

—By Herblich

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1942

Vote Or Give Up

Issues: None

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON

FROM a national point of view only one issue seems to have appeared in the elections now just two weeks away. That is the issue of good men.

The real national policy issue has developed. Everyone running for office wants to win the war. Differences as to measures concerning the war are minor. None is of sufficient importance to provide a decisive test of whether a man should be elected or defeated.

Although the isolationists were wrong, I can't see as a conclusive test except in the case of a few hopelessly ossified, congenitally errant persons who don't seem to be in public life because they are too stupid or too stubborn to learn.

Except for those, I think we have to bear in mind that most of us have had to learn as events have taught us. Most of us were isolationists longer than we should have been, most of us have learned better now. So I can't see an arbitrary issue there. I think the isolationist test has failed to take with the country because everybody has had to learn a policy that doesn't work and respond to new conditions as they arise.

So in reviewing a man's record in such matters, it seems to me that the test is not so much where he stood on a particular vote as whether he shows the ability to learn from events, and whether he is realistic enough to abandon a policy that doesn't work and respond to new conditions as they arise.

That is going to be the thing most needed—the open mind, the capacity to learn, the independence to act—changing circumstances make new policies necessary. It is pretty much a matter of stinging your man and deciding whether you want to put your affairs in his hands, whether you trust his judgment in facing new emergencies.

Nobody can draw blueprints now. We don't know much about the shape of things to come. We'll have to meet the future largely on a catch-as-catch-can basis. The next Congress will need men who do that, men who won't go to sleep, who raise questions with too many preconceived notions. We can't always make theories of old world fit into the fluid currents of a new world. You have to send men to Washington who can't possibly tell you today what they will do about something tomorrow, because they can't know what it is they will be called upon to consider. If they are intelligent, independent, able to make decisions without worrying too much about their re-election chances, that is about all you can ask. Indeed we'll be a very lucky nation if we can get that kind of Congress.

I've been speaking about men. I mean women too. Women will be important in this election because so many men will not be on hand to vote. They have an especial responsibility this time. Women have had the vote for 25 years but they haven't produced political leaders. Few women of real distinction have been elected to Congress. Most of them have inherited their seats from their husbands.

Mrs. Edith Rogers of Massachusetts is one of them and she has been one of the able and important members of the House, a credit to the minority side. If the men had showed the intelligence that she has shown, Congress would not have suffered so much criticism. Congress needs more women like that who can stand on their own feet.

Clare Luce, running as a Republican in Connecticut, would bring a fresh dash of intelligence to the House. She knows this world. She has been over it time and again. Women like that ought to get into politics and get elected.



“Our Day”

By the Editors of The News

OCT. 6: This morning we received, in company with most of the daily newspapers of the country, some “very secret and confidential” information. The feature syndicate that merchandises Mrs. Roosevelt's column, “My Day,” wrote that the First Lady was going to fly to England on or about Oct. 12. She would make the trip as a private citizen, paying her own expenses, but—

“It is of the utmost importance that no word of this proposed trip be published anywhere until after Mrs. Roosevelt has arrived safely in London, when an official announcement will be made.”

We rather resented being made a custodian of such important and confidential information. After all, if there was any sense in keeping Mrs. Roosevelt's trip a secret, there was sense in keeping it a total secret. Axis ears are directed by the Government itself to be everywhere, eavesdropping on tongues that flap too freely. And a letter to the trade soliciting customers for Mrs. Roosevelt's columns about her trip could hardly be called keeping it dark.

Oh, well; we did not want the column anyhow, and we would keep the secret. All the same, if the Axis happened to get a tip on the plane in which Mrs. Roosevelt crossed, it would have to be charged to sheer commercialism, wouldn't it?

