

Texas: A City Disgraced

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Adlai Stevenson paused patiently time and again while scattered hecklers hoo'ed and booed during his United Nations Day speech in Dallas' Memorial Auditorium Theater last week. When one crude super-patriot interrupted to shout a question about Stevenson's beliefs, Adlai, unruffled, replied: "I believe in the forgiveness of sin and the redemption of ignorance."

When he left the auditorium, a jeering flock of pickets swarmed around him. Many lugged anti-U.N. and anti-Adlai signs. The crowd began to jostle Stevenson—and a woman clunked him on the side of his head with a cardboard sign that said "Down with the U.N." Startled, Stevenson called out to policemen who moved in to collar the female, "Wait a minute. I want to talk to her."

He walked over to Mrs. Cora Frederickson, 47, and asked: "What is wrong? What do you want?" Mrs. Frederickson did not make much sense:

"Why are you like you are? Why don't you understand? If you don't know what's wrong, I don't know why. Everybody else does." Adlai decided not to pursue the subject, advised Mrs. Frederickson, "Well, just don't hit anybody." Stevenson then moved through the yelping pickets and headed toward his car. A young man spat on him. A policeman moved in to arrest him, and the fellow spat on him too. Stevenson kept moving, climbed into a car and left Dallas' adult delinquents behind.

Dallas was shocked. Wrote the Dallas Times Herald in a Page One editorial: "Dallas has been disgraced. There is no other way to view the storm-trooper actions of last night's frightening attack on Adlai Stevenson." Texas Governor John Connally called the affair "an affront to common courtesy and decency." And Mayor Earle Cabell pointed out that the demonstrators were "not our kind of folks."

Amid the furor, Adlai Stevenson seemed the least perturbed of all, calmly turned the other cheek and said of his assailants: "I don't want to send them to jail. I want to send them to school."