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The Wounded Earth

PERHAPS few subjects, save the basing point system and a detailed weather report from Nigeria, seem quite so dull as something called "conservation of natural resources" first mentioned in this country by Theodore Roosevelt about 50 years ago.

Yet, this season there is new interest in "conservation" both on the regional and national scene. A top ecologist, William Vogt, wrote an angry book on the subject ("The Road to Survival") for The Book-of-the-Month Summer trade, and here in the Carolinas there is increasing talk about something confusingly known as "Resource-Use."

Mr. Vogt brings his message so vividly to the nation's attention that it can scarcely be ignored. He writes about soil conservation with the fervor of a Biblical prophet. Here, for instance, is Vogt on corn:

"Because corn increases soil erosion at least a hundred times, I believe it has probably contributed more to the world's misery than that other great gift of the Americas, syphilis. Corn has now ringed the earth, and wherever it has gone, it has torn down the land even as it has built human hunger by building populations. Syphilis is visited upon the children unto the third or fourth generation; corn erosion, unto the tenth—and even to all time."

Vogt says what other top economists have frequently said: That the world's natural resources cannot long support the reckless and wasteful ways of 20th Century America combined with an ever increasing population. "The Gulf of Mexico, off the mouth of the Mississippi," Vogt writes, "is stained with the substance from which our children build bone and muscle and blood. These tawny waves are drowning the future of America . . . It is at least important that American children understand what the uncontrolled raindrop has done to their country as what happened at Bull Run or in a seven-gabled house in Salem."

These words make sobering sense in a nation where the earth has been stripped of its covering and wounded almost unto death. A native Carolinian need only look about him to find the proof. Let him glance at the dull-red Yadkin-Great Pee Dee River rolling toward Georgetown with a slab of the Appalachian hillsides blended in its floodwaters. (There is a point at Britain's Neck, S. C., where the red water clashes suddenly with the peat-blackened waters of the Little Pee Dee, and they run side by side for almost a mile before the red waters conquer the black.)

Or let our inspector survey the seared wooden skeletons of a forest stricken by fire; or the slashed stumps left in the wake of a buzz saw; or the wrinkled and eroded face of abandoned farm land.

All these sights — familiar and accepted —tell a better story than words.

Because conservation is dull and "long-run" (frequently conflicting with business of the moment) it seldom gets the enthusiastic support of average people; but in North Carolina an agency appointed by the Governor called "The Resource-Use Education Commission" performs valuable work in informing the public of its responsibilities. Professors Paul W. Wager and Donald B. Hayman of the University of North Carolina recently contributed an instructive book called "Resource Management in North Carolina" to publicize the needs of the moment in this region.

There is increasing understanding among Carolina people that, in the words of Teddy Roosevelt, "to skin and exhaust the earth is to undermine the days of our children." Messrs. Wager and Hayman think that the era of freebooting is over and that wise farm practices like contour plowing and the use of cover crops will heal much of the wounded earth and in a small but valuable manner help restore to the depleted land what man's unthinking plunder has taken away. The Carolina Farmer, that down-to-earth feature of every Monday's Charlotte News, preaches from the same text, and does it graphically.

Rituals Of Autumn '48

THE Presidential campaign trains of Messrs. Truman and Dewey roll on across the face of the nation in the quadrennial revival of a familiar American political ritual.

There are few better views of the backyard of the nation than from the window (or rear observation car) of a transcontinental train. Millions of ex-service men will testify to that.

But there is news this year that the American whose pulse the politicians are measuring made up his mind about the election long before the trains began to roll through the early autumn. Such is the claim of the Gallups and the Ropers, our 20th Century scientists of public opinion. Just in case the nation still harbors a few independent souls, the quadrennial railroad treks continue full blast, and Americans are hearing what Wendell Willkie admitted in a candid moment is often little more than the "old political talk."

Nevertheless, Americans need to hear this talk and weigh with care the issues at stake. It also behooves the American press to evaluate well the heated (and not so heated) arguments of the campaign, for it is here that our democratic processes begin to reach their full flowering. No citizen should come before the people on the ballot until he has told them what he believes and what platform he represents.

