

PRESS & TELEVISION

*Measuring the Value
Of Endorsements*

"The Influence of Newspaper Endorsements in Presidential Elections: The Case of 1964" by Robert S. Erikson, in *American Journal of Political Science* (May 1976), 5980 Cass Ave., Detroit, Mich. 48202.

Can the mass media, by endorsing a particular candidate, persuade a significant number of voters to switch their votes? Florida State University political scientist Erikson studies the 1964 presidential election and answers yes, in limited situations. In 1964, traditionally Republican newspapers endorsed Democratic nominee Lyndon Johnson, over his GOP rival, Senator Barry Goldwater, by 42 to 35 percent (23 percent remained neutral). Erikson analyzed 1960 and 1964 voting patterns in 223 northern counties where single local newspapers, mostly Republican, held near monopolies. When one of these newspapers endorsed the incumbent President, Johnson's share of the vote in its circulation area exceeded the Democratic share in 1960 by about 5 percent. The gain occurred regardless of which candidate the monopoly paper had endorsed in 1960. Moreover, this change was true to some extent again in 1972 but not in the 1968 election. Erikson suggests as a possible generalization that "newspapers may be more powerful forces in highly ideological contests" such as 1964 (Goldwater-Johnson) and 1972 (Nixon-McGovern), than in more "normal" elections such as 1968. Even so, he writes, if a heavily Republican press can persuade even a few of its Republican readers to vote Democratic, its long-term influences in behalf of Republican candidates may be greater than previous projections have indicated—although this influence cannot be measured with any precision.

*Military Genius
Or Media Creation?*

"The Hutier Legend" by Laszlo M. Alfoldi, in *Parameters* (no. 2, 1976), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa. 17013.

For almost 60 years, American military writers and historians have credited a General Oskar von Hutier with devising the innovative battlefield tactics that nearly won victory for Imperial Germany in World War I. Alfoldi, assistant archivist of the U.S. Army Military History Research Collection, discloses that the "Hutier tactics," so widely extolled, were not devised by General Hutier; his role in the 1914-18 struggle is scarcely noted by German historians. Why was it, then, that the Paris magazine *L'Illustration* in June 1918 called Hutier "Germany's new strategic genius," and later that month the *New York Times Mid-Week Pictorial* described him as "one of the most successful of the German commanders"? And how did Hutier's prestige and reputation survive to the point that his famous "tactics" became part of the curriculum in American military schools and the noted Ameri-

PRESS & TELEVISION

can combat historian S.L.A. Marshall called him (in 1940) the father of blitzkrieg tactics?

It is true, Alfoldi explains, that when Germany's chief of staff, Erich Ludendorff, launched his surprise offensive in Flanders on March 21, 1918, his spectacular initial successes came with the advance of Hutier's Eighteenth Army, which gained 39 kilometers in just four days. But Hutier (and other German commanders) used new infiltration tactics evolved by Ludendorff as part of a defensive doctrine for trench warfare. Crediting Hutier with all this was the work of Allied print media, beginning with the French, who, Alfoldi suggests, needed an enemy "genius" to explain a shocking setback and preferred one with a French name and Huguenot ancestors.

ARTS & LETTERS

*A Good Theater
Is Hard to Find*

"Toward an Architecture of the Theater as a Human Art" by Martin Bloom, in the *AIA Journal* (June 1976), 1735 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Stage producers, directors, and playwrights often criticize the theaters in which they work. Joseph Papp, producer of New York's Shakespeare Festival, has called the elaborate National Arts Center at Ottawa "a bad theater," while Tennessee Williams refers to New York's Circle in the Square as a "gymnasium." The Helen Hayes and the Morosco, both built before 1920 and slated for demolition, rate as satisfactory, says Bloom, a New York City architect. "The sightlines and acoustics are good and the relationship between the auditorium and stage is such that one is easily drawn into the event."

Generally, there have been three approaches to theater design. First, an innovative architect takes a visionary approach and, too often, overwhelms theatrical effectiveness with his own technical virtuosity (e.g., the Dallas Theater Center by Frank Lloyd Wright and Paul Baker). A second approach is that motivated by the philosophies of stage directors, and the success of the outcome depends on the "buoyancy and vitality of the original idea" (e.g., Jacques Copeau's Vieux Colombier in Paris). These theaters usually work well only under the influence of the original creator. A third approach, a kind of "consensus eclectic," inspires most theater construction. Building codes rather than aesthetics have the strongest influence on design. These theaters, though uninspired, tend to provide good sightlines and silent air conditioning. Largely overlooked in theater architecture, says Bloom, is "the relating of spectators to performers so that both feel deep commitment to the event." One way to achieve it, he suggests, is to study the few existing successful theaters before they are demolished.