

The Success System 'That Never Fails'

By Robert Hollis

"THIS is an IMPORTANT day in YOUR life," boomed W. Clement Stone, the Chicago insurance tycoon, as he stood before about 60 admiring San Francisco State University students yesterday.

"If you're willing to listen and learn, something wonderful is going to happen," he added.

It was the typical hard-sell pitch Stone makes to hundreds of his success-seeking students all over the world. Dressed in a conservative blue suit and sporting his trademark butterfly bow tie, the millionaire — estimated fortune \$300 million — repeatedly plugged that old PMA (Positive Mental Attitude).

His audience consisted of graduates of the university's Clerical Training Program, which is sponsored by Stone. Many claimed they too possessed PMA along with the more routine office skills taught in the course.

'Money is Good'

The pitch went like this:

"Money is good. Money is power. The love of money is evil, but money is good.

"Develop PMA and eliminate the negative attitudes. There isn't a person in this room (or in the world, he later said) who can't be rich."

The homilies proved, if nothing else, that Stone believes what he says. "I was born in poverty, noted the 70-year-old head of Com-

bined Insurance Co. of America. "In this land of opportunity, poverty is an asset."

Poverty is okay, he added, if you're reared in a "healthy environment" and have a "good church life."

Born on the Chicago South Side and raised by a widowed mother, Stone started selling newspapers at 6. He was 13 when he read the entire writings of Horatio Alger. He owned his own newsstand by then, too.

Three years later he started selling insurance and by age 30 he had 1000 agents working for him.

Nixon a 'Pupil'

With no false modesty, Stone credits PMA for the political resurgence of Richard Nixon. Shortly after Nixon's famous "You won't have Richard Nixon to kick around any more" farewell news conference in 1962, Stone said the future president went off to a Caribbean island to contemplate.

While hidden away, Nixon was "exposed" to the PMA success formula. The rest is history, he noted.

Stone left unsaid the fact he gave Nixon's campaign \$500,000 in 1968, \$1 million in 1972 as well as another \$1

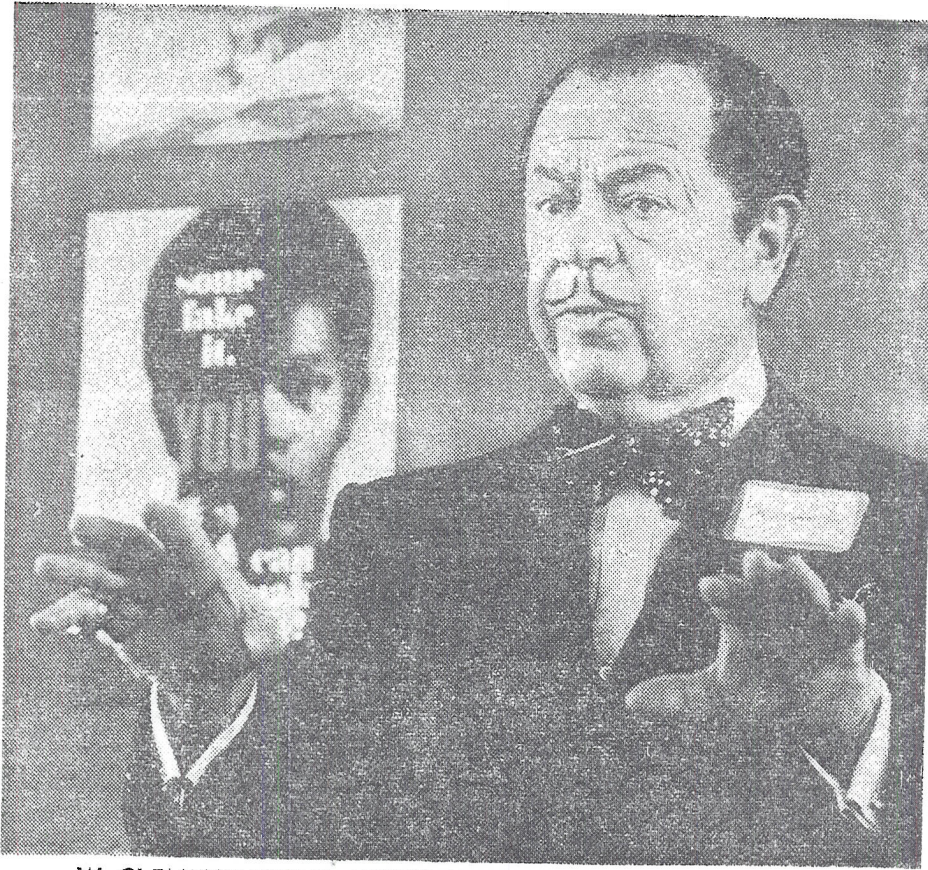
million to other conservative candidates.

Among his thousands of disciples Stone counts the Chicago Bears. In December 1971, he gave the slumping team a 70-minute pep talk and passed out his three favorite books (as he did to his audience yesterday).

The Bears slaughtered the Green Bay Packers in their next game, 35 to 17. The following week they beat the New Orleans Saints, 24 to 3.

During the Packer-Bears game, Chicago players shouted "O.K., PMA" and "We need more PMA!"

The Bears lost the last four games of the 1971 season and finished overall with six wins and eight losses.



W. CLEMENT STONE, MULTI-MILLIONAIRE WITH A MESSAGE

"In this land of opportunity," he said, "poverty is an asset"

—Examiner Photo