The two major candidates are busy at this job. Already the atmosphere of the 1948 campaign has been set. Harry Truman, faced with schisms from the right and left, has assumed a role unusual for the incumbent. He is the challenger, the underdog yapping at the heels of his adversary. As he left Washington the President promised to "give 'em hell", and the frequency of his speeches and the hoarseness of his voice attest to his zeal. Like the perennial political challenger, he also chooses to rail harshly at visible and invisible windmills, appealing for partisan support in the farm belt and attacking his major opponent along class lines. The Republicans, say Mr. Truman, are "gluttons of privilege" and they would try again to make the West "an economic colony of Wall Street."

These tactics show more than anything else the desperate efforts of the Truman strategists to regain the initiative which they realize was lost many months ago. The political heir of Franklin Roosevelt focuses all his ammunition on retaining the FDR tradition which labeled him a "friend of the little man."

On the other hand, Mr. Dewey as his associate campaigner, Earl Warren, have unveiled a genteel and mannerly campaign in keeping with their personalities and with the top contenders in the Presidential sweepstakes. Their assurance leads them to say many things which have more of the ring of truth than the average political harangue (i.e. Dewey's admission that many of the Government's current difficulties are not the President's fault at all but "the result of circumstances beyond the control of any government"). To some extent the New York Governor has ignored his Democratic opponent by discussing what he, Mr. Dewey, intends to do as President. Politicians say he wages a "safe" campaign, stressing the need for unity and the outlook for peace, two subjects which fall to make him sound mad at anybody.

Whether the Dewey line will continue along these constructive channels depends in large part, it appears, on how well he and his advisers feel they are retaining their comfortable lead. It will be recalled that the late President Roosevelt adopted much the same tactics against Mr. Dewey in 1944 until the latter part of the campaign season when he feared the Republican candidate was looming as a genuine threat to his fourth term bid.

And so, as the colorful political trains roll on across the heartland of the nation, the Presidential contenders and their retinues measure anew the delicate shiftings of public opinion, shaping their words to fit the moods of the people. They are seeing and hearing the people, but most important of all, the people are seeing and hearing them in the opening act of the nation's top political drama.

From The Asheville Citizen

A Primary Myth Comes To Life Again

THAT STORY of North Carolina's "surplus and idle funds," the telling of which occupied orators overtime in the Democratic primaries, comes back to dog the general election. Of course, it isn't true. It isn't true — not even by a sizable fraction of the $171,375,075.19 alleged to be "idle" in State banks as of last March 31.

If the reader will labor through some figures, certainly the truth will out. Fot chapter and verse of text we take the figures of W. Tom Bost of the Greensboro Daily News, scrupulous dean of the Raleigh press corps who has known, man and boy, somewhat more about the mysteries of North Carolina Government than any considerable handful of elected officials. To quote Mr. Bost in *extensio* on the "surplus and idle funds":

As has been many times written, these $171,000,000 deposits represent all the money that the State has. They are made up of $51,161,388 (we will omit the cents) from the General Fund; $48,701,128 from the Highway Fund; $48,018,655 from the permanent improvements fund; $5,285,025 from the "cash held over for 80 special operating funds"; $4,378,290 from "Federal funds for special purposes"; $2,950,996 from "funds for matured bonds and interest not tirned in for payment"; and "outstanding checks, departments, institutions and public schools" which amount to $10,979,683 . . .

The proposal to apply $20,000,000 for current "operating expenses" and then to invest $150,000,000 of the "surplus and idle funds" would be specific if we had a law for it instead of prohibiting it. Against these deposits are already authorized payments of $135,779,659. As will be seen this leaves about $35,600,000 as actual "surplus". Of that amount $23,000,000 recently was put into short term notes, leaving slightly more than $12,500,000 as a present surplus. And there are charge-off items even against that.

The party which comes to power in North Carolina in January will have no $171,000,000 to draw upon as either "surplus" or "idle". There is no point in fooling the voter oratorically or performing a juggling act with campaign propaganda.

