

The Press And Southern Progress

JUST as some scientists will argue that the nine major planets, 26 satellites and 1,200 asteroids exploded from the sun to form the solar system, some historians insist the economic revolution that produced the New South exploded from the pen of Henry W. Grady.

It was Grady's militant Georgia journalism that jostled southerners from their post-Civil War slumber and helped prod a whole region into industrialization. Editors all over Dixie took up the cry for progress until it echoed in every cobblestoned corner of the land of cotton, crinoline and Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Newspaper leadership in the economic rebirth of the South deserves special attention today for this is the beginning of National Newspaper Week.

There was a direct relationship between the press and progress in the South. If Grady launched the campaign, thousands of other southern editors carried it on. The blaze of language has not yet died down.

These editors have sometimes driven their sharp phrases so deep into the tough hide of southern nature that it has actually been painful. But few editors felt that Dixie must break up its old patterns of culture and agriculture, must make vast social, economic and political changes and must outgrow deep and angry prejudices.

By the middle of the 19th century, Grady knew that the time had come for the South to stop putting all of its economic eggs in one basket. But it took a steady torrent of words to convince many a reluctant southerner.

These words were manufactured by the wagonload in Atlanta and Richmond and Charlotte and in editorial offices all over the land of cotton.

The success of this massive editorial movement can be measured today in billions of dollars.

The South has outgrown its raw, agricultural adolescence and a new, prosperous, progressive, enlightened region is emerging.

The voice of the banjo has been replaced by the muffled roar of machinery. Natural resources are no longer being shamefully wasted. An average of one multimillion-dollar plant is attracted to Dixie each working day of the year.

But if it were not for the thunderous voices of Grady and other persistent southern editors, the South might not even have the price of a rube today.

These voices were raised not only in Grady's Atlanta but in many southern cities. The words were those of Douglas Freeman, Virginia Dabney, Gerald W. Johnson, Josephus Daniels, Joe Caldwell, John Temple Graves and many others. They were part of that notable development of intelligence and realism in the region that was laboriously building a new life out of an old heritage.

Naturally, opinions differed on what was the best course for the South to follow. Prejudicial prejudices had to be handled delicately. But few editors lost their courage in mothballs. Southern newspapers—large and small—became sturdy instruments of morality and justice and tolerance.

The South developed a virile press and a free press. Even the most partisan journals could usually be depended upon to give its readers straight, objective reporting in their news pages.

But editorially, southern newspapers have battled boldly for progress. Their causes were frequently liberal causes, despite the region's hide-bound conservatism. The RICHMOND TIMES DISPATCH, for instance, even dared to campaign against the poll tax in Virginia and in 1909 supported the Wagner-Van Nuys anti-lynching bill—in both instances against the active opposition of Senators Carter Glass and Harry Flood Byrd.

A great tradition of independent, aggressive journalism was developed below the Mason-Dixon line. We are proud to be a part of that tradition. We are proud of our own battlescars from the long struggle for economic progress and social justice in North Carolina and the South. We expect to have a few more before history folds up her telescope.



"This is for the TV audience... it takes the monotony out of their drab little lives..."

People's Platform

Providence Road Issue Aired

Editors, The News:

I appreciate the very fine editorial "Planning for Tomorrow's Traffic" in last Thursday's (Sept. 23) News. It was very well written and the facts presented will go a long way to clarify the misunderstanding that perhaps exists against the widening. As you know, we property owners and residents are not opposed to improvement; in fact, we are going to insist that it be made. However, we stand one and all against the highway commissioners' proposed 68-foot (from curb to curb) paved superhighway.

I enclose a copy of a petition bearing more than 400 signatures which has been filed with the county commissioners.

—B. MERRITT (Enclosure)

We, the undersigned, being citizens of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County and being owners of property in the Providence Rd. area in and near the city of Charlotte, respectfully petition you as follows:

1. That we are urged to review the proposed plan of erecting a 70-foot boulevard and thoroughfare to replace the present 48-foot wide Providence Rd. in and near the city of Charlotte for the following reasons:

1. The proposed road is much greater in width than that required by a reasonable expectation of use in the foreseeable future.

2. That the proposed width is not commensurate with the neighborhood in which it is located, the neighborhood being first class residential zone for the most part. R.1 residential, and occupied as single family private homes.

