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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 1957

Exempt Mecklenburg From Listing Law

The average taxpayer is no more capable of a "grand passion" than of a grand opera—Israel Zangwill.

MR. Israel Zangwill, thou shouldst be living at this hour. You were talking about love, of course, and were talking about irrationally, exasperation, but it's "grand passion" all the same, and efforts are afoot to make it all the more grand.

If small Tar Heel counties have their way, and that is a very diminutive "if," state law will require every auto owner to make a personal visit to the tax lister before applying for license plates. The very commendable aim is to force auto owners to declare their vehicles for taxation, while relieving counties of expense and effort now involved in snaring tax dodgers.

Surely this would be very fine for, say, Beaufort County and the folks in

Pinetown, Pungo and Pantego. The tax collector's efficiency would be increased without too great a strain on individual taxpayers. The lines are not very long in Pungo.

But the prospect is more than distressing in Mecklenburg, where some 112,000 license plates are expected to be issued this year. A Mecklenburg simply does not have the time to stamp two lines with 100,000 other Mecklenburgers in order first to prove he is not a cheat, and second, to be accorded the privilege of buying a tag for his car.

Moreover, the whole plan goes against the grain of this county's progressive and necessary efforts to streamline tax listing to the realities of a metropolitan area.

Let counties which want it have the new listing requirement.

But leave Mecklenburg out!

Personal Manias & Community Peril

TWO stories, one about a missing stop sign and the other about a dog poisoner, appeared side by side in yesterday's News.

Juxtaposition of the stories served more than the mechanical requirements of putting a page of type together. It served as a moral for three people in particular, and as a sad commentary on the stealthy satisfaction of personal manias at the community's peril.

One of the three persons removed a stop sign from the intersection of 8th and Smith Sts. Without benefit of the sign's warning, a car and a truck came together at the intersection. A man was killed.

The second of the three persons repeatedly removed the stop sign posted to safeguard children at a school crossing on Old Sardis Rd. No one was killed or injured during absence of that sign,

but the implications of the 8th St. accident have a chilling application all the same.

The third person is putting out poisoned bologna in a N. Tryon St. neighborhood. His great mission in life doubtless is the anonymous destruction of dogs, cats, and the birds, too. But children share the rather general hungriess and trustfulness of small animals. The poisoner could become a murderer. As a Charlotte veterinarian pointed out yesterday, a South Carolina child was poisoned in the same manner last year.

Stop sign movers and dog poisoners have no place in a safe and civilized community.

They need isolation. If they don't provide it for themselves, the community will have to provide it for them in the places assigned for that purpose.

There Are No Bulwarks For The Herd

IMAGINATION boggles at the lengths bureaucrats will go to keep the public's nose out of the public's own business. Unfortunately, it is an occupational disease among some people in Washington to imagine the sins they are privileged to stare the great issues of the day in the face, they somehow acquire a property right over what they see and do.

It has been discovered that a 1789 law intended merely as a "housekeeping statute" has been used by executive agencies to withhold non-security information from press and public.

But the battle for freedom of information has its champions. For instance, Rep. Ben F. Jansen (R-Iowa) has announced that he will ask fellow members of the Appropriations Committee to end their practice of holding secret meetings—except where matters of national security are involved.

"Maybe this would save the taxpayers some money," said Mr. Jansen. "If the hearings were in some people might be a little bashful about asking for appropriations."

It brings a lofty moral principle down to a level that is understandable to everyone who signs Form 1040 on April 15.

The fact is that most of the really important work in Congress is done in the committee rooms. Gone are the days when the volume of legislation was light and the ordinary citizen could get a sound notion of legislative processes by attending meetings of the whole House of Representatives or Senate. What occurs on the floor now is often more than formal and final confirmation of what has been done behind the closed doors of a committee room.

During the 83rd Congress alone, 39 per cent of all committee meetings were closed, according to CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY. In all, press and public were excluded from 1,243 meetings out of a total of 3,092.