High Stakes

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Pay Of Legislators

By ALBERT COATES
Director, Institute of Government

( ) FOR fixing salaries of members of the General Assembly at twelve hundred dollars ($1,200.00) and presiding officers at fifteen hundred dollars ($1,500.00) and fixing salaries for extra sessions at two hundred and fifty dollars ($250.00) and three hundred dollars ($300.00) respectively.

( ) AGAINST fixing salaries of members of the General Assembly at twelve hundred dollars ($1,200.00) and presiding officers at fifteen hundred dollars ($1,500.00) and fixing salaries for extra sessions at two hundred and fifty dollars $250.00) and three hundred dollars ($300.00) respectively.

PRESENT PAY. Article II, Section 28 of the North Carolina Constitution allows members of the General Assembly a salary of $600 each for a regular session every two years, and $8 per day for extra sessions—not exceeding twenty days. It allows the Speaker and the Lieutenant Governor—presiding officers of the House and Senate, a salary of $700 each for regular sessions and $10 per day for extra sessions—not exceeding forty days.

Proposed Pay. On Tuesday, Nov. 2, the people of North Carolina will vote for or against an amendment to the Constitution allowing members of the General Assembly a salary of $1,200 each for a regular session of 60 days and a salary of $250 for extra sessions; allowing the Speaker and the Lieutenant Governor—presiding officers of the House and Senate, a salary of $1,500 each for regular sessions and $300 for extra sessions.

Reasons cited for pay increase. The present pay scale was voted by the people in 1928, changing the pay scale in force since 1875—$4 per day for members and $6 per day for presiding officers for sessions of 60 days, with like pay for as many as twenty days in extra sessions, and ten cents a mile for one round trip between home and capital. The rise in living costs during the past twenty years has practically doubled, and the proposed increase in pay will leave legislators in 1949 in little if any better situation than legislators in 1929.

Most if not all people will agree that the pay of legislators should not be high enough to induce candidates to run, or to legislate, solely for the pay increase proposed will leave most if not all legislators facing the question their predecessors have faced before them—"how much money they will make, but how much money they will lose: in paying for room, board, laundry, tips and other incidental living expenses; in paying for stationery and postage, telephone calls and telegrams in the course of dealings with constituents; for regularly recurring trips home on week-ends to consult with their constituents, keep in touch with their families, and give a lick and promise to the business they left behind them.

Present and proposed pay is based on the theory of regular legislative sessions of 60 days. Since the present day scale was adopted in 1928 seven sessions have lasted 120 days—ranging from 106 to 120 days. This means that legislators who have barely made both ends meet for a 60-day session have had to dip into their own pockets to finance the added costs of six to 60 added days. With the growing volume and complexity of the business of the State which legislators are called upon to deal with these added days are likely to increase and pile up further living costs on long suffering legislators who have increased all state officials' salaries but their own.

The proposed increase in pay cannot be stretched to cover: the loss of income suffered by the legislator who lets his business slide while he is away from home—particularly biting on professional men and little business men; the support of the legislator's family and the upkeep of his office while he is undergoing this periodic income loss; the cost of running for the office—varying with the competition and the heat of local contests. In losing these things legislators suffer loss enough without incurring further loss from lack of living wages while working at their legislative jobs.

A poll of legislators indicates the common feeling that past and present payments of less than living wages to its legislators is costing the State many times its skimpy savings every year: in losing the service of many good men who cannot afford to take the loss involved—such as men without continuing income, little business men with large families to support, younger veterans of the wars seeking footholds in their professions, and many others with better heads than mere bankbooks.

It may be argued that payment of less than living wages is operating in fact as a property qualification for public office nearly 100 years after this qualification in theory was swept out of the Constitution. In well nigh every legislative session some men who had not previously counted the costs involved are forced to leave weeks before the session closes on account of sheer financial stringencies—leaving their localities and constituents unrepresented in the all-important closing days of these legislators writes: 'Only the following types of persons can offer their services as lawmakers: (1) men financially able to sustain a loss in order to render public service; (2) men who may represent special interests who can see to it that the legislator does not suffer a sacrifice; (3) men of wealth who are interested in the Legislature for the fame (?) or excitement it may offer; (4) or men, unable financially, but willing to 'give' as a sacrifice to public service."

