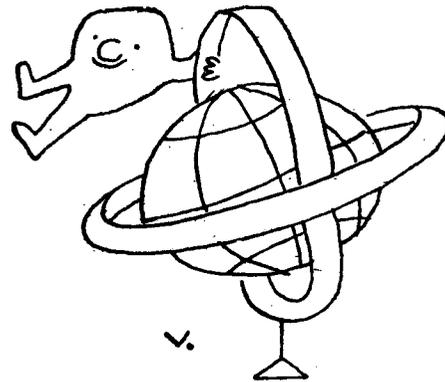


any country trading with a rebellious Rhodesia." This would affect Portugal and South Africa.

With or without the oil embargo, the sanctions ought logically, as Wilson and Simon Kapwepwe think, to wear down the rebellion. "Smith," noted the *Guardian*, "will not find it easy to govern without the consent of the governed." He will find it even harder to govern with his supporters gone, and this seems to be the most likely important effect of Britain's actions.

ACCORDING TO British High Commissioner John B. Johnston, who has returned to London, there are 180,000 whites in Rhodesia, half of them with United Kingdom passports and a fourth with South African ones. The total white electorate, including some U.K. citizens, is 67,000. About 150,000 whites are working-class. Voting adults in this group make up most of Smith's support. Semi-skilled and unskilled white workers depend for their existence on the "three pillars" of the Rhodesian economy: land apportionment, the non-white job ceiling, and the race tax. The sanctions will lead to a slowing down of the economy and unemployment for both black and white workers. In a country with no social security, the working-class whites, with their often middle-class living standards, are less able to withstand adversity than the Africans. Most, it is thought, will drive off with their bills unpaid to South Africa, where there are jobs in abundance, or leave for Britain or Australia.

Rhodesia's main problem is that it has more expatriates requiring an overdeveloped standard of living than an underdeveloped country can carry without resorting to tyrannous racial legislation to protect the white surplus. Wilson on Johnston's advice believes that the present squeeze, perhaps with oil added, will push out those who make a permanent peaceful settlement impossible. Believing that Salisbury will prove a Little Rock but not a Suez, Wilson hopes to turn the crisis into a victory that could win the Labour Party a snap election. Hurdles aplenty remain, but Wilson, a political technician rather than a statesman, is convinced that time is on his side.



$$A+B+C+D=NY^2$$

MEG GREENFIELD

ON OCTOBER 11, the United States Supreme Court handed down a ruling that was something of a landmark in the New York State reapportionment case: it directed the state to proceed with the election of a new legislature under a redistricting plan that the state's highest court had found to violate the New York constitution. Since the plan had been devised by a legislature whose own existence the Supreme Court had found to violate the U.S. Constitution, the ruling obviously raised some interesting and important questions, although nobody could think what they were.

To veteran issue watchers, this development did not come as a surprise. For at least two years it had been apparent that the New York reapportionment problem was well on its way to becoming the nation's leading impenetrable public issue, and that, as a source of unread newspaper stories, it had already overtaken such giants in the field as the international liquidity crisis, omnibus farm legislation, and the reorganization of the National Guard. To be sure, there are still no figures

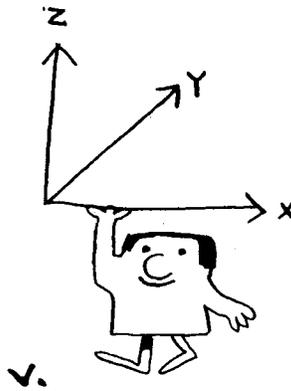
available to document relative standings in all this, but it is the opinion of some that the issue has done a good deal more than simply outclass the competition in its power to induce stupefaction. For whereas the subsidy, liquidity, and National Guard situations have at all times remained accessible to a hideous application of human reason (the argument runs), New York's reapportionment case seems to be moving toward a point of final and complete opacity.

LOOK at the October 12 news accounts reveals the dimension of the problem; and it also helps explain why, at first glance, the fault appears to be that of the press—some troubled persons having even gone so far as to charge malicious intent and premeditated "gaslighting." As evidence, these persons point to the *New York Times* report and ask what other explanation there could be for a sentence such as that which reads as follows: "Since the Supreme Court had upheld the lower Federal court's decision to hold the election despite the state

court's ruling, the high court today dismissed Governor Rockefeller's appeal as moot." In this, the suspicious seem to be on fairly solid ground, but much of their other evidence fails to stand up. It is true as charged, for example, that the *Times* account dwelt upon the court's disposal of "four interlocking appeals," of which, it went on to say, "Democrats had filed three" and "two had been filed by Thomas E. Dewey," as counsel for New York State. But, as any intelligent person would have begun to sense somewhere in the course of a careful third reading, one of the two and three that made up the five was not among the four that had been disposed of.

