PIE'S A LA MODE

First N.O. Mayoralty Election Held in 1812

By PIE DUFOUR

In three weeks, the people of New Orleans will go to the polls to elect a mayor, a function they first fulfilled 157 years ago.

It wasn't until 1812—the year the first steamboat, the New Orleans, reached the city—that New Orleans voted for its municipal leader.

Between 1803, when the Louisiana Purchase put the city under the American flag, and 1812, when Louisiana entered the Union as the 18th state, mayors of New Orleans were appointed by Gov. William C. C. Claiborne, himself an appointee of the President of the United States.

After Spain returned Louisiana to France on Nov. 30, 1803, Pierre Clement Laussat, French commissioner, appointed Etienne Bore, the wealthy planter who demonstrated that sugar could be profitably produced in Louisiana, as mayor of New Orleans. Twenty days later, after Laussat turned over Louisiana to the United States, Claiborne, who was governor of the Mississippi Territory, in his capacity of acting governor of Louisiana, confirmed Bore in the mayor's post.

* * *

Bore served less than six months, resigning the office, presumably for business reasons. The real reason probably was the hostility he felt for Claiborne. Bore's successor was James Pitot, a Frenchman who had settled in New Orleans and established himself as a business leader and a responsible citizen.

Pitot, who had been in France at the time of Transfer of Louisiana, returned in time to be named by Claiborne to the Municipal Council in March, 1804. When Bore resigned, the Municipal Council elected Pitot as mayor, with Claiborne's approval.

When Pitot resigned in July, 1805, Dr. John Watkins succeeded him and, in 1807, Dr. Watkins turned over the office to James Mather, an Englishman, who was the last appointed mayor of New Orleans. Mayor Mather resigned under the weight of age, ill-health and increasing criticism and New Orleans was without a mayor for almost five months.

During this "interregnum," Charles Trudeau, "recorder filling functions of mayor," directed municipal affairs in New Orleans. And then came the first election for the city's chief executive in September, 1812. Meanwhile, Louisiana had become a state and Claiborne had been elected its first governor.

The election procedures in 1812 are a little vague today. There doesn't seem to have been any formal bids or nominations for the post. It appears to have been a "write-in" election. A voter of New Orleans went to the polls and wrote on the ballot the name of the citizen for whom he was voting for mayor. However, in mid-August—the election was not until Sept. 21—a large group of citizens met to discuss candidates and they seemed to have settled on Nicholas Girod and James Pitot. Argument against Girod was that he neither spoke, read nor understood English; that against Pitot was his presidency of the Orleans Navigation Company, which, it was felt, would create a conflict of interest.

* * *

The group finally settled on Pitot, but when the election was held Pitot's connection with the navigation company doubtless worked against him. Of the 1402 votes cast, Girod received 859 to Pitot's 461. In distant third place was Col. Bellchasse with 79 votes. The only other aspirants were Charles Trudeau, Benjamin Morgan and Monsieur Villome, first name not given. Each of these three got a single vote, so it would appear self-evident that each voted for himself.

There's nothing wrong with that, of course, and you can bet that Messrs. Fitzmorris, Gertler, Guste, Landrieu, Petre, Rittner and the rest in this year's mayoralty race will do the same thing on Nov. 8. But I rather suspect that every candidate on the ballot will summon a little more strength than just himself.

In the last election, Mayor Schiro was elected in the first primary with a majority of only 514 votes out of about 164,000 votes cast. Here's the way the vote went:

Schiro	81,973
Fitzmorris	78,654
Thompson	2,121
Held	458
Perkins	226

New Orleans' first elected mayor had a majority of only 317 votes, but with a total vote of only 1402, that's quite an edge. Mayor Schiro's edge was minifractional, but it was a majority. And that's what it takes to win.

NOTES FROM CITY HALL

Schiro Offers His Views on Election, Candidates

By PAUL ATKINSON

Mayor Victor H. Schiro, in an exclusive analysis of the mayor's race for this column, said he feels either Moon Landrieu or John J. Petre will oppose James E. Fitzmorris Jr. in the second primary.

"At this stage Fitzmorris is leading in the popular vote," said Schiro. "One reason for that is he has more exposure and is better known than any of the other candidates. He's had a fairly good record, and hasn't done anything to hurt anybody. All of these things together give him an advantage.

"Petre and Landrieu are toe to toe to get in the second primary. What will happen is anybody's guess. Any little bad judgment by any one of them or any one special good move could make the difference."

Speaking of the rest of the field, the mayor said, "Then you have Mr. (William J.) Guste, following considerably behind Petre and Landrieu; David Gertler and Lloyd J. Rittiner."

Schiro said Gertler "started off popular in a way, then he was the only one in the field real early. He spent some money, and people talked about it. But when it comes down to a question of who you vote for, he doesn't show up too well.

