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Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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Thomas A. Burke, 1953.



TESTIMONIAL DINNER

OCTOBER NINETEENTH
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THREE



THOMAS A. BURKE

*Born October 30, 1898, Cleveland, Ohio + Loyola High School, 1916
Holy Cross College, A.B., cum laude, 1920 + Western Reserve
University, LL.B., 1923 + Married Josephine Lyons, 1924 + Private
Practice of Law, 1923-1930 + Assistant County Prosecutor, 1930-1936
Special Counsel to Attorney General, 1937 + Private Practice of
Law, 1937-1941 + Director of Law, City of Cleveland, 1941-45
John Carroll University, LL.D., 1946 + Mayor, City of Cleveland,
1945-1953 + President, United States Conference of Mayors, 1953
Appointed United States Senator, October 12, 1953*

THE MAN

ON HIS OWN, they didn't think Tom Burke "had it".

Sheltered comfortably behind the wind-break of the master politician, in whose cabinet he was law director, was one thing. Cut loose, exposed to the cruel, biting political cross-winds, was quite another.

It's a strange brew, analogous to the medieval witches' stuff, that makes at once the successful public official and the magnetic vote getter. They don't always go together. That's why the democratic process gets so little of one and so much of the other.

The metaphorical reference to the "cruel, biting political cross-winds" is more real than otherwise, because Thomas Aloysius Burke had scarcely seated himself in the mayor's chair at City Hall than the heavens dumped down upon Cleveland an inordinate amount of snow, and caused the winds to howl unmercifully.

Mayor Tom rose magnificently to the occasion, so heroically that it set the tone, the pattern, the standard for his successive conduct in emergencies—the thing the people expected of Tom Burke.

Wise, warm, pixy-like in his way with people, puckish in his humor, sensitive deep into the delicate strings of his heart, Tom Burke has made himself a singular and inimitable figure in the liberal politics of Greater Cleveland. Of him it can be said, as of few others, "there is only one like him, and there will never be another."

Quick of mind, intuitive as a woman, sharp in appraising motives, shrewd in observing the means to ends, Tom Burke has exhibited these qualities on the solid foundation of an integrity which has brought admiration from friend and foe alike.

In the anecdotes Tom Burke relates are the character of the man. The story, bear witness, he likes to tell best of all—

Tom has just taken office as mayor. It was a great day for him. There was

excitement, exaltation and family happiness.

"I got up that morning to drive down to the mayor's office," as Tom tells it. "I had always picked up my Dad and taken him to his office. I did it this morning.

"I started toward my Dad's office. He said: "Son, I got a couple of stops to make. I want you to drop me off at Charity Hospital first."

"I started to explain to Dad that I was due at the mayor's office, my first day, and all that. He leaned over and said:

"Son, you may be the mayor of Cleveland, but right now you are my chauffeur. Remember?" "

Tom Burke, as an infinite number of audiences have reason to recall, perhaps even tonight, has an almost inexhaustible supply of little stories with which to illustrate a point, make pat an argument, or break down a reserve. It is an integral part of the man.

It isn't possible to write about Tom Burke alone in appraising him as either a public official or as a man. Jo Burke must be there. She is Tom Burke's life as well as wife. Tom freely acknowledges an unpayable debt to Jo, whom he loves as few public men have ever loved a wife—loved, respected and adored a wife.

It is, in fact, for her, his family, his daughters, his grandchildren that Tom Burke, who "had it" on his own as few men in the public life, here or elsewhere—it is for her that Tom Burke stepped aside from the mayoralty after a service never equaled in length and seldom approached in quality of performance.

Everything about Tom Burke adds up to a man small in stature, big in mind, deep in heart, warm in sympathy, alert and wise, who gave Cleveland a good job and made himself a good record. As a good man always does.

L.B.S.

HIS WORKS

I SHOULD THINK THAT testimonials would frighten Mayor Burke as much as they do most prudent persons who privately think of themselves as trying to do the best they can, and not as world beaters; he is that kind of man and that kind (miraculous to see!) of public officer. Testimonials sometimes cause the honest fellow to feel that he wasn't completely understood.