Moreover, the conspiracy school appears to have made far too much of the fact that the *Times* reporter, having opened his story with the news that the court had turned down an appeal to review the New York reapportionment plan while accepting an appeal to review that of Hawaii, immediately undertook to analyze what the court had meant to do "by declining to consider the New York and Hawaiian appeals." Open-minded and properly rested readers could think of any number of reasons for this admittedly troublesome aspect of the story. They never foreclosed the possibility, for example, that what had happened was that a lower Federal court or a higher Hawaiian state court had upheld some feature of the plan which was appealed to the Supreme Court and denied at the same time that an appeal by the state from another court order, which would have resulted in a review, was granted, or something of that nature.

Unfortunately, this explanation has failed to mollify many critics who counter that the press has an obligation to supply such information if it is relevant and true—an argument that goes to the heart of what is known in reapportionment circles as the vexed-context question. For while most thoughtful observers concede that the public's understanding of the issue has suffered from the newsmen's failure to provide the political and legal background of daily events, they believe that it has suffered far more grievously on those occasions when such background was provided. As an example, they have



cited the *Times's* undoubtedly well-meant effort to clarify the superimposition-of-large-multimember-districts-on-each-other controversy not long ago, which, they note, the *Baltimore Sun* for the same day quite sensibly simply took note of as an "issue" and which the *New York Herald Tribune*, in a characteristic show of public responsibility, restrained itself from mentioning at all. And few have even dared estimate the probable decline in readership that followed the *Times's* explanation of developments in Albany last winter: "Should the court strike down the fractional voting plan, then Plan C would become the law of the state. Should it also strike down Plan C, then Plan B would go into effect. This is to be achieved, according to reliable informants, by passing first the plan least favorable to the Republicans, Plan A. The Governor will sign it. Then Plan B will be passed and signed, superseding Plan A, and so on. When this procedure has been completed, Plan D—the one including fractional voting—will be in force."

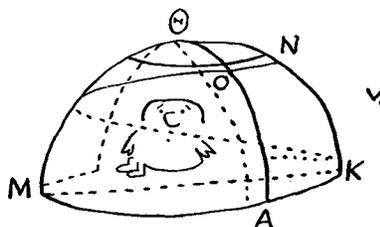
By and large, it is this sort of thing that has convinced most members of the dwindling legislative reapportionment community that any obligation the press may have to explain the situation to the public must be weighed against an even greater obligation, which is not to. It therefore seems extremely unfair to blame the confusion on reporters,

who in the main are a fine class of people, many of whom have gone out of their way to provide the reapportionment story with what is called "color" in their profession—"Judge Waterman, a strong-jawed Vermonter"; "'Judge' Rifkind, a wiry, animated man with a trim gray mustache."

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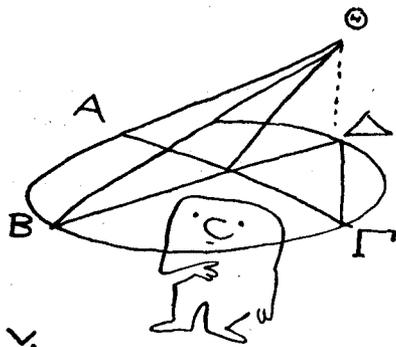
Naturally, the provision of "color" has not wholly made up for the lack of "meaning." What, after all, can the diligent reader really learn about the October 11 event? Is it enough to know that the state has been ordered to hold an election under Republican Plan A without knowing, for instance, what Plan A is? As luck would have it, the answer to this question appears to be "Yes": an informal survey of the handful of persons who claim still to be following the case revealed that none of them was any longer capable of recalling what Plan A was—except to say that it was "different" from Plans B, C, and D, which were "knocked out"—and fully fifteen per cent of those questioned admitted to this magazine that they had "probably" never known. As these persons saw it, the burden of the October 11 story was this:

The court ordered the election of a new legislature under reapportionment Plan A, while reserving final judgment on Plans B, C, and D until it had decided what to do about Hawaii. Whatever the ultimate resolution of the Hawaiian B-C-D situation, however, the upshot of the Plan A reapportionment was bound to be more reapportionment because, as the press had made plain, the newly reapportioned legislature, though not yet elected, was under an order to devise a permanent new reapportionment scheme in 1966. Moreover, a referendum on the November ballot would lead to a state constitutional convention that would devise a permanent new reapportionment scheme in 1967. And Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller was already under an order of the New York Supreme Court to devise a permanent new reapportionment scheme no later than February 1, 1966. Notably, all the persons surveyed declined to speculate on an apparent confusion of responsibilities here,



turning away all inquiries on the matter with the observation that "It depends what you mean by 'permanent.'"