Oct. 17: The New York World-Telegram, a Scripps-Howard newspaper closely affiliated with the syndicate which handles Mrs. Roosevelt's column, printed a chatty item about Mrs. Roosevelt today. It “heard in Washington,” the last paragraph was,

“Don't be surprised when Mrs. Roosevelt turns up in London. It's all set despite official soft-pedaling.”

That seemed to be pretty free-handed treatment of the confidence which we carried around in our bosom, not to mention the risk it added to the movement of the First Lady over hazardous waters. The only excuse for it, and it was hardly an offerable excuse, was that Mrs. Roosevelt was already in England, and that her syndicate knew ahead of the press associations that she had arrived.

The more we heard about Mrs. Roosevelt's trip, the less we liked the advance notice given. She could say, as much as she pleased, that she was traveling as a private citizen. She cannot so easily disclaim her semi-official identity.

Oct. 20: Today the Associated Press came out with a story from London that the Queen was expecting Mrs. Roosevelt shortly. That meant undubitably, we took it, that the visitor was almost in sight or had arrived. But by that time we had begun not to care a great deal. Our secret was chafing.

Either Mrs. Roosevelt's plans to go to England should have been kept strictly private or noted around without restraint. Beside, it was unbefitting to her place as a person of consequence to the Government of the United States and a responsibility of the Secret Service that the “strictly confidential” in an hour's trip should have been allowed to circulate in a sales message. If caution did not dictate as much her sense of dignity should have come to the rescue.

We hope she has a good time, and sells lots of columns.

Citations

Steel Mills Will Not Shut Down This Winter

Any man of the house who has lugged a sizeable piece of scrap metal from his basement out to the curb, has mopped his brow and learned anew what a load 50 pounds can be, will have a keener appreciation of the accomplishments of the scrap drive in Mecklenburg County. That it is going to fall short of its goal is disappointing, but of no great significance. The goal was a figure plucked out of the air and represented optimum hopes rather than minimum expectations.

And don't let anybody kid you: a ton of scrap is a whole of a lot of scrap, and when you go to talking in terms of thousands of tons of scrap, you're up in the millions of pounds of scrap, 2,000,000 pounds for every thousand tons. And a lot of lugging mates; a lot of lugging.

When you add Mecklenburg's tonnage to North Carolina's and North Carolina's to the tonnage of the 47 other states, you've got, misters, a scrap pile. The steel mills will not close down this winter for lack of scrap. Mr. Donald Nelson's challenge to the newspapers of the country, and theirs in turn to the people of the country, have not gone unmet. The scrap yards are loaded. The scrap dealers complain cheerily of a bad case of scrap indigestion.

In Mecklenburg, there are a good many complaints to be passed around. The division heads of the scrap drive militee render aid and comfort. There is no need to name them; they know who they are; know, too, that they did it for country, not for credit. And the business firms and individuals who used their precious truck tires and gasoline to haul the scrap, the working men who hauled the scrap without thought of pay, the men who weighed the scrap, the individuals who constituted themselves one-man drives for scrap, the junk dealers who went far out of their way to get in the scrap—these deserve the highest praise. Scouring for ourselves and The Charlotte Observer, both in a scrap-happy staff, we would like to express a full measure of appreciation.

But in the end the principal satisfaction which all these may take lies in the knowledge that they rendered, a service to their country. Their stout efforts materialized in the form of tanks and guns and ships, the stuff of victory.

brought the new woes and broken the peace. Mississippi was not to blame. The stringing up of three Negroes outside the law might sound like Axis work, but it also simply perpetuates an old custom of the Deep South. Men of thought could recognize the Axis charge as a red herring. Anyone might have made sure of that by reading the rest of the “investigation” which Governor Johnson had demanded.

While the Governor was doing his talking, a Laurel grand jury, called into special session to investigate the lynching of one of the Negroes, was discharged by a judge. The jury had made its final report—and it did not mention the lynching at all.

If there were Axis forces at work in Mississippi they were homegrown, and the grand jury was their representative.

No, the trouble-maker in this instance was not Berlin. It was the Mississippi militee. Lynching is a domestic institution, our own home-grown variety of Fascism. To be dealt with properly, it needs to be identified as such, not disguised.

New Dodge

“Protectors” of Young Soldiers Only the Old Prohibition Bloc

Sanctionlessly, as usual, and professing tender anxiety for the youngsters soon to enter the Army, the Prohibitionists are making a stealthy attempt to have their way. In the flood of warnings and pleas for protection of the cadets and volunteers pouring in to Congress may be heard the excited motherly clucking of the Drys. And in the swift reaction of their Congressional strongmen there is further revealing evidence.

Often rebuffed, never beaten, the professional prohibitionists see in the young men a new chance for salvation, a new chance to bend the nation to his will. Using the kids as a smoke screen, he appeals feverently for the insulation of Army camps against alcoholic beverages—and vice.

That his arguments have been testily answered by Secretary of War Simons matters little to the Drys. In making certain the boys are allowed to finish school terms, Congress will be forced to resist or accept the provisions of the shelved Sheppard Bill. The Prohibition Bloc has rebuilt an ancient vehicle on a new chassis.

Senator Josh Lee of Oklahoma, an old hand at fighting for the Drys, was quick to see his chance, prepared an amendment to ban vice and liquor on and around Army posts. The vice issue, you may be sure, is thrown in to save weight and breath to the argument. Liquor is the real and only target.

However, even if Congress is not sufficiently fortified to withstand the new movement, Secretary Simons will stand in the path of the patch. His earlier statement on the Sheppard Amendment is yet an effective weapon: “The War Department has its own and more effective methods of attaining temperance . . . such legislation would not be in the interest of temperance in respect to the armed forces but would be used as a stepping stone for a movement leading to nationwide prohibition . . . one tried and later repealed.”

Win or lose, the new saviors of our youth are really the old Prohibitionists who may never get by us. As proof of it, note that when they say “liquor” they mean not only liquor but beer, and not only beer of accepted alcoholic strength but the 3.2 beer which is served in Army camps. Advance, Drys, and be recognized.

—

A Westerner boasts he has had the same wife and pipe 38 years. We could understand either, but not both.

—

Some of the boys around downtown Think it very small of the Government to interfere with the Louis-Conn benefit for Mike Jacobs.

Side Glances



The Inflation Man

Byrnes Working Quietly

By Paul Mallon

WASHINGTON

The inflation repressor, Justice Jimmy Byrnes, is going about his job quietly, without much of a staff.

He says all he needs is a place to hang his hat. The White House has given him a rack for it, and the other departments lend him what help he calls for.

The technique he is applying against salaries has taken somewhat the same easy form. His hold-down step against salaries is aimed to stop collective increases, but to allow individual advances.

While he went beneath the surface of his law from Congress to prevent collective increases in even the smallest salaries, the rules he set will also pay the salaries of no one but his own purpose the employer seeks to set.

So also will the restriction of big incomes to \$25,000 net a year. The only way the order can be enforced is to prevent corporations from taking tax deductions on salaries paid to executives above that figure. If the corporation chooses to pay the tax, apparently it can also pay the salaries.

This Justice Byrnes seems to be working up a formula which is a little easier than those considered in the public debate, certainly much easier than an arbitrary freezing, and no one can yet safely predict its overall effect upon wages, although it must be assumed the average will slowly rise.

Taxes and Paper Money

Some people suspect this is a corporation tax bill. True, it proposes to collect only \$1,300,000,000 from corporation and more than three times as much, or \$4,900,000,000 from individuals.

But its top average corporation rate, (which will hit the big corporations like U. S. Steel and General Motors) is 80 per cent, and, as they are generally profiting to the extent of 100 per cent, will continue their profits supposedly to 6 per cent, the bill means roughly that they will be allowed to earn 20 per cent of 6 per cent.