"Any little thing these people do—and I found this out through experience in five winning campaigns—can change public opinion overnight."

The mayor said he felt Petre's endorsement of Harry Connick for district attorney was a plus.

"Petre at that time was either just ahead or just behind Guste," noted Schiro. "But when he endorsed Connick, he picked up. He got that whole group who normally wouldn't have paid any attention to him and were rabid about the Shaw case."

Turning to the DA's race, Schiro said flatly, "I think Jim Garrison will win in the first primary. Garrison still has 55 per cent of the vote."

But the mayor said he thinks Garrison MUST win it in the first primary because Connick, if there is a second primary, will take the position. "If Mr. Garrison is forced into a second primary, Mr. Connick will be your district attorney," said Schiro. "I think the groups will pile up on Mr. Garrison."

Concerning a second primary in the mayor's race, Schiro said a Petre vs. Fitzmorris pairing "will give Fitzmorris a lot of trouble." On a Landrieu vs. Fitzmorris confrontation, Schiro said, "that also will give Fitzmorris a lot of trouble."

"Fitzmorris has no cinch in a second primary," said Schiro. "He will have to work very hard. I think he will have to hold all he has and also pick up another 10 per cent. This race is far from being won by anyone at this stage."

Schiro said he doesn't see any real issues in the mayor's race. "It's now a case of personalities," he analyzed.

The mayor said he believes James A. Moreau will win one of the councilmen-at-large berths in the first primary, mainly because he has "tremendous support on all the tickets." But he looks for a second primary between Joseph V. DiRosa and Ernest N. "Dutch" Morial for the second at-large seat, and he predicts a DiRosa win in the runoff.

Schiro stressed that he is not endorsing anyone in the mayor's race or the DA campaign. "I have no reason to do so," he said.

But he did chide the candidates for refusing to take his public relations director, Jack McGuire, on their tickets. "I know this young man to be an outstanding student of government," said Schiro. McGuire is running as an independent for the District A Council slot.

"He would make a great councilman," said Schiro. "And I predict that he is a good prospect for mayor in a few years. I was disappointed that no one took him on his ticket. I think they missed the boat. My one regret about staying out of the race is that I wasn't able to lend my entire support and help to this young man."

AROUND THE HALL: Reports from the Oct. 9 Fraternal Order of Police meeting at the Police Academy are that it was the liveliest of the campaign. And there are whispers that Judge Joseph R. Bossetta, advisor to the FOP, really burned himself by endorsing Fitzmorris at the outset of the meeting. Some members were so incensed they talked about asking the judge to step down . . . All of the major candidates have agreed to endorse the urban renewal referendum on their sample ballots . . . Hmm—that Tommy Heier does get around. The former city chief administrative officer, who was endorsed by Guste before he withdrew from the Council-at-Large race, hosted a luncheon for Fitzmorris recently at the Governor House . . . Good to see Landrieu's secretary, Rosalie Grad, back at City Hall. She had quite a siege of sickness.

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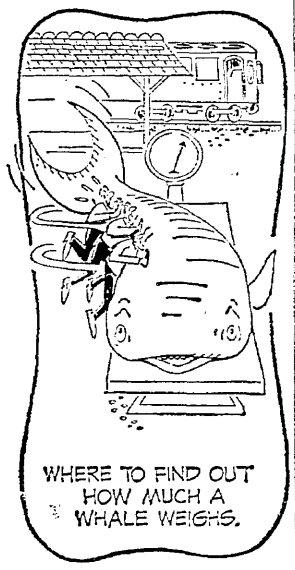

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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(Answer appears on Page 18)

Some Ills Induced by Treatment

(Chicago Daily News Service)

The physician's ancient adage, "If you can't help the patient, don't hurt him," needs reinforcement in a day when a substantial number of patients are in a hospital on any given day because of treatment-induced illness or complications, says Dr. Mark M. Ravitch.

These illnesses range from penicillin sensitivity rash through aspirin cause asthma and gastric ulcers to cancers induced in organ transplant recipients as a result of reducing their ability to reject foreign protein.

Dr. Ravitch, who this month resigned as chairman of the University of Chicago pediatric surgery department to join the University of Pittsburgh Medical School, adds two more treatment-induced diseases.

One is ulcers and blockage of the small intestines resulting from swallowing potassium chloride pills in a form that is coated to prevent absorption before they reach the intestines. The pills are often given along with diuretics to replace the lost potassium.

Another induced disease is the urological side effects produced by methysergide, an effective drug for the treatment of stubborn migraine. Patients may form mysterious obstructions in the ureter.

"What is not recognized is that almost any drug can be harmful to some people," says Dr. Ravitch in Medical Times.

The old time family doctor, who sometimes tended to do nothing ("therapeutic nihilist") has something on his side, in Dr. Ravitch's opinion.

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