

Holmes Alexander ————— '68 No Laughing Matter

WASHINGTON — Wipe the smile off your face. "Absent thee from felicity awhile," was Shakespeare's literary way of saying it. Colloquial or quaint, there is no better political advice as 1967 fades into the presidential year, ordinarily a season of vaudeville and frolic. Heaven forbid we get sopranos to sing "Hello, Lyndon," and that sort of thing. No Nero's fiddle in 1968, because this is the grimmest American election contest that man alive will have experienced.



HOLMES ALEXANDER

It's questionable whether the President should be allowed his crowd-plunging, flesh-pressing forays into our raging cities. We live in the night of small knives and long rifles. The Warren Commission's hurry-up coroner's verdict on the Kennedy assassination is no longer believed. If the daylight murder wasn't done by a lone, demented gunman then it was a conspiracy, abhor the idea as we may.

The urban riots, under study by three separate groups

in Washington, are acknowledged to have been planned, at least in part. Our two top Cabinet members have been put in danger by college boys. On two public occasions the President's lady has been threatened with death. It's no joke.

Foreign policy, which used to be for the highbrows, has been taken to the streets. The warlike demands for peace with communism are going to get us third-party candidates,

perhaps only some scarecrow figure like Dr. Benjamin Spock, but possibly worse. In any event pacificism has recruited a rabble which runs with the mob of race-radicals and outlaws from up the alley.

No time for comedy in 1968. Johnson and Nixon, the presumptive candidates, can't afford to be vulnerable to the heckling of George Wallace who says they are indistinguishable on domestic issues. If this is allowed to seem true, it means that neither major party has any idea or any intention concerning our internal strife.

Mr. Wallace says a lot of foolish things, but he has hit some responsive chords in his tom-tom refrain. Many people are strongly against the social conformity as ordered by Washington. They are against the coddling of criminals whose "rights are set above those of their victims. They are against the loaded dice that political Supreme Court justices rattle from the bench.

The election of '64 did not prove that Goldwater's choice-not-an-echo campaign was wrong, only that it was inept. It's no smiling matter to contemplate four more years at the same barricades where President Johnson has taken us and where Mr. Nixon in an act of a get-thee-behind-me-Barry could leave us stranded.

This coming election is not for tripping the light fantastic.

(Dist. by McNaught Syndicate, Inc.)

the small society

by Brickman



30 Dec 67