3. That the proposed boulevard will require extensive excavation and grading, and probable jury trials to arrive at compensation for the considerable depreciation in value caused by excessive widening of the present right-of-way, as the cost of many homes will be reduced from approximately \$40,000 to \$20,000 each, due to the shortening of long established building set-back lines, which heretofore have permitted extensive landscaping of front lawns.

4. That the proposed boulevard would tend to funnel traffic from adjacent and traversing lateral residential roads and thereby create an undue concentration of traffic on Providence Rd.

5. That the proposed boulevard and thoroughfare would lead from Charlotte southward but to no other city, Providence Rd. not being an arterial link to another populated area of considerable size.

6. That Providence Rd. is only one of several roads leading from Charlotte through the southeastern, Myers Park and Eastover sections of Charlotte and should not bear the brunt of anticipated future roadway requirements for further development.

7. That Sharon Rd. should be expanded in width as it serves an area of development equal in size to the Providence Rd. area.

8. That the proposed plan of the Charlotte City Planning Board of re-developing the Old Sards Rd. to provide an adequate connecting link from 4th, Crescent Ave. and Sards Rd., has been urgently recommended by the mass of the people of the Sards Rd. and new residents of the Sards Rd. sections, to the north of and adjacent to Providence Rd.

9. That the completion of the Sards Rd. project to the north of Providence Rd. and the expansion of Sharon Rd. to the south of Providence Rd. would more adequately serve the present requirements and the future development of the entire southeastern section of Charlotte, whereas, the extensive widening and preparation of a boulevard and thoroughfare on Providence Rd. would tend to unreasonably channel all future traffic to this proposed boulevard, leaving the northern and southern area on the sides of Providence Rd. without adequate direct traffic links to the city of Charlotte which apparently will be required in the near future.

10. That the proposed boulevard and thoroughfare will require considerable additional erection of traffic controls and police supervision as it will tend to become a speedway to the great detriment of our families and particularly our school children who will need to cross the thoroughfare en route to schools and adjacent areas.

11. The Providence Rd. area has become the location of many beautiful churches, serving a first class residential area; that the proposed boulevard and thoroughfare would greatly detract the value of these church structures and the utilization of the property occupied for this purpose.

12. That we, as citizens of Charlotte, a Mecklenburg County, being property owners and very interested parties and having placed a major portion of our assets in permanent homes in the Providence Rd. area, are paying a considerable amount of the property taxes of the city of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County on our permanent homes.

13. It is our understanding that the proposed width of 70 feet has been recommended based on a primary consideration that the federal government will be spent in such an amount on such an expanded thoroughfare, supposedly doing a major portion of the funds required. We, as taxpayers to the city, county, state and federal government, do not desire that such a boulevard and thoroughfare be constructed in our neighborhood, fully realizing that should the available federal funds not be spent in our area, that the money will be spent elsewhere.

We, individually, respectfully petition you that the above proposal be rejected as unsound, economically, and unfair to us as property owners and we propose that the Sards Rd. project be actively considered at this time and that Providence Rd. be extended beyond the city limits of Charlotte a distance satisfactory to the governing bodies with that adequate width which is already being provided within the city limits of Charlotte and over that adequate right-of-way which need not be extended.

Administration Power Policy To Be Under Heavy Attack

WASHINGTON

A MODERATE and unassuming Mississippi has shaken to its foundations the much-vaunted Eisenhower power policy of partnership between the government and private enterprise on which the President is risking so much in this campaign.

In his soft-spoken testimony before a Senate judiciary subcommittee on monopoly, J. D. Stierenroth, former secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Power and Light Co., made it absolutely certain that the next Congress, whether it be Republican or Democratic, will have an investigation of the power industry. Not only the controversial Dixie-Yates contract but the whole question of the efficacy of the public utility holding company act will be at issue.

AMAZING REVERSAL

With the momentum achieved now, it easily could rival the dramatic public utility inquiries during the early days of Franklin D. Roosevelt. This is an amazing reversal of the most favorable climate for the private utilities since the depression. It may prove that they made too much hay while the sun shone.

Mr. Stierenroth's former company is one of four operating subsidiaries of Middle South Utilities. Middle South Utilities is the parent of Dixie-Yates.

From his inside knowledge he testified that Dixie-Yates—promoted and defended by President Eisenhower as an example of free enterprise—is virtually rickety. Should there be any losses, it would be explained that the contract allows Middle South to pass them on to its operating companies. They of course, would pass them on to their customers.

They are being guaranteed a nine percent return on their investment. Stierenroth testified that in view of the lack of risk, the money could be obtained much cheaper in the open market.