The political implications they considered on the whole to be less clear. They pointed out that the *Times's* section on how the ruling would affect "Democratic interests" failed to help them much because



it had been a full two years since they had been entirely clear about what the Democratic interests were. To the best of their recollection, they said, the Democrats had once been *for* holding elections in 1965, but not under Plan A, and the Republicans had been *against* holding elections in 1965 under any plan until, following the 1964 elections, the Republicans had decided that their interests would be served by elections in 1965 while the Democratic interests would not be. For this reason, they felt, the *Herald Tribune's* assessment of the ruling as the "last blow" to the Democrats might well have been more accurate than the *Times's* opinion that Democratic opposition to the elections had in fact melted. When they were asked to assess the Democratic interest in the light of the fact that radio station WMCA, which had initiated the suit and had gone into court to have Plan A declared unconstitutional, was now trying to get the courts to compel an election under Plan A and also asking the Supreme Court to deny what appeared to be its own appeal, thirty-six were "undecided," eight had "no opinion," and one man burst into tears.

Even on the basis of such unofficial polling, it is possible to understand why the New York reapportionment problem has aroused so much interest in medical circles—especially among psychologists who

suspect it may force a rethinking of widely accepted theories of thought retention and data mastery going back as far as 1885 and the publication of Hermann Ebbinghaus's classic work, *Über das Gedächtnis*. Ebbinghaus, for whom the famous "forgetting curve" has been named, experimented in the human capacity to learn and retain monosyllabic words that had been constructed so as to be entirely devoid of meaning—TAJ ZIN VEC YOX JOF. And his major discovery was that, even though the rate of learning was slowed by the addition of more meaningless data, man's ability to retain and repeat it appeared to be indefinitely expandable.

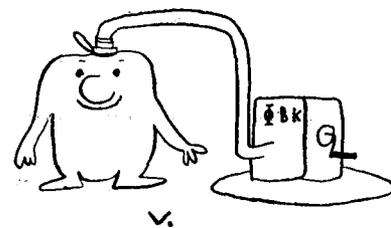
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Taken together, the limitations of both the human mind and the working press might seem to present an insurmountable obstacle to the achievement of an over-all grasp of the New York reapportionment problem. Nevertheless, it is possible to gain at least a sketchy perspective on events by consulting the 149 column inches that have been devoted to the controversy in the *New York Times Index* since 1961, when the "WMCA *et al.*" case was begun and the Republicans in Albany sought to put through a reapportionment bill of their own ("Dems call bill 'larceny, mockery' . . . ed scores Repubs . . . Ryan blames Zaretski . . . Zaretski disputes Carlino . . . Sen Mahoney defends not holding pub hearings . . . holds pub not interested"). Since WMCA *et al.* lost its case and the Republican bill did not pass, these events were significant chiefly in that they preceded events of the following year, when, as a result of the court's one man, one vote ruling, WMCA reopened its suit and also demanded that a special legislative session be held on the problem, contrary to the Governor's best judgment ("Rockefeller . . . holds issue too complex for election year . . . cites difficulties of equating air apportionment with population equality"). As an issue, however, air apportionment never really caught on. The court proceeded to order the lower court to reconsider the WMCA complaint ("Ruling is blow to Rockefeller"), which it did and decided that it

had been right the first time ("Ruling is major victory for Rockefeller"). On appeal by WMCA, the court sent the case back for yet another reconsideration, which not only constituted a second blow to the Governor but which appeared to have a certain finality and even significance about it ("A Krock comments").

In a stunning countermove, the Governor appointed a special citizens' committee to advise him on reapportionment, and R. P. Straus, president of WMCA, appointed a detective to find out what the perhaps more crucial legislative committee was doing. There were serious limitations to the detective's activity ("detective has to leave at bldg closing time"), but the citizens' committee, which Straus attacked in a telegram its chairman didn't receive, turned out to have been quite limited in its activity, too ("com has not yet met"). The Governor thereupon let it be known that there would be no special session, for which he received an editorial scoring. However, the loss of the legislative elections that fall appears to have persuaded him of the necessity of holding such a session before the Republican legislature was adjourned, for which he received another editorial scoring and also was scored by the Democrats, who introduced the lame-duck issue in a gay and spirited fashion ("Rockefeller on arrival at airport from vacation in Spain greeted by Dems masked as ducks").

