

When Do You Think I Can Go Out By Myself?

The Legislature Should Be Scared

THE 1947 General Assembly has had a full quota of critics. It has been called by the *High Point Enterprise*, with half a dozen other papers, "the worst Legislature in history." It has made full use of the obnoxious gag rule. It has passed highly controversial and half-understood legislation without a record vote. It is now adjourning in the face of a stamped toward adjournment in which many a good bill will be lost and many a doubtful one passed.

But the ultimate evidence of Legislative irresponsibility is now before the House. A bill that would increase the membership expense allowances of six dollars a day for subsistence and six cents a mile for each weekly round-trip to Raleigh. The measure has been approved in committee and is scheduled to come before the House for a vote (non-record) if past performances are any guide) tomorrow.

This newspaper, like most others in the state, has long argued that the fixed salary of \$600 for members of the Legislature is too low to support the constitutional amendment providing increased compensation which was rejected in the last general election. We now support the bill in the House that calls for resubmitting the amendment at the next general election.

But this scheme to increase compensation under the guise of "expense accounts" we regard as utterly indefensible. In the

first place it is in direct defiance of the popular vote which rejected, rightly or wrongly, the amendment of 1945. In the second place it is an act of bad faith on the part of Legislators elected with the clear understanding that they would receive only \$600 for their services. Finally, it is a violation of a basic principle of sound Government—that no incumbent in public office shall be allowed to increase his own compensation. It is hard to imagine a more dangerous precedent than this one that would be established by passage of this measure; under it all public officials who tax the people and disburse public funds would be handed an open invitation to raid the public treasury to meet their private needs.

This is a matter of elemental honesty and responsibility. It is incredible that such a proposal should have gotten as far as it has without arousing determined opposition. If it passes—particularly if it passes without a record vote—it will have every right to place full blame for it upon the Administration, which has demonstrated a notable ability to block any legislation it found objectionable.

If an "expense account" bill is added to the record already established, the 1947 General Assembly will find that it has every right to be scared. Public indignation, unless we miss our guess, will ultimately be translated into positive action at the polls.



SEN. ARTHUR H. VANDENBERG, 63, has just had a birthday. Sixty-three years old on March 22, he is the oldest member of the Senate. He has three offices and eleven telephone extensions. He is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee. He is also a member of the Senate Select Committee on the Tenth Amendment.

Just ahead of the Senator from Michigan is a stiff schedule. On the emergency list is passage of aid to Greece and Turkey. Behind that is confirmation of David E. Lilienthal. Peace treaties with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary must be filed. These are only the major steps to be taken that have no limitation on debate.

GROANS OCCASIONALLY

Now the Senator groans under his burden. But he counts on his numerous votes from his Dutch ancestors to see him through. His mood customarily is one of resignation, but he prays that he will be able to get along with the dead cats and the overripe vegetables.

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Hardened Arteries In The Body Politic

DR. GALLUP, the doorknob ringer, finds American democracy showing distinct signs of hardening of the arteries. His pollsters report an increasing number of citizens who do not know the names of their Congressmen, the number of years in the Presidential term, or the general organization of state and federal governments.

But in most respects the picture is bright. In an article in the current *Reader's Digest*, it is to be found in a study of voting records. Last November only 35,000,000 out of 81,000,000 eligible American voters went to the polls to register.

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fought. Candidates take leave of their good manners and run up and down the countryside beating tom-toms and uttering their senseless noise.

We would like to concur in the Doctor's judgment, but unfortunately, it has been our own experience that the lower the plane of the campaign the higher the vote. The most mannerly contest we can recall was the one in this Congressional district which Mr. Jones to Washington last Fall. It was polite to the point of lethargy and if tom-toms sounded or any other nonsense was uttered nobody was listening.

It may be of course, that an orderly discussion of the merits of the candidates would have been, but somehow we doubt it. We could only conclude after it was over that the voters of the 10th District no longer give a tinker's damn who represents them in Congress.

The fault, it seems to us, lies squarely with the people, not with the system. It should not be possible to drive a free man away from the polls; it should not be necessary to lure him to them. Our campaigns are conducted on "an incredibly low level," it is because our politicians, perhaps even more expert at measuring public opinion than Dr. Gallup, have found that this is the only way to get people to vote. The sad truth seems to be that in a democracy the people get about the sort of government they deserve. The only fruitful occupation for those who share Dr. Gallup's dim view of the current political scene is a continuing effort to make the democratic system so that when the people finally grow weary of being governed by second-rate men, as they do from time to time, they will be able to do something about it.

Nazi Collaborator?

Kirsten Flagstad's Record

(NOTE: The record of Kirsten Flagstad, the Norwegian soprano, has become a local issue since announcement of her concert here April 27. Opinion ranges from the formal opposition of the Veterans of Foreign Wars to the observation of one bystander that a concert in the echoing wind-swept reaches of Charlotte's Armory may be a proper setting for a collaborator. The following discussion of the charges against Mrs. Flagstad, and her own defense against them, was written by Editor Wright Bryan of the Atlanta Journal.—Eds., The News.)

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD, who possesses one of the great voices of this generation, has returned to the United States after an absence which excites the Pearl Harbor. Her standing as an artist remains high. How she will be received as a person and whether American audiences will be eager to hear her remain uncertain. Atlantans and other Georgians, being ardent patrons of the opera and the concert platform, will have their part in the ultimate decision.

It is a nice question, one in which the human intangibles are so mixed that it is difficult to speak with any surety.

The facts are these: Madam Flagstad was in the United States when the Germans invaded her native Norway in 1940. She was, as any woman who serves in the world would have been concerned about her husband and her relatives who were in Norway. In the Spring of 1941, when she returned to her native Norway, she remained neutral, she remained there through the rest of the war. She was not in the United States until she came to the United States.