Stierenroth was fired by Mississippi Power for that he considered as a long fight for increased independence in the operations of the company, all of which came in a package deal by Middle South, a New York holding company. He had been employed by his company 27 years. He was emotional as Committee Counsel Sidney Davis touched upon what it meant to him and his family to be fired. He was just sensible and often humorous as he discussed the relationships of the big holding companies with their subsidiaries, and the complete dependence enforced upon local officials by the New York owners.

FAMILIAR RING

To veterans of the 30's, much of it had a familiar ring. Stierenroth returned to those days when he felt the holding company act would cure the problems of the industry. But as the years passed, he said, the same absentee landowners and speculators by investors as against operating officials had largely nullified the good purposes of the act. As sensitive as the utilities are to the attacks on Dixie-Yates, it was this blow which will hurt most. They are on the defense again with these old wounds reopened. A specific investigation of Dixie-Yates is one thing. The evident lack of Sen. Langer and Sen. Kefauver to pursue the whole story to which Mr. Stierenroth has pointed, is a very bad news indeed. The Senate subcommittee which was refused funds to investigate Dixie-Yates will almost surely get them now. The Dixie-Yates issue which has been made more explosive in this campaign than in any of the recent past is almost guaranteed as an issue in 1956.

It Takes Men To Make An Army

WE DO NOT envy the task of U. S. military planners. There is the burden of deciding how to prepare for a war which, if it comes, might make World War II seem relatively like a frontier skirmish with Indians. They must make their plans within limits set by economy-minded Congresses, and they must expect, this being a democracy, that the prospective enemy knows much more about U. S. plans than Americans know of his.

Perhaps unintentionally, some of the military leaders seem to be minimizing the military requirements, thus leading Americans to believe that necessary sacrifices are less than they actually are. This impression is created by what has come to be known as the "More Bang For The Buck" line, in which it is declared that, while spending less, and using less men, defenses will nevertheless be maintained or even strengthened.

Under the "new look" military program the Army is scheduled to drop 23,000 men by next June 30. Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson says that this loss will not reduce combat effectiveness. Actually, the Army is having its manpower cut much more than 23,000 over a year's time. The current strength of 1,404,596 men. It must end the current fiscal year, next June 30, with only 1,173,000, a loss of 231,000 men.

How, then, is the Army to increase its number of combat-equipped divisions from 18 to 24 during the next two years, as Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens announced this week? This step-up is actually going to be a paper transaction, at least for the time being. What are

now called training divisions—five of them—are to be designated combat divisions, reorganized and given more equipment. But they will fall short of combat readiness in either manpower or training.

Military leaders of course cannot be blamed for manpower restrictions set by Congress. But in view of the convictions of men like Gen. Mark Ridgway, Army chief of staff, who maintains that atomic or hydrogen warfare would require more, instead of less, manpower, the personnel cutback cannot but be viewed with alarm.

Gen. Ridgway can be expected to plead the cause of the service he heads, but his argument is convincing. He holds that A-bomb or H-bomb warfare could result in the loss of entire units, and require deeper battle zones, wider dispersal areas, more supply troops for longer supply lines.

The unmandated, untrained status of these new combat divisions' points up again the need for a universal military training program, which the administration has assigned top priority on next year's legislative agenda. The cutback suggests too that civilian military leaders ought always to speak frankly of the manpower requirements, instead of suggesting that "efficiency and economy" have produced a better military machine.

And the prospective nature of the war for which this nation must prepare requires that all possible non-military means must be used to try and avert the nuclear war which likely would result in defeat of not only one side, but of much of humanity.

A Case Of Survival Of The Fittest

NO MATTER what happened in Cleveland's Municipal Stadium this afternoon, it's all settled in our minds: The Giants will win the World Series.

New York won the National League pennant principally because of breeding and local. These matters, unquestioned by true gentlemen, are sometimes the butt of obnoxious sarcasm offered by dodger fans. But they are important; it is an undeniable truth that, although the conquest of baseness by unvalued quality may take a little time (world conditions being what they are), it is an ineluctable inevitability.

Consider, if you will, the strong-lined

picture of American health suggested by the names of Lockman, Williams, Mays, Irvn and Rhodes. They all summon up visions of minutemen and pioneers and starspangled banners fluttering in the breeze.

Consider, also, locale. Compare the natural splendor of Coogan's Bluff to some place in Ohio that would almost certainly be in a foreign country if it were not for a pesky pond called Lake Erie.