By now, of course, it was 1964, and one of the committees must be presumed to have met because a thirty-four-page report was issued



that was the basis for Republican Plans A, B, C, and D. These were to be introduced (ABCD) in an ascending order of their preferability to the Republicans, which was also the descending order of their presumed constitutionality. The Democrats and the courts swung into action, as a result of which all but

Plan A seemed to be ruled out as the basis for a new election ("both parties claim victory"), and the Democrats subsequently uncovered their own alternative plan. However, the alternative did not prove upon its unveiling to be universally acceptable ("Repubs, Reform Dems, Negroes, Puerto Ricans denounce it . . . large numbers of errors in it noted . . . Tammany leader Jones charges Koch pleaded for plan that would 'get rid of Itals in his dist' . . . Koch denial . . . Grossman, Levy back Jones version . . . Posner charges plan is deal between Dem leadership and Bronx oldline leader Buckley . . . Buckley denies deal . . . ed scores plan . . . Jones calls Koch 'liar'"). It was shortly thereafter that the three-man Federal court ordered that the election be held under Plan A after all ("Dem leaders stung; score ct").

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Regrettably, this clarification of the past may not be much help in predicting the outlook for the future. Under Plan A, the New York electorate chose a Republican state senate and a Democratic state assembly each of which has let it be known that it intends to meet all the courts' various orders with a new plan of its own. Moreover, as the *Times* of November 5 disclosed, the Democratic advisory committee in Albany is seeking the services of an electronic computer. "The computer," the *Times* reported, "would be used to figure out legislative districts as closely as possible to carry out the Supreme Court's one-man-one-vote mandate."

Since the electronic effort is just getting under way, there is probably no truth to reports out of Albany that the Democrats are having a good deal of trouble programming the computer, which is said to have already been fed the relevant court transcripts, all five volumes of the *Times Index*, and, as a precaution against one obvious danger, a ton and a half of No-Doz pills. And at this writing, it has also been impossible to confirm a persistent rumor that no matter how the questions are put, the machine continues to provide the same answer: TAJ ZIN VEC YOX JOF—in no particular order.



A Cautionary Report on Laos

DENIS WARNER

VIETIANE
LAOs, or to be more exact, the western diplomatic circuit in Vientiane, is in a state of euphoria. Since 1959, the fall high-water mark on the brim of the Mekong has tended to reflect a military and political low-water mark in the domestic affairs of the kingdom. The Communist-led Pathet Lao once seemed not only to be ten feet tall but to have webbed feet as well, and the clearing November skies used to bring little cheer to spirits dampened by reverses during the rainy season.

This year, for a change, there is cause for optimism. But once again, there seems to be a danger that local successes may obscure the real issues that have persisted since the Geneva Conference of 1962 theoretically neutralized Laos under a government combining right-wing, leftist, and neutralist leaders. Subsequently, a series of coups left the neutralist Prince Souvanna Phouma in control, though sporadic fighting with the Pathet Lao, which holds much of the eastern section of the country, has continued.

If Laos could be considered a separate entity, divorced from the war in Vietnam or the subversion and infiltration in northeastern Thailand, and if the handouts on which the country exists could be guaranteed in perpetuity, there might be more reason for the current mood.

Within limitations, the achievements of the past year have been impressive and are worthy of close attention. But more urgently in need of examination are the startling new developments along the Ho Chi Minh trail and the continuing failure, despite a decade of effort and

half a billion dollars of foreign aid, to achieve anything that can even remotely be considered as a basis for economic viability. If the United States were to cease its budgetary support of Laos, five years from now there would be nothing to show that it had ever been there. With a few exceptions, there is little to show even now.

AS EARLY AS last winter, the military situation had begun to take a turn for the better in the less critical areas of the country. The use of American air power against the Pathet Lao's lines of communications, and the tactical operations of T-28s flown by both Lao and Thai pilots in close support of the Royal Lao ground forces, had brought a marked change in morale. Pathet Lao plus the North Vietnamese Vietminh used to equal a Royal Lao rout. Now, with air power added to the equation, the Pathet Lao and even the Vietminh were doing the running. Moreover, paramilitary aircraft of Air America, a CIA-sponsored transport operation, had supplied Meo tribesmen in the uplands with rice and rifles and rallied them to oppose the Communists.

The wet season saw a continuation of these developments. General Ung Pao, a thirty-six-year-old Meo tribesman and a native of Sam Neua Province, which for the past thirteen years has mostly been in Communist hands, carried out a highly successful campaign in his native mountains and valleys with the logistical support of Air America. Nearly three-quarters of the population of the province are Meo, and Ung Pao made full use of them, harrying and blocking and effectively preventing