The Armed Services Committee of the House, where hush-hush military sub-

jects are often discussed, actually does not lock its doors as much as many other committees. It held 38 per cent of its meetings in secret during the 83rd Congress. But the Education and Labor Committee locked the public out of 92 per cent of its meetings; Ways and Means, 70 per cent; Judiciary, 62 per cent; Veterans Affairs, 45 per cent; Post Office and Civil Service, 42 per cent; Bank, and Currency, 42 per cent; Agriculture, 38 per cent.

The Senate's committee record, with a few notable exceptions, is not any better.

Congress' example has had an unfortunate effect upon state legislatures, too. North Carolina's own General Assembly felt the awful necessity in 1953, and again in 1955, to strengthen its committee secrecy provisions.

What Woodrow Wilson once wrote about secret committee processes applies equally today to state and national legislative bodies:

"Legislation, as we nowadays know it, is not conducted in the open. It is not threshed out in open debate upon the floors of our assemblies. It is, on the contrary, framed, digested and concluded in committee rooms. It is in the committee rooms that legislation desired by the interests is framed and brought forth. There is not enough debate on it in the open House in most cases to disclose the real meaning of the proposals. Clauses lie quietly unexplained and unchallenged in our statutes which contain the whole gist and purpose of the act; qualifying phrases which do not attract attention, classifications so technical as not to be generally understood, and which everyone most intimately concerned is careful not to explain or expand, contain the whole purpose of the law. Only after it has been enacted and has come to adjudication in the courts is its scheme as a whole divulged. The beneficiaries are not the common people—and that includes most of us—have no bulwarks.

But the common people—and that includes most of us—have no bulwarks.

From The Montgomery Advertiser

A FOWL FACT OF LIFE

A BULLETIN of the National Geographic Society takes note of a plain fact ready to be seen in the South—that good farming, rather than rood marksmanship, is the big foe of the quail. Bob White thrives in briar patches, weedy fields, fence rows, and grassy stretches along the edges of forests. He is a ground dweller who does not like to fly and does not visit distant feeding grounds as the dove does.

Putting more land in pasture, farming larger blocks of land with modern machinery in place of small scattered food patches, turning poor soil over to timber stands, and poisoning up the growing up of insecticides, are listed among factors working against quail.

There are sportsmen who stoutly maintain that one reason for smaller quail bags is that the birds are better educated. They do not like to do as they once did—waiting in oblique fashion until sportsmen come up and get set,

before taking to wing.

Today's quail are more and more runners—over the ridge or into the swamp without rising from the ground. They run, according to accounts we hear, before the hunter arrives, so that if a pot-hunting cad were inclined to blast them on the ground he has no chance. Formerly the increased running propensities were attributed to Mexican quail imported for restocking, and said to be addicted that way. But nowadays they are saying it is a case of native quail learning the facts of life and self-preservation.

Since the history teacher planned to discuss "The Puritans in America" that day, she opened the class with the question "Does anyone know what peopled were punished in stocks?" A voice replied: "Small investors." —FOUR MYRANS (Fla.) News

'You Fellows Aren't Going To Put It Back Just Like That, Are You?'



Military Shell Game

How Large Is The Stick?

By STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON PRESIDENT'S REQUEST for a standby authority to use force in the Middle East has been described as a policy of "speaking softly and carrying a big stick."

Presumably the President has in mind the limited application of force, rather than a global hydrogen war with the Strategic Air Force. And we have after all, some rather recent experience of the limited application of force, in the Korean War.

Lesson one of the Korean War was, simply, that you need an army to win a war. President Truman at first hoped to use only the Air Force and the Navy, but he was quickly disillusioned. Even the Marines, with their small ready force, cannot do the job alone, vital as was their contribution in Korea.

FORCE REDUCED

What, then, is the state of the U. S. Army? As a result of the budget-dictated "new look," its manpower has been reduced by a third, to about a million men, since 1952. At the same time, the administration claims to have maintained the 19 divisions it inherited.

If the same combat power had in fact been maintained with a third less men and a sharply reduced budget, this would have been a remarkable achievement. But when you inquire a little more closely into the facts, the re-

markable achievement begins to look more like a sort of shell game.

BITS AND PIECES

For consider those 19 divisions. At least five of them are not real combat divisions at all, but hardly more than training divisions, under strength and unsurely for combat. Two more are the so-called "static divisions." The static divisions were magically created by picking up various bits and pieces, a battalion here, a regiment there, from Panama to Alaska, and calling them divisions.

Seven of the 19 divisions were ostensibly maintained despite reduced manpower and a reduced budget. Eight from twelve in four, and of these one or two at least must be kept in reserve in this country.

Add, finally, that the Eisenhower administration's official estimate is that the Red Army consists of 172 divisions. The bulk of which are being reorganized and equipped with nuclear weapons, and the contrast becomes rather stark. The American army, to be sure, is spread very thin—from the DEW Line to Formosa—and in view of our global commitments it is admittedly difficult to maintain real ground strength.

been organized into new divisions. But that is not to be done, because, for one reason, it would cost too much.

The story does not end there, either. It has been announced that the 17-wing Air Force program, so long considered sacred, is to be abandoned. The great bulk of the reduction in Air Force wings is to be in the Tactical Air Command, which directly supports the Army, and which is an essential component of our ability to fight limited wars, as Korea demonstrated.

RESERVE FORCE

The twelve real (as opposed to phony) divisions, which are to lose both air support and combat manpower, are set of course all available for use in the Middle East. Five divisions are committed to NATO, and another three to the Far East, and these could not be substantially reduced without degrading our European and Asian defenses.

There are, as there were bound to be, big differences between Eisenhower today and the Eisenhower of the first inaugural. The facts of life are stronger than man's preconceptions. He began, for example, with a theory which was presumably acquired in the classroom at West Point. The theory was that Congress determines policy and makes the laws while the President, deferring to Congress, executes the policy and enforces the laws.

BRINK OF DISASTER

The practice of this theory very nearly brought him to a disaster in his first two years of office. His administration was wrecked owing to his passivity in the face of the usurpation of power by congressional committees. Now, within the bounds of his own temperament and of his own energies, Eisenhower has become, as have all successful Presidents before him, partly responsible for the large increase in the presidential office is the central and the originating branch of the government.

Budget Battle

The hard again, Ike's record peace-time budget touched off by Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey hasn't simmered down yet. Nor did it explode only at Humphrey's recent conference. Had been building up for some time and penetrates deep.

Health Interests

She has been active in health circles as head of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, founded by herself and her late husband. Her efforts are considered partly responsible for the large increase in attention by Congress recently to experimentation for cancer, heart, and other cures.

A Widow

Mrs. Lasker is the widow of the late Albert D. Lasker, a member of the Warren G. Harding brain trust and one of the campaign managers who helped him defeat Gov. James Cox of Ohio in 1925.

Wedding Bells To Ring For Stevenson

Mrs. Lasker, a native of Wisconsin, is now a resident of New York, has been a vigorous Stevenson booster and has known the former governor of Illinois for many years.

People's Platform

A Sandburg Note

Flat Rock

ENJOYED the fellowship of your editorial "To Carl Sandburg On His 79th Birthday," News, Jan. 8.

In 1941 and 1955 I gave the commencement address at the University of North Carolina. Our purebred bucks and does are secured over the state for improvement of goat herds.

My books are in nearly all colleges and high schools. I have deep roots as a Tar Heel and when you make me an award as a citizen of the world I take it and salute you.

CARL SANDBURG.

People's Own Folly Made Farm Wasteland

Charlotte

WHO made the western desert? Wasn't it man's folly and greed?

Should the reward him by more handouts? Real need of the small family-size farmer should be helped; but exclude further aid to the large industrial-size organizations, which have become big on tax money. If he, the latter, has grown big by greed and his own folly, befouling his own nest, let him lie in it! Cease further handouts, and high price supports, the direct cause of the condition now complained of.

All through holy scripture we are told of man's folly and sin, even to the withholding of rain, and I am not sure this isn't another such instance, for not only this, and much other sin, and folly we commit and permit all around us.

Give us more Byrds in Washington! I seem to remember some little politician complaining of "too many Byrds" but more of his kind would be a wholesome change from indiscriminate waste in Washington.

Liquor And Council: Both Need Changing

Charlotte

THE greatest curse in the city is liquor, and it is licensed by the state. Licensed liquor smells just as bad on a person's breath as bootleg liquor.

I believe that most of the accidents on our highways are caused by drunken drivers. The revenue received from the sale of liquor is not pay for the deaths, suffering and crime it causes.

Teach Safe Driving By Impounding Cars

Los Angeles, Calif.

THESE do not seem to be the answers to our traffic violations. Better results might be obtained by impounding the car. If we had to do without it for a while, we might begin to understand about the rights of the road.

West Point & Reality

The Changing President

By WALTER LIPPMANN

NEW YORK

THE President enters upon his second term with good prospects but with a heavy shadow about abroad. The country is prosperous, and its internal problems, though important, are not serious.

There is not now, as there was at the time of his first inauguration, deep and bitter division among our people. I think we may well say that the most notable achievement of Eisenhower in his first term was to bring about internal peace within the United States and to inaugurate an era of internal good will. The President himself had the confidence of a very great majority of the nation, and while he has opponents and critics, he has no formidable enemies.

There are, as there were bound to be, big differences between Eisenhower today and the Eisenhower of the first inaugural. The facts of life are stronger than man's preconceptions. He began, for example, with a theory which was presumably acquired in the classroom at West Point. The theory was that Congress determines policy and makes the laws while the President, deferring to Congress, executes the policy and enforces the laws.

HOPES FOR TRUCE

This is not what President Eisenhower hoped for when he was inaugurated four years ago. It is fair to say, I think, that his original hope was that, starting with a move to end the Korean War, he could arrive at some general truce with the Soviet Union. Such a truce would have enabled him to disengage many of our armed forces from their far-flung and perilous commitments all over the globe. Only on this assumption could he have believed, as he did during the 1952 campaign and as he set it forth in his famous compact with Sen. Taft, that he could reduce drastically the federal expenditure, and that he could reduce taxes, and that he could reduce the size of the federal government. His hope then was that he could disengage, retreat, and reduce.

As he enters his second term, he finds himself extending rather than reducing our commitments abroad. On the three great fronts of the cold war, in the Far East, the Middle East, and in Central Europe, there is no prospect of negotiation which might open the way to some end of truce. There is an atmosphere of irreconcilability here and in the world about us which hangs heavily upon the future as the new term begins.

No Payroll

Talking to one friend, however, Humphrey's message reminiscent of what he and other business leaders once said about FDR's New Deal.

"Those people across the street" he nodded toward the White House, never had to meet a payroll.

"They've got to cut out all this welfare nonsense."



Behind Phony Figures, Army Strength Retreats

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON IT looks as if wedding bells, at long last, will toll again for Albee Stevenson.

No one is confirming it officially, but close friends of the recent Democratic candidate for president say that he and his old friend, Mrs. Mary Lasker, expect to be married sometime in the spring.

A Widow

Mrs. Lasker is the widow of the late Albert D. Lasker, a member of the Warren G. Harding brain trust and one of the campaign managers who helped him defeat Gov. James Cox of Ohio in 1925.

Wedding Bells To Ring For Stevenson

Mrs. Lasker, a native of Wisconsin, is now a resident of New York, has been a vigorous Stevenson booster and has known the former governor of Illinois for many years.

Health Interests

She has been active in health circles as head of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, founded by herself and her late husband. Her efforts are considered partly responsible for the large increase in attention by Congress recently to experimentation for cancer, heart, and other cures.

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