Quote, Unquote

A news story in last Sunday's Herald-Leader mentioned the Security Trust Co.'s "banking house at Upper and Mill Streets." For the information of any who want to do business there, the bank now has been moved back to Short and Mill Streets, where it was located until last Sunday morning.—Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader.

Naturally, as some people claim, worry kills more people than work. So many more people do it. —Little Rock Arkansas Gazette.

Life is a game in which too little attention is paid to the coaches and too much to the grandstand.—Dallas (Texas) Morning News.

Of course the Review gets out with a few misspelled words now and then, but probably the best thing to get out lately is the new school bus assigned to Church Hill. It appeared on the streets all bright orange and black with white letters printed on the left side "Hawkins County Schoos."—Rogersville (Tenn.) Review.

Farmer Grimes of Vinegar Bend says that he is not asking very much of the next national administration. All he wants is an administration that will be interested as much in the welfare of Oklahoma and Texas as it is in the welfare of Greece and Italy and Palestine.—Oklahoma City Daily Oklahoman.

Marquis Childs

The Loyalty Check

WASHINGTON

AMERICANS who have become increasingly concerned with the rights of the individual and the preservation of basic American freedom must soon come forward with a plan to preserve those rights. If the present drift continues, the structure of American freedom may be seriously impaired.

Pointing this up was the forthright statement of Rep. P. Edward Hebert of Louisiana, that the whole issue of loyalty and disloyalty had now become hopelessly tangled in partisan politics. That statement has needed saying by someone familiar with the controversy for a long time.

Hebert, who can never be accused of even New Dealism, has sat as a member of the House Un-American Activities Committee. As he said in a radio interview, he had seen overwhelming evidence that the motivation of the committee was political. They were not so much interested in getting the facts as in making a case.

At the same time Hebert saw politics in President Truman's charge that the un-American hearings were merely a "red herring". This is the kind of offhand oversimplification of which the President frequently is guilty.

While the President made his "red herring" charge, which has now been taken up by Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, his own loyalty boards were running a close race with the Un-American Committee.

COMPETITION

Although not operating in the same headline-hunting atmosphere as the committee, the President's loyalty-testing system has appeared to be in competition with the Republican Congress in running down individuals with even faintly irregular or heretical thoughts.

These individuals, it is true, are not subjected to the public and often irresponsible accusations that pour out of the J. Parnell Thomas propaganda mill. Hebert cited Dr. Edward U. Condon, head of the Bureau of Standards, as an example of one who had been publicly smeared and yet never given an opportunity to reply to vague charges of disloyalty.

It is possible, however, that the secret procedure of the loyalty boards may have an even more damaging effect. Unless the accused individual deliberately chooses to make his case public and expose his entire life and career to view, he has no appeal even to public opinion.

Nor is it any answer to say the number investigated and found disloyal is relatively small. If the future of one individual is unjustly destroyed, there is reason for deep concern. As Dewey said in his opening campaign address, our beliefs are the highest value on each and every individual.

The latest Government loyalty count showed that a full investigation had been ordered in 5,421 cases. Of that number 883 resigned while the investigation was on or pending an appeal. This compares with 2,110,521 Government employees cleared.

To date departmental loyalty boards have found 54 individuals guilty of disloyalty. They have the right to appeal to the top loyalty board and 21 of this number have served notice of appeals.

STRANGE ACCUSATIONS

Lawyers who have represented some of the "disloyal" individuals, out of a sense of public duty, report strange accusations. Charges were brought against one Government employee because he had contributed to a fund to hire a lawyer for one of these accused in the Canadian espionage case.

The accused Canadian had been a classmate at college and a former professor requested the contribution, since the accused Canadian did not have funds for counsel. The Canadian was later acquitted of all charges. The Government employee was asked by his department loyalty board if he had made any other contributions.

He replied that he had given $250 to the United Jewish Appeal. A board member then said: "Don't you know that Communists almost too much zeal for the underdog?" A department official saw the transcript with this exchange and it was stricken from the record.

All sorts of prejudices inevitably enter; guilt by association is a too common conclusion from the hearsay reports presented to the loyalty boards. The accused is not permitted to confront his accuser.