Even under such qualifications, it is fair to point out some things about Mayor Burke that are unique. For instance, no mayor before him ever succeeded in clearing up the age-old uselessness of the downtown lake front, lost in the red tape of lawsuits and legislation. He did. He induced railroads, property owners, the State of Ohio as trustee, and the guardian City Council to agree on a program which some day might mean the whole commercial fate of our harbor and shipping. He could see that it might mean that.

To every prior mayor, a "city planning body" was a piece of ornate decoration, but Mayor Burke made it a mighty arm of city government; not without some friction, but to the sound benefit of the future of Cleveland in terms in which it is plain no prior mayor ever thought about the future. He did this as a matter of subscribing to the sound principle that a city without a program of development is like a business without such a program.

It sounds simple to say that he will be specially remembered by some Clevelanders as the mayor who got the car tracks off Euclid Avenue and gave our main drag a chance to breathe; that is true, and as characteristic in Mr. Burke's evaluation of what a big industrial community needs from time to time, as any of his acts.

I believe that Mayor Burke is the first Cleveland mayor to use a newspaper column and a radio hour regularly to make himself

and his proposals and plans understood by the people. At first he might have been suspected of ingeniously feathering his personal public relations, but he waltzed into so many tough problems and situations in his discussions as to convince the most skeptical that inside him there beats a proud heart for the betterment of Cleveland, and not just the city proper but "Greater Cleveland" so called.

He was born and raised here, he has had a splendid and interesting career here, he likes the flavor of his city, and he wants the world to appreciate it; so it would not be surprising if he embodied a certain extraordinary civic patriotism.

The notion has struck me several times that his ability as a lawyer added to his usefulness as an independent and aggressive mayor. Where other mayors emote, struggle, or explode, Mr. Burke has ever sought the orderly and equitable methods of getting something done that Cleveland needed to have done. Every person, organization, business, and politician who has worked with him has been made conscious of the Burke instinct toward the framework of law and constitutional provisos.

This has not only not slowed him down, but many times has enabled him to get the best effort and make the best time toward benefits and reforms. He gathers trust that he will not only aim at the right thing but the legal thing to do. This instinct is the opposite of the demagogue's.

One more unusual credit to an unusual man: The longer he has been mayor, the better listener he has become, and the better listener he became the less he has resembled the big-shot brass of modern American politics. In this respect, it may be some time before Cleveland sees his shrewd and upright equal.

N. R. Howard

PROGRAM

6:30—Cocktail hour and reception—Carter Ballroom

7:30—Dinner—Rainbow Room

National Anthem

Invocation: MOST REV. EDWARD F. HOBAN
Archbishop—Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland

8:30—Cleveland Heights Choir
(Recently returned from European good will trip)

9:00—Greetings—WILLIAM I. ONG, *General Chairman*

Toastmaster—HON. CHARLES J. McNAMEE
Judge of the U. S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio

Portrait of Mayor Burke
A. M. LUNTZ, *Chairman of Portrait Committee*

“Our Friend Tom Burke”
JOHN A. GREENE, *President, Ohio Bell Telephone Co.*

BOB HOPE

Response—MAYOR BURKE

Benediction—RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Auld Lang Syne—AL ANGELOTTA'S ORCHESTRA