Consequently, while the stock market has been shaking off its chronic despair as a result of the bill, and the market men are saying the bill means business, among the average profits which will continue to increase slightly as production swings into its highest gear, there are no reasons for corporate cheers.

The market reaction is probably a result of change in the capital gains tax more than the corporation rate. As for what it does to the individual taxpayer, the most extreme statement yet printed is not exaggerated.

One of the old stories now going around, with a new twist, is that the Government is letting the banks issue paper money against nothing more than Government bonds. The inference is that money is being inflated artificially, as well as through price-wage increases.

Under the present system of issuing money, the Treasury deposits a gold certificate in the Federal Reserve Banks and money is issued against that certificate. The Federal Reserve may, upon the approval of the Treasury, issue Federal Reserve Bonds, issue other money up to 60 cents on the dollar with gold backing.

But today the amount of gold held by the Treasury is far above the value of outstanding currency, so there has been no direct inflation from that source.

The real value of the dollar today is fixed by Mr. Henderson, not by bookkeeping devices, but by decreasing the price he pays for the gold we own and the wage we receive for our work. We have gone far beyond currency manipulation into a completely managed economy.

Sixth Birthday

Mint Museum an Institution Which Belies Its Years

Six years ago today, making history of its own, the Mint Museum of Art first opened its doors. It was accomplished, this beginning of an attempt to offer to the public a new civic dimension, largely by boon-doggling the museum. In the six years the graciously simple old Mint building has become the headquarters of an institution. The community was, as a famous art dealer once wrote the Mint's hard-working directors, hungry for art.

Its growth, except in the way in which it became accepted by the public, was not overnight. The Mint's permanent collection was and is taken of things to be desired. But it caught on, and it flourished.

Under direction that has been both inspired and practical, the Museum has filled a place in Charlotte's cultural scene and activities. It is not yet for all the people, but if it continues to grow toward the fulfillment of its aims it will some day be for most of them.

At six, the Mint Museum wears a charm which makes it seem a great deal older. A factor, indeed, for gracious community life.

Axis At Home

Grand Jury Keeps Mum While Lynchings Are Pinned on Enemy

Mississippi, with three fresh lynchings behind her, paused only a moment in an awkward attempt to obliterate her trail, and turned languidly to other things. In answer to the chorus of protests from the nation over the three-capita murders in this state, Governor Paul Johnson roared that “disturbing influences aiding the Axis” had

“You know you do it on purpose—you let that cal out every day just to wreck our war dog training!”

Platform Of The People Young Soldiers

Editors, The News:

The United States declared war on Germany, Italy, and Japan less than a year ago. Has the war condition become so serious that Congress is obliged to lower the draft age to include our boys in the eighteen and nineteen year old brackets? What is the trouble with our boys in the eighteen and nineteen year old brackets that we cannot get 2,500,000 men from the forty odd million registrants between the ages of 21 and 45?

Is the man-power of our nation so physically, mentally, morally incapacitated that only one man out of every ten is fit for war service? The recent draft legislation passed by the lower House is far-reaching and a serious measure, one that demands serious thought and grave action. The legislation plainly says that after July 1943 there will be no more deferment for educational purposes, which means the closing of our colleges and universities, a serious matter indeed.

What about our medical colleges? Are they to be closed too? With a serious shortage of doctors and pharmacists already, not enough in any means to take care of the men on the battlefields. How, then, pray, before we close these medical schools, should we have in epidemic some fatal disease of our civilian population, millions of them, would suffer and die for lack of medical aid and for lack of medicine skillfully compounded.

We are not sending enough of our Negro population to war.

—JOHN E. KOONCE.

Chadbourne

Yep, We Think It's Funny

Editors, The News:

Chadbourne from a speech of Congressman Jarman, Oct. 13, Congressional Record, Page 8401:

“Alabamaans are not purchasable for that.”

Don't you think that's funny?

—JOHN SMITH.

Chapel Hill.