Responsible citizens, deeply troubled over what such procedures mean if they become generally accepted, long have been considering how the whole matter could be taken out of politics. They have considered a commission, made up of men of unimpeachable integrity, which would in private review the question of loyalty and espionage and perhaps pass on individual cases of those accused publicly by the Un-American Committee or privately by the Administration loyalty system.

In my opinion, some such step must be taken. Men of the calibre of, say, Justice Owen J. Roberts, who came forward with an offer to review the entire problem, could not be rebuffed. Unless such a step is taken, the danger is bound to grow as the campaign becomes more heated.

Stewart Alsop

Tea Table Topic

WASHINGTON

THE comfortable Crimean dacha of Josef Stalin, according to reliable reports, has lately been receiving a steady stream of satellite Communist leaders. Romania's Ana Pauker was the first to make the pilgrimage, shortly after the Belgrade conference, but Bulgaria's Dimitrov, Hungary's Rakosi and Czechoslovakia's Gottwald and Slansky's ments have followed her, to pay homage to the aging dictator and to receive his orders. For some reason no Polish leader, so far as is known, has yet made the pilgrimage.

The dacha has doubtless been the scene of discussions on Berlin and the question of the succession to the dead Andrei Zhdanov's post in the Cominform has probably also been considered. But the chief purpose of the satellite pilgrimage to Crimea, it is believed, has been to settle the fate of the rebellious Marshal Tito. And, from information now available, a fairly accurate picture of Stalin's timetable for Tito can be pieced together.

The timetable has already been upset by the shooting some weeks ago of Yugoslav Gen. Arso Yovanovitch, Tito's wartime comrade-in-arms, as he attempted to leave the Yugoslav frontier. Yovanovitch, it has now been learned, had been chosen by Moscow to become the instrument of Tito's downfall, and his successor. He had served with the Red Army and was considered loyal to the Kremlin. Accordingly, arrangements were made for him to leave Belgrade on the plane of Madam Pauker, Tito's arch-enemy, at the end of the Danube conference. He was then to be grouped to lead an anti-Tito putsch, with the full support of the Kremlin and the satellites.

The plan misfired. The OZNA, the efficient Yugoslav secret police, discovered what was up before the Pauker plane took off. Yovanovitch tried to escape but he was caught and shot, not, it is believed, by a simple frontier guard, but by a special OZNA task force. But a substitute for the dead Yovanovitch will doubtless be found, perhaps among the Yugoslav officers now in Moscow, and trained in the role he is to play.

THE EASIER WAY

This role will of course be much easier if Tito is dead. Therefore efforts to assassinate him will be redoubled—Trieste Communists loyal to the Kremlin have already been instructed that it is their duty to kill Tito if the opportunity arises. The OZNA will certainly have its hands full protecting the life of the Yugoslav dictator.

Meanwhile, the economic squeeze on Yugoslavia by the Soviet sphere will be further tightened in an effort to weaken Tito's hold on his country. Already Russia, Albania and Bulgaria, a fairly accurate picture of Stalin's timetable for Tito can be pieced together.

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Merry-Go-Round

The Case Of The Letter Of Sen. Thomas

WASHINGTON

A GREAT many people have wondered whatever became of the letter of Senator Elmer Thomas, Democrat of Oklahoma, which Senator Ferguson, Republican of Michigan, began with considerable fanfare last Winter.

The start of the probe made newspaper headlines, then suddenly and mysteriously Senator Ferguson quit. He said absolutely nothing more about his Democratic colleague from Oklahoma—even looked embarrassed and changed the subject when the matter was mentioned.

The reason for Ferguson's sudden change of heart has now come to light. Senator Thomas did some investigating of his own regarding Senator Ferguson, then wrote him a personal letter threatening to make these facts public:

In particular, he dug into the connections of Senator Ferguson's associate, Charles R. Beltz, with the Chrysler Automobile Co. and its subsidiary, Chrysler Airtemp.

To get the full picture, it is necessary to recall that on May 6, 1946, this column first disclosed the fact that Senator Thomas had been making speeches on the Senate floor aimed to influence the cotton market while he, his wife and friends bet their money in advance on cotton.

