly a description of a vote against a "sense of the House" resolution that would have authorized military intervention in any Latin American state by any other. Need I cite the list of dictators there now or in the recent past? If Simms is for kindling more war and more suffering and more extremism in Latin America, and this would assure it, he has a lot of gall running for anything.

Perhaps the single biggest lie in this 3/5 of a page of them is the pretense that domestic spending, described otherwise and unfactually and in propaganda words, is what is "leading our nation to bankruptcy". With 75 percent of the national income spent on war and its related costs, any man who so misinforms the taxpayer is unworthy of consideration for any office. In all that verbal garbage in Simms' ad, there is no mention of war or its cost - save for his inherent support of war everywhere else in the Western hemisphere.

Over the years Mr. Simms has spent enormous sums of money in his unending campaign to get Mac, whatever office Mac has or seeks. I think it entirely unlikely this vast fortune was or could be obtained locally. Therefore, I think you, as editor of our local news, should undertake to learn exactly how much money Mr. Simms spends and exactly where it comes from. If it comes from out of the district, then the voters should know it. If, as is widely rumored, it comes through the John Birch Society, that, also, the voters should know, and its extent.

After reading this ad which, presumably, represents the best thinking and the best English of which Mr. Simms and all his top people are capable, there is one thing which I would recommend to Mr. Simms: a normal high school education. He might find a nodding acquaintance with the language less than subversive.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg