

## Shortgrass Political Turmoil Puts Buddhist Unrest To Shame

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MERTZON — In all my days of wandering across this thin-leaved land of the Lipan Indians called the Dusty Trail, I have yet to see the white natives as upset as they are now. Not even during the terrible drouth of the '50s did the populace become so nervous.

Source of their unrest is an election contest that outcropped from the May primary county judge race. This squabble would never have been if the electorate had shown more care in casting their ballots to be sure there would be more than one vote difference in the results. But the candidates were only one vote apart.

Now the entire community is torn up worse than an alligator's nest. The district judge was called in. And if there were some way of getting those Oriental monks to give up fire bathing, it's to be suspected that our native shortgrass political tension would rate highest in the world.

As a matter of fact, in view of past political turmoil in this section, it's a wonder that the now popular pastime of demonstrating on land and sea didn't originate right there. No one can explain why some of our more discontented citizens haven't at least joined the demonstration circuit that has swept larger colleges and cities.

As far as anyone knows, not even one prodigy from these parts has tried his hand with the bearded lads who are wearing their first calluses carrying signs and chancing fallen arches pounding up and down in front of buildings that prior generations built in their behalf.

Probably the main reason we short-cash operators are forced to limit our civic bellowing to the local scene rests in the amount of our energy that is sapped by worry over conflicts like the aforementioned judge's race. These local disagreements offer about all the excitement that we can stand. By the time a man has seen a large percentage of his compadres called before a stern out-of-town judge (as happened here last week), then had done a stint himself before the same His Honor (as I did last week), he had has a major part of the marching and crusading instinct knocked out of his system.

Come to think of it, that may be one solution to the protester explosion, which has become such a far flung, acute problem that an ordinary citizen is afraid to fall down in the street or sit on the curb for fear his acts might draw a crowd the likes of which Barnum and Bailey never dreamed.

If all the dissatisfied marchers were invited to participate in the vote threshing, and allowed the thrill of sitting first on the special tempered witness benches and then on the witness stand itself, under the solemn glare of a shortgrass district judge, they might be cured of the void in their lives that makes them crave to create domestic unrest.

Also, the thought that the tennis shoe and T-shirt set was planning to attend these local ruckuses might tend to diminish the politicians' appetite for causing them in the first place.

Peace might become a popular item when it became apparent that the courthouse was in danger of being filled with a crop of protesters constantly on the verge of launching a stampede that stood to cripple every man, woman and child in the county.

That might be the best way to solve our own severe case of hotbeditis. It would undoubtedly make us popular with some of the more faddish picketing spots around the country that are bound to be a bit weary of the dissident element.

If there is ever constructed a building large enough to hold all of us who know how the world should be run (the foyer alone would be larger than the Astrodome), I just might appear and bring this idea before the group.

However, the scheme is too late for this neck of the woods. The battle lines are already drawn. The telephone rehashings are threatening to melt the wires from the insulators. Street-corner forums are operating from dawn to dusk.

But the crisis phase of the disagreement may not last nearly as long as the experts are predicting. After all, to prolong a 1966 model 600-vote election feud until the bus companies are offering family rates to the moon seems to be a bit ambitious even for one of our dandies.

Anyway, this election contest has been the major recent event in our shortgrass area. We'd be a lot better off if it hadn't. As it is, the mess is offering plenty of excitement and it's the first time in many a year that some of us have been observed fighting our heads as if a new face fly had just hit the country.