Consider all this and tell us how such well-favored stalwarts as the Giants can lose to a bunch of American (league) Indians—apparently all full-blooded?

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON

If you go down to the Interior Department to ask about Secretary McKay's plan to lease Alaskan oil lands to private oil companies, you'll find the place like a mine.

All you get are icy stares. Strict orders have been given that no Interior Department underling shall talk to a newspaperman.

Reason is that generous Doug McKay, who has been more lavish with the public domain than any secretary of the Interior since Albert Fall's day, almost got the Eisenhower administration in a good political water.

The Interior and Navy Departments have 48 million acres of oil land in Alaska, hitherto set aside for national defense, and McKay, together with Under Secretary of Defense Bob Anderson, has proposed opening up the area to oil companies for private exploitation.

What makes this so dynamited from a political viewpoint is, first, that many naval officers oppose it. So do Democratic congressmen and some Republicans. Third, Under Secretary Anderson favors the lease because as secretary of the Navy, is himself an oil man. And though he is one of the most respected members of the Cabinet, his position as former vice president of the Associated Refineries in Texas and head of the Texas Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association makes him vulnerable.

Interior Dept. Mum On Giveway Plan

Herbert Hoover Jr.

Firmly and most important, it happens that the new undersecretary of state, Herbert Hoover Jr., has long been a director of United States Oil and Gas, which has had a contract with the Navy for exploring Alaskan oil lands. Hoover's company is now familiar with the whereabouts of oil in Alaska than any other.

It also happens that Herbert Hoover Jr. was one of the heaviest contributors to Vice President Nixon's secret \$18,000 personal expense fund. Furthermore, it doesn't seem too good for the public viewpoint that 15 of the secret donors to Nixon's fund were oilmen.

Another interesting point, as noted by the conservative New York Journal of Commerce, is that the oil companies got every law they wanted through the last Congress. They increased the public's main for oil and gas leasing. They got the right to develop both minerals and oil and gas on the same public land simultaneously. And they put across certain improvements in leasing regulations.

Go Slow, Ike

Taken together with the oil industry, it doesn't seem anything the industry didn't get. And when you compare this with the long list of political contributions from the oil boys to the Eisenhower campaign, and then turn the 48 million acres of Alaska oil lands over to the oil companies—well, no wonder some Republicans such as Sen. Stantislav of Massachusetts have warned Eisenhower personally to go slow.

Yet Secretary McKay and Anderson propose the Alaskan private leasing plan despite the advice of Ray M. Thompson, longtime expert for the Navy who worked in the Alaskan oil fields.

"At least one major oil field, plus his reserves of natural gas is in the state of Alaska," Thompson says have been discovered in Alaska. "I do not believe you could duplicate that record in the state of Oklahoma during the early years of discovery."

Naval officers were put on the spot by the decision of their chief, Secretary Anderson, to get the Navy out of the Alaskan oil lands. Cross-examined at the hearing of the House Armed Services Committee, Capt. Robert H. Meade, the Navy's expert, testified:

"There has been a reasonable chance of finding a tremendous oil field. There is still a reasonable chance of finding a tremendous oil field. When we stop, it is still possible that someone else, our selves or someone, depending on the national policy, of course, might find a very large oil field. It is probable that the congressman who chiefly favored pulling the Navy out of the Alaskan oil fields was Leon Gavin, Republican, who,

significantly, is from Oil City, Pa.

Venerable Congressman Carl Vinson, of Georgia, however, asked two questions of Naval Secretary Anderson. Let's see what you are going to do, he asked. We have a great deal of money we spent 40 million dollars on," Vinson pointed out. "Now we are going to stop. Now what are you going to do with that money? Are you going to make contracts with private enterprise to go in there and develop it?"

Congressmen Demur

"Oh, no sir," replied Anderson. "We will not plan to make private contracts."

"Do you propose to turn this land over to the Interior Department or do you propose merely to let it remain in status quo for the time being?"

"I would just propose to let it stand in status quo," replied the secretary of the Navy.

"If you decide to change your mind, will you tell this committee about it?"

"Yes," replied Anderson.

However, without telling Congress or the committee, plans have been under way in the Interior and Navy Departments to turn two big Alaskan oil fields over to exploitation by private companies. As a result of newspaper inquiries it is probable that the leasing of one oil field has been stopped. But what happens later remains to be seen.