

W. C. DOWD JR.
Editor
BURKE DAVIS, Associate Editor
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Anti-Climax

Georgia, at long last, has thrown out the poll tax—and you can count on the fingers of one hand the ripple that caused. It was just as simple as that. The House passed its repeal by an overwhelming majority, 141-51, and when the Senate got around to it the proposition was virtually unanimous, 41-3.

There you have the consummation of the years of fierce debate, of generations during which the poll tax has burned as an issue. It had become intersectional, had passed its usual filibusters, and adorned many a legislative plenary. In its name militant societies had arisen. The cry was that the shackles should be struck from American citizens, and that their right to vote should be unencumbered.

And in the end, with Governor Arnall speaking authoritatively for repeal, it was so easy. There are seven poll tax states remaining, to be sure, and none of them shows signs of kicking over the traces of tradition. But Georgia had been the stronghold, the only state which had never abandoned this tax since Revolutionary times. And it discarded the thing most casually.

It appears that the poll tax was a good deal more important while it lived as an issue, and that when it came down to cases it shrunk down to almost nothing.

Heads We Win

To have, or not to have, a statewide referendum on prohibition is a comparatively simple proposition. All that has to be done is to drop up a bill, say that at a certain time—six months after the war, say the people of North Carolina shall go to the polls and vote Yes or No. But wait a minute. Yes or No?

A specific choice has got to be submitted to the people. A choice always has two sides to it. And what, pray, is going to be the choice in this proposed referendum?

We know, to a certainty, what would happen if statewide prohibition were to be voted down in the Volstead Act restored to full standing. A first result would be to outlaw beverages containing more than a whiff of alcohol. Exit, beer. A second result would be to abolish the 28 counties in North Carolina which have voted in ABC stores to close 'em up, relinquish the considerable revenue they produce, and thereafter join the rest of the state in relying upon the BLS—the Bootleg Liquor System. That much is clear.

But what if the people should turn down on prohibition? Would this mean that the 75 dry counties must thereupon open up ABC stores, abandon the BLS, start collecting the revenue which now they eschew? We hardly think so. It is a poor rule which doesn't work both ways; nevertheless, we hardly think so.

As the dry will phrase the proposition it is likely to be "heads we win, tails we lose." If the drys win, they will take all. If they lose, they will keep what they have.

Contemplating so one-sided an issue, the only thing that consoles us is the conviction that the referendum won't be called, anyhow.

Post-Berlin?

At this writing the Red Army is reported within 32 miles of Berlin, and in position to make that was, acerbic and resplendent. Berlin's fall appears inevitable, within a few weeks. But there is a division of opinion as to whether that historic event would bring an end to the war in Europe.

We have been told at length of the military, economic and political importance of Berlin to Germany at the present moment—and it is said that if Berlin goes the Wehrmacht will fall into rather impotent segments. But there are other commentators who believe that the Nazis can and will fight on, even if Berlin is taken.

The past offers little in the way of a pattern. Sometimes the fall of a

capital has signaled the end of conflict—and sometimes not. Often, it has not altered the outcome of the war at all. When Napoleon occupied Berlin, he mastered Prussia; when he took Vienna, he had Austria. When Americans captured Mexico City, the Mexican War was done. In '65, when the Yankees were on the verge of taking Richmond, the South surrendered.

But the United States kept on fighting after the fall of Philadelphia in 1777, and after Washington was burned in 1814. The North could have fought on and on had the Confederates taken Washington after Bull Run—and the Red Army would surely have fought on had Hitler taken Moscow in 1941. So all we know to do about Berlin is to wait and see what the Germans do. The thought that, even if the Nazis do fight on after its fall, the end can't be far away.

No Payoff

Last Fall the Congress of Industrial Organizations was looking forward to its golden days. Its time of reward, CIO spokesmen during the "presidential campaign" had promised audiences that Mr. Roosevelt's re-election would mean upward revision of the Little Steel Formula. There were other high hopes and fond expectations. Even after election, on Nov. 21, when CIO was still congratulating Wallace said, "Roosevelt will not fall you if you do not fall him."

CIO leadership was not being naive about the future, despite Phil Murray's grand comment on Election Day: "This is a CIO day, another kind of Labor Day." Sidney Hillman, with victory in the bag, saw no defensible mountains ahead. He warned that the Roosevelt triumph did not guarantee "the attainment of the great goals we seek," but added that it did give new ground from which to carry on the fight. It was the winning of a beachhead, in short.

And, in fact, it has become nothing more than that. The record shows that CIO has been given little of what it wants—and a good deal it does not want.

The appointment of Wallace as Secretary of Commerce was admired by CIO, but that reaction was likely less important to the President than the fulfillment of his old dream—getting Jesse Jones out of the Administration. Aubrey Williams as head of Rural Electrification would please CIO, but he's likely to be stymied by the Senate.

