



I'd Rather Be Right

By Samuel Grafton

Consider the Republican party, for its troubles are many. It is split. Part of it wants to go forward into the brave new world, and part of it doesn't.

The "intellectual" wing of the party, consisting of the remnants of the Willkie forces, the New York Herald Tribune, Harold E. Stassen, etc., would like to cut tariffs, and see us move ahead into a broader world trade. But the intellectual wing of the party has very few members in Congress. It is a curious situation; the party's most glamorous and presentable figures have next to no organizational power.

Up Another Street

The truly exciting Republican pronouncements these days come from newspapers aligned with the party, from a former governor with an eye on the Presidency, from friends of Willkie. But when we turn to Congress, the picture changes almost completely.

In the lower House, all 10 Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee are engaged in deadly warfare against a bill to cut our tariffs further. They are working at this like shock troops, without a doubt in their minds.

The party's honorary colonels may imagine that they are heading up the parade, but if they will look back over their shoulders, they will see that the privates and non-coms of the G. O. P. organization have turned up another street altogether.

Governor Dewey, as titular head of the party, whatever that means, is in an admirable position to bring the two factions together on a program. But the Governor has always made it a kind of mystery as to which wing he really belongs to; and he has not lifted the veil since the campaign ended. Mr. Dewey is not really a bridge connecting the two factions, he is more of a secret tunnel between them.

The Compromise

In the absence of his leadership, another solution is being found. It is a strange and desperate one. The Republican party seems to be slowly evolving the policy of being for Dumbarton Oaks (or San Francisco) and for nothing else.

This is its compromise. This is its effort to lift the mists and headaches of conflict from party councils. It will support the verbal side of the peace, the structural side of the peace, the adjectival side of the peace. But it will oppose the concrete side of the peace, the lower-tariffs-and-Bretton-Woods side, the substantive side of the peace. It is not a question of whether the party sincerely believes, on evidence, that a world organization is enough, and that we don't really need economic measures. Nor is it a question of a sinister Republican plot against international economic measures. It is a case of a party fumbling for a compromise which will hold its forces together.