Cronies Are Indicted

SENATOR THOMAS promptly denied this. But two years later, when the official records were published, his speculation deals were fully confirmed. Furthermore, four of his cronies—Ralph Thomas Harris, Tom Linder of Georgia and J. E. McDonald of Texas—were indicted for illegally influencing the commodity market.

Meanwhile, Republican leaders, who had promised the public they would "investigate, investigate, investigate," and who had thoroughly probed the commodity speculations of two Democrats—Ed Pauley and the President's personal physician—decided also to turn the heat on Democratic Senator Thomas of Oklahoma.

Senator Ferguson of Michigan, widely acclaimed as the Senate's foremost investigator and who aspires to be Dewey's Attorney General, was given the job of investigating Thomas.

Then, suddenly, on Feb. 14, Thomas wrote Ferguson one of the most extraordinary letters ever written by one Senator to another, and nothing has been heard of the Thomas probe since. Ferguson dropped it like a hot potato.

This column has now obtained a photostat copy of the Thomas letter. It is written in longhand and after reference to the fact that Senator Ferguson has spent a great deal of public money investigating him, Senator Thomas continues:

Senator Thomas' Letter

I ASSUME that you will not object to me using my private funds to do some investigating of facts, or incidents that are coming to me from all parts of the country.

"I have been in the Congress for over 25 years; I have been in every state in the union; I have friends in almost every city of the country, and I have many friends and even relatives in Michigan and especially in the great city of Detroit. In the past it has never even occurred to me to think of repeating the stories and incidents about Senators and Congressmen—and to mention the name of a lady—well, suffice it to say that I have rather full information.

"In my formal letter to you I refer to the 'Chrysler Airtemp Sales Corp.' and to the 'Charles R. Beltz & Co.' and this is to advise that I have rather full information and data respecting your connection with such organization. While you have deemed it in the public interest to investigate me and my wife—Edith Thomas—and to advise you that I have used and am still using her as a 'front' for my private business transactions, I wonder what your friends and constituents in Michigan will say when they learn that the same charge can be made against you.

"I have all the pertinent facts with respect to the said company; the names of the stockholders, the number of shares and the official positions held by each such stockholder.

"You must know that the making of such information public at this time could not possibly do any person any good—but instead, because of your unwarranted attacks upon me and my family such publicity would unleash a horde of reporters who will go to any limit to get news stories. You, your fine wife, your likewise fine daughter and her equally fine husband, should not be subjected to constant telephone calls and requests for interviews as certainly will happen if the charges against you and your family are made public. This is my forecast as I know full well what you have already done to me and my family.

Who Paid The Bills?

"AGAIN I must remind you that you and your committee have spent a riding expedition in an effort to develop evidence to destroy me. . . . As stated—inasmuch as I do not have access to the United States Treasury and to investigators and detectives, I am compelled to defend myself against further alleged charges on the Senate floor. I assure you that I do not want to be driven to making public data, in the form of charges against you and your committee.

"Personally it should be of no concern . . . where you have spent your Summer vacations, whom with, who paid the bills, or when and where you have met you and your friends here in Washington. That is your private business —but you must remember that I have private business myself, and I am charged with all sorts of things including the best of drinks including good champaign (sic)—all paid for by another—is not good publicity at any time—and is especially bad in a personal campaign year. Luckily, I am not a candidate this year.

"You will no doubt be surprised to know that among my letters and reports, some not signed—that charges have been made that certain wealthy automobile interests, acting through lady members of their inside organizations have made gifts of valuable coats, dresses and other items to certain members of your family.

"Senator, your activities against me and the personal charges against you have no proper place in the Senate of the United States. I have always been ashamed of and I certainly know of nothing that you should be ashamed of—save perhaps your attacks upon Mrs. Thomas and me.

"I have personally written this lingthy (sic) note in order to keep it strictly private. However for fear that I may hereafter need a copy I have had the sheets protostated but I do not plan to make the contents a public matter unless I deem public interest will be served thereby.

"Sincerely
"Elmer Thomas"