CIO heads have blasted long and loud at WLB Chairman W. H. Davis and his public members, but Davis, Frank Graham and George Taylor remain on the Board because the President refused to accept the resignations. Of the State Department nominations, only that of Archibald MacLellan pleased the CIO. The group had called for a guaranteed annual wage, better language under Presidential attention. It called for a new head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics; there has been no change. It wanted a new Secretary of Labor, but Madam Perkins remains. Attorney General Biddle is still going to depunt Huey P. Bridges, a CIO pet. Further, the President continues to resist Russia on the matter of the Polish settlement, and still recognizes the Polish Government-in-Exile in London.

In brief, the President has proved to be groundless, thus far, the fears of his opponents that he would turn the country over to labor. And he has thus far, dashed the hopes of CIO that he would be liberal with his reserves. Up to now, things have gone along as if the Political Action Committee had never registered a single vote.

Not only are we a pet-lover, but a globe-trotting dog that is half bull terrier and half mastiff and weighs upward of 130 pounds has our respect.

With trains pulling in from 3 to 5 hours off schedule, the MacArthur fleet stands out, as the Philippines weren't slated to get their independence until 1946.

Statesmen At Work

(Serious, facetious and comic excerpts from the Congressional Record.)
DURING debate on Henry Wallace's appointment as Secretary of Commerce, Senator Brewster of Maine advanced a unique argument.
Mr. BREWSTER. It is not also true that if the country is under the danger of the malign influence of the views of Mr. Wallace, it would be perfectly possible, regardless of whether he was in authority, for me to carry out my duty as the President's close associate in some way which has been used by Mr. Harry Hopkins, for Mr. Wallace, in Rome, has been announced as the foreign policy of the administration under the changes which have occurred, although so far as I know the nomination of Mr. Hopkins in any capacity has not come before the Senate.
Mr. TAPT. (Chairman of the President's Committee on the Selection of Mr. Wallace) says that Mr. Brewster's name was before us. His name was never before us.

Mr. BREWSTER. I was referring to Mr. Hopkins; in his present incarnation as sort of a combination of Roosevelt and Colonel Roosevelt, I am not sure that it would be wise to have Mr. Wallace in any office, but rather we would contribute to the aspects of martyrdom which undoubtedly will be his.
Mr. TAPT. Mr. President, apparently the Senator has a new argument for the confirmation of the nomination of Mr. Wallace as Secretary of Commerce, namely, that although he is not competent to exercise the broad powers of Federal Labor Administration, he will be a martyr unless we confirm his nomination. It seems to me that argument is really "bullshit."
Mr. BREWSTER. I never heard before the argument that we should confirm the nomination of a man who has been so completely incompetent in his office as Mr. Wallace.

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

IF the U. S. Army has any friends left on the Senate Military Affairs Committee when the "work-or-fight bill" is passed, it will be the fault of the brass hats. Senators and even a lot of Congressmen are boiling mad over the way the Army has allowed its new-weapons to be regarded as vital amendments to the work-or-fight bill.

The climax came in a closed-door session of the Senate Military Affairs Committee last Saturday, which featured the stormiest debate seen in any committee for years.
On the day previous, the committee had adopted an amendment which the Army favored (or at least so it said in a formal letter which would put the administration of the work-or-fight bill under Mr. Mobilizer Byrnes. This meant that Byrnes would delegate the administration to Paul McNutt's War Manpower Commission, since Byrnes favors the WAC.

Because of the small number of Senators present at Friday's committee meetings when the Byrnes amendment was adopted, a second meeting was held on Saturday, with a full quorum present. Forthright Senator Joe McHenry of Wyoming opened the secret session by delivering a sarcastic attack on the Army. He pointed to all the tragic mistakes of the War Department, and its demand for centralization of authority. Time after time the Army has demanded this or demanded that, "if money changed, only to change its mind and find it was wrong. Now, he concluded, how can we tell whether they are not equally wrong in demanding what they want.

The War Department, he went on to say was opposed to the Byrnes amendment adopted the preceding day though it had gone on record as favoring it.

At this point, Chairman Thomas of Utah, rose halfway out of his chair. Senator Thomas is a mild man. He was formerly a Mormon missionary, but when he becomes indignant his voice becomes as vibrant as the bass horn of an organ.

"The way means to tell me," boomed the Utah Senator, "that at this late date the War Department, having already agreed to this bill, now is demanding another amendment?"

"Yes," meekly replied the gentleman from South Dakota.
"I demand to know why in the War Department wants this amendment," boomed out Thomas again.

"The War Department," evaded Senator Gurney.
"I demand to know why in the War Department wants this amendment," repeated Senator Thomas.

"Well," hesitated Senator Gurney, "it came from General Persons' office."
(General Wilton B. Persons is head of the Army's lobbying agency on Capitol Hill.)

"At this, Senator Thomas nearly hit the ceiling.
"The Lord knows that I'm out of harmony with this bill," he stormed. "But I've gone along with it, regardless. However, I'm not going to be shuff-shuffled. This committee has already adopted an amendment which it thought was approved by the War Department. If the War Department now wants to take back its amendment, it can come to the chairman of this committee."

Rejection of the amendment would have put the work-or-fight bill under the draft boards instead of the War Manpower Commission.
The touched off another diatribe from hard-hitting Senator Ed Johnson, Democrat, of Colorado.
"I'm absolutely fed up," he said, "with the War Department's double-crossing and their going through the back door."

"I object to being called a back door," shouted Senator Johnson. "I want it understood that I am not a back door, and I resent the inferences drawn from the Senator's statement."
"I mean no personal reflection on you," replied Senator Johnson. "My criticism was aimed at the War Department. The Senator need not consider himself a back door."

This set off a free-for-all, with almost every member of the committee participating. Finally Senator Bridges, Republican, of New Hampshire, tried to pour oil on the troubled waters by making this observation:
"It seems to me that it serves the committee right for trying to shortcut this important legislation without having full public hearing." Bridges said, "Here is a bill affecting all the men of this nation from 18 to 45. The least we could do would be to permit the heads of business firms and the heads of labor unions and other important organizations to express their views before the committee."

Finally, the committee adjourned its secret session for the week-end, with no agreement except that regarding the vacation of the Army. "This was unanimous," this criticism was shared by various members of the House Military Affairs Committee, who experienced the same shilly-shallying when the bill was before the House.

No Gas



Let's Look At Russia

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK
Somebody perhaps made a little list of what's good and what's bad about winter. It's cold, of course, but then also rivers freeze over, and you don't need so many bridges.

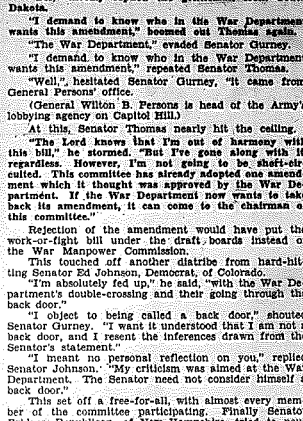
Mr. Voloshin. In the Christian Science Monitor, has traced the causing developments: "ski-troops and sledges, fast-moving cavalry, wide-china soldiers, even special helicopters to operate in below-zero weather." The Jewish climate came when the Russians actually launched one of their major pushes during a blizzard; they did it because it is so notoriously hard to fight during a blizzard; hard, that is, for those who have never looked at a blizzard with a fresh eye.

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Quote, Unquote

Heinz Liebert, German radio commentator.
What Von Hunsdoerfer was trying to achieve I don't know, but I am sure he is the only guy who has his order of the day which told his soldiers they must go all out for the big effort—Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery.
The Philippines' attack has been one definite piece in strategy to get bases and anchorages to work from in carrying the war every day closer to the enemy's rear.
Admiral Harry E. Yarnell, retired, former Asiatic Fleet commander.



There is no shortage now but there could be if a sufficient segment of the population began to hoard out of alarm as has happened with other commodities. If there is any hoarding, the hoarders deserve no better than the like to be hoarded—three to the match—with the very item they hoarded.

What About A New Station?

Dear Mr. DeDuits:
I am attaching a clipping of an editorial that was run in The Charlotte News, Feb. 3.
I travel a great deal for Stetlin Brothers, Asheville, but I am sure that we certainly do need a new station in Charlotte, because the one we have does not compare to many stations in smaller towns. Anything you could do to help make Charlotte up-to-date in this respect would be greatly appreciated.

People's Platform

Editors, The News:
The increasing din at the walling mill where America's smokers are gathered to mourn invites attention to the match situation.

It appears that because most of the paper book matches and penny-book safeties are now going to the armed forces, the smokers have been forced to fall back on the kitchen match. This, I gather, is the supreme war hardship and one which only the very hardy will survive since it entails the added burden of pocket filled with loose wooden matches.

As a matter of fact the kitchen match is a positive luxury compared with the difficulty of only a short time ago, judging time from the viewpoint of recorded history.

It was only 30-odd years ago that we were using the white phosphorous match with its ghastly toll of inoperated and dead. The lethal match joined its victims in death when patents for a non-poisonous match were given to all U. S. match manufacturers by the Diamond Match Co. then headed by Edward R. Stettinius, father of the present Secretary of State.

The trouble is that we have become accustomed to "free" matches with every purchase of smoking material. This custom started in 1912 when a clerk placed a wooden box of kitchen matches in his counter, presently driving sharp nails, points upward, through the bottom to deter the greedy.

But, though the "free" matches these days, the match remains one of the few items which priced retail in the face of war and increased costs. A single paper book match costs 1/40 of a cent, and a kitchen match, despite its size, 1/72.

And, to cover the complaint conveyed, may I point out that there is no match "shortage" all of the penny-book safeties and 35 per cent of the paper books have been earmarked by the WPJ for the military.

There has been approximately 160 million civilians and over fourteen years of age with about 120 billion paper books and over 200 billion kitchen matches for 1945. This figures to 3,200 matches each but since there are more than 20 million cigarette smokers in working condition, a great many will use a lot less than 3,200 matches.

The 200 billion kitchen matches alone are a lot of matches. Since each is 1/18 inch long, they stretch for 6,000-1/2 miles of 200 times around the equator. Lighted one at a time they'd burn for 190,275 years by which time even the cigarette situation might be in a state of total straggle-out. With 200 billion matches you could build a six-foot fence all around

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SIDE GUINNESS



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