DINNER

Fresh Gulf Shrimp, en Supreme

WRHS

Hearts of Celery

Rose Radishes



Queen and Ripe Olives

Roast Whole Stuffed Boneless Squab Chicken
with Seedless Grapes, Veronique

+

Julienne String Beans, Fine Herbs

Rissolle Parisienne Potatoes

+

Orange and Grapefruit Salad, Endive

+

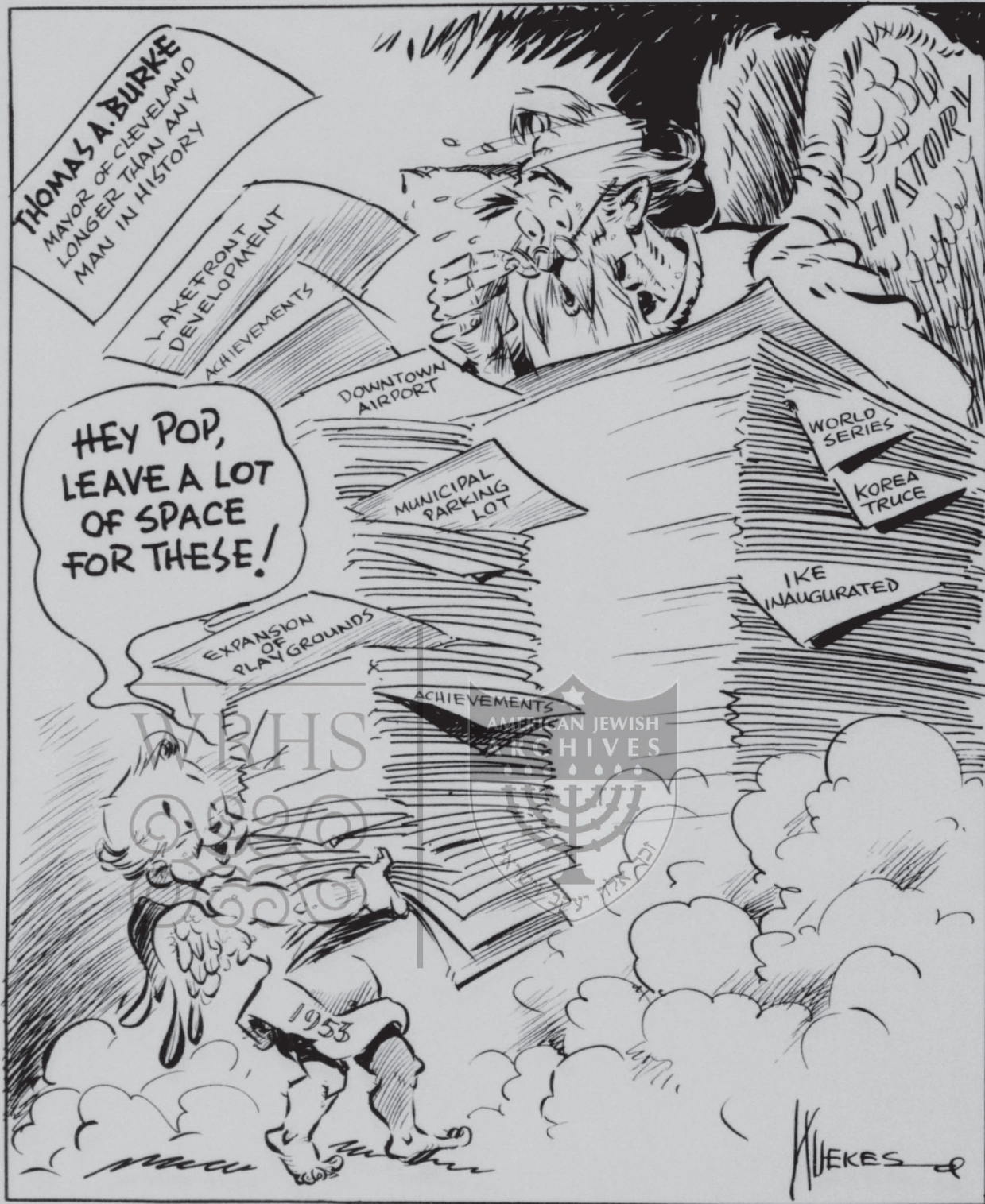
Frozen Ice Cream Layer Cake—Fresh Strawberry Sauce

Coffee

Assorted Rolls and Butter

After Dinner Mints

Salted Nuts



ADDENDUM

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FINANCE COMMITTEE

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|------------------|------------------|
| Robert F. Black | Allen J. Lowe |
| William F. Daley | Herman R. Neff |
| Nathan Dauby | Wm. F. O'Neill |
| Dan W. Duffy | Thomas F. Patton |
| Walter M. Halle | Lester M. Sears |

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CITIZENS COMMITTEE



| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| George A. Bryant | Richard J. Lamb |
| Gordon Cobbledick | James B. Lewis |
| Hal P. Collins | Don C. Miller |
| Hon. Harry L. Eastman | J. H. Nook |
| Robert P. Joyce | C. F. O'Neill |
| Ray Lamb | Edgar L. Ostendorf |

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Flowers by Louis Slapnik