Her husband died in prison, charged with collaborating with the Germans. Madam Flagstad received a letter from him in 1941, in which he expressed a cold shoulder from many of her countrymen. But when she returned to her native Norway, she found the press that she had not sung either in Norway or Germany. She said her conscience was quite clear; she had not felt that she was in America, she hoped to become an American citizen.

A document attesting to Madam Flagstad's patriotic attitude during the war, bearing the name of the chief justice of Norway's Supreme Court, has been offered in her behalf. At the behest of the Norwegian Embassy in this country, the statement was accepted to cover only the time she was in Norway, and not the period before her return. This distinguishes her from the many who, during the war, remained in the United States to support the government-in-exile rather than to sanction her return to Norway in 1941.

Presumably her countrymen believed that she should be treated as a collaborator. The committee cause by remaining outside the Nazi domain. She could have given benefit concerts and exerted her influence in behalf of the occupying forces. Instead she returned to her family.

Apparently there is nothing in the record to indicate that she was a collaborator. She was a resistance fighter or the Nazi invaders (except by her government then).

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Senator Soaper says: "I have heard it said that the only factor to be considered is Madame Flagstad's artistry. That view cannot stand, for artists are rational human beings and must be held accountable for their actions. It is certainly Madame Flagstad's right to hire Carnegie Hall and give a public, commercial concert, with the public privileged to buy tickets or stay away, as is their inclination.

"But the Metropolitan operates otherwise. Supported by public subscription and granted state tax exemption as an educational institution, it sells its seasonal subscriptions months in advance to persons who accept such artists as the management presents. It would be an odd event in our history for such an institution to present an artist not respected in her own country. The Metropolitan, by Madame Flagstad's own admission, has forced her to sing without her for five years. Why reverse the course now?

"One may say with Mr. Kolodin, 'She that was not for us was against us.' Or one may say, 'Judge not that ye be not judged.'"

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Samuel Grafton

Saved From What?

ONE of the startling things about the current red scare in our country is the number of frightened. Are we really going to save ourselves from nameless horrors by about the interlocking the list of Government employees for signs of disloyalty, and then announce he is going to carry the Communist Party? If so, one wonders why these nameless horrors have to be named. These are awfully dilatory nameless horrors; they are nameless horrors that must have a MARCH TO RIGHTS.

For during this year, without control measures, the biggest political phenomenon in the country has been an action by the conservative Republican Party. There has been no march to the left in our country; there has been, if anything, a march to the right, which makes it all the harder to understand the red scare.

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The Empty Jury Box Again

WE note, with no pleasure whatsoever, that still another visiting jurist has arisen in righteous wrath in the Mecklenburg County Courthouse to send the High Court back to the jury box. It is to round up absent jurors. The mill of justice creaked to a complete halt one day this week when ten members of the 24-man jury panel turned up missing.

The sheriff's office, which bears full responsibility for producing the jury panel, is to account for the missing jurors before the day was over. One had written the clerk of court to tell him he would be out of town. One sent a note from his doctor. Another said he had never received any notice. The others, we gather, just hadn't

considered jury duty worth their while.

The Judge pointed out at some length that being out of town is no excuse, that only the presiding judge can excuse a juror for any cause, that too much politics was involved in the haphazard notification system in vogue here. And yet, after all that, Judge Olive accepted all the excuses offered him and suspended the \$20 contempt fines he had previously imposed.

When the smoking man made his suggestion that the Sheriff require that notices of receipt be returned when jury notices are mailed out, and that personal service follow if they do not come in. This certainly bears the appearance of a system that has been long ago. But we have an idea the situation will not show any major improvement until the visiting judges match their complaints with positive action of their own. When enough Mecklenburgers discover that failure to report for jury duty is contempt of court, and that contempt of court is invariably expensive, the problem will be solved.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round: Knutson Fattens Democratic Position

IT IS easy to understand why Tax-Car Congressman Knutson's bill will be passed. The bill is a simple one. It would give the public the right to sue the government for damages caused by the government's negligence. It is a bill that has been passed in the House of Representatives.

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Should Turkey Help Us?

THE same is true of Turkey, where great strides are being made toward the American concept of democracy. Turkey is much better off financially than Greece, and that, contrary to most national, living costs there are going down.

In fact, the statistics regarding Turkey appeared so optimistic that the State Department was forced to issue a statement that Turkey is much better off financially than Greece, and that, contrary to most national, living costs there are going down.

Another Voice

THE habits, or morals, of South Carolinians, have improved, and the decadence, the disappearance, of the crude and cruel practice of shooting turkeys in the woods. It is to shooters who compete with rifles when the targets are tame turkeys tied with their legs to a stake, with cords that allow them freedom of movement, of walking around. Of turkey shooting matches we have not

heard in a long time, nor have we had recent information about shooting matches when a heifer or steer was the target and prize.

The habits, or morals, of our South Carolinians, one infers, are more refined than they were some time ago. As for cock-fighting: No comment.—*Charleston News & Courier*.

The defect of Russian news dissemination, says a critic, is that one sees but half the picture. It is like looking through the Venetian blind, in passing, for a friend in a bar.

Under cushions and in compartments of a Montreal taxi, the driver of which was tired at the wheel, police found thousands of dollars cached. So that's where the fellows keep their change.

Secret 'Black Book' On Greece

HERE'S the inside story of the mysterious "little black book" the Greek Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson passed the book out to members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee last week on condition that the committee members would not disclose the contents of the book to anyone.

WASHINGTON

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Lifting Secrecy Veil

DESPITE the veil of secrecy, it revealed that the book gives unimpeachable State Department evidence that guerrilla forces are being trained in Greece by Communist agents receiving substantial aid from Communists in Russian-controlled Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria.

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