

Stand-Bys

Sometimes when highly complex, ripe and tick questions are demanding, to be taken up, or when we are utterly bereft of any notion of what to do about the world and its ills, we like to seek refuge in the thought that there's an inexhaustible supply of flat-right-or-wrong topics needing attention.

For instance, take this Wallace-Jones controversy. When people declare that Henry Wallace would be wholly unreliable as Secretary of Commerce and that the President's appointment of him is an affront to the business interests of the whole country, we agree. But when other people come along and say, "What the heck, Jesse Jones was unimpeachable, too, and if the New Deal is going to depend so largely on business to provide those 60,000,000 jobs after the war, then why shouldn't the President have a New Deal in mind of a Stand-pating Secretary of Commerce? When they say that, we half-way agree, but remain puzzled as to whether Wallace would be a healthy influence for the business of the country or would bank-rupt it.

The question, you see, is a leaser. To lose of an opinion would require omniscience, or at least a fixed and satisfying prejudice. Having neither, and accepting this as a matter of simple right or wrong.

And that is—did Tommy Corcoran (Tommy, incidentally, used to be an N.Y. attorney and cozy with Jesse Jones) obtain the connivance of Attorney General Biddle to quash the Government's suit against his fat client, Sterling Products, or did he not?

If Biddle did connive, as has been charged, why doesn't Congress do something about it? There is, at the least, this to be said about Wallace's integrity isn't in question.

One of the immediate problems facing the General Assembly lies in the field of general education. And this goes beyond appropriations or fiscal control. The present requirement for school attendance must be raised—and attendance itself must be more strictly enforced. The present age limit of four years leaves a big gap in our educational system. Over the state thousands of young Negro and white, drop out of school at that age, and there is no power to force them to attend.

Of these thousands, all too many turn up with some regularity in the juvenile courts, and some complain that they are unable to direct them to attend school. So, indeed, are parents, school authorities and law enforcement officers powerless. If this age limit is raised to sixteen, an average of 61 days a year, would jump immediately, delinquency would almost inevitably decline, and North Carolina's low standing in the ranks of literacy would improve.

The increase in age, of course, must be accompanied by some means of stricter enforcement of the law, for without that, the gap would remain as large as ever. North Carolina is the only state to have assumed the total public school burden, and has done wonderfully well with its scheme of 100-county equity. But the record looks black when reduced to cold figures, largely because of school attendance requirements.

Dix Hill Visitors

We can tell in advance how the Legislators are going to react to the sights of Dix Hill tomorrow—those of them who are making their first trip through a mental hospital. They are going to be pleasantly surprised, after all they've heard, at the condition of the physical plant. They will find the buildings adequate for what they are, the food superior-looking, but sufficient to maintain life; the treatment skimp, largely because of war-born shortage of personnel.

But they will come away from the place shocked by what they have seen, most of them resolved to do something, now about the plight of these people imprisoned in our hospitals. They will not look upon the inmates with revulsion, but rather with an outraged pity and sympathy for them. These poor people, themselves will be the minds of the Legislators when they leave the place. It cannot be otherwise, for it is the suffering of the inmates, a good many of them destined to drag out their lives behind those walls, that depresses the visitor.

And if the Assemblymen do react as we expect them to, they'll turn to the business of hospitals appropriations with a new spirit. Many of them will be struck by the hopelessness of attempting to solve our problem on the present basis. They will have seen enough to convince them that the appalling lack of remedial care and treatment is the chief fault of our system, and that we cannot longer take care of these people simply by sticking them behind bars and leaving them there with a minimum of attention.

They will not see the worst of our hospitals, though Dix Hill is typical of conditions in all four. They will find it scrubbed as clean as it can possibly be, and will discover no reason to place blame for conditions upon the present administration. But they will see enough to persuade them that bigger appropriations alone are not sufficient, and that the great sums we have already spent have not solved the pressing problem.

They will understand afterward, we predict, just how vital it is that North Carolina make all possible haste to reorganize a competent superintendent to head its entire hospital program, and to begin work on a new program, designed to restore these people to society, and not merely to put them out of sight and out of mind.

What, Again?

The Gallup Poll has brought up a matter we hadn't even considered. We'd thought it was settled for good, this line that Franklin Roosevelt would run no more for President. Oh, we know there were those who said the same thing in '40 and '44—but we thought he had reached the limit, and was through once and for all, and we supposed that most Americans thought the same thing, that the political mind was focused upon the forthcoming spectacle of a lesser Democrat running against an unknown Republican in '48, in a relatively calm phase of the post-war period.

But it isn't so, according to Dr. Gallup's investigators. They discovered that 30 per cent of the people thought Mr. Roosevelt would run again, for Term Five! We can't know what was in their minds. Perhaps they voted spitefully, or in disgust. Perhaps they muttered in their beads, grumbled that the country had erred greatly in November—but they've never been rid of this man. But they thought he would run again, they said.

The Merry-Co-Round

FOR about one year after Pearl Harbor, the members of the House of Representatives, who were the Republicans, in various committee meetings they heckled him unmercifully for overruling the recommendation of the National Defense Council and refusing to do anything about rubber.

But now the situation is reversed. Apparently certain GOP Senators have short memories. It is these same Republicans who are now supporting Jesse Jones in their fight against Henry Wallace.

For instance, GOP Senator Owen Brewster of Maine is leaning toward Jesse Jones in the current fight. But as a member of the committee, Brewster's brilliant cross-examination made Jones look like a dummy. Brewster brought out that Ed Stettinius, then in charge of raw materials for the National Defense Council had repeatedly urged, implored and demanded that Jones begin synthetic rubber production as early as two years before Pearl Harbor.

Brewster even showed Jones up regarding the committee of experts on rubber as recommended by the National Defense Council. Here is a cross-section of Brewster's penetrating cross-examination.

Senator Brewster: The report recommended the creation of a committee of experts to pass on these technical questions. Did you create such a committee?

Mr. Jones: Well, I don't know what you call experts.

Senator Brewster: I don't think that is susceptible of definition. I think either you know it or you don't. It is obvious that you consulted with what you called experts.

Mr. Jones: We consulted freely with the experts of the National Defense Council.

Senator Brewster: How did you have a committee of technical experts or did you not?

Mr. Jones: I don't know whether it was a committee of technical experts or not.

Senator Brewster: Mr. Jones, that is a very amazing statement.

Mr. Jones: I don't think it is amazing at all.

Senator Brewster: You don't know whether you had a committee of technical experts or not?

Mr. Jones: I don't know what an expert is.

Senator Brewster: "Well, you know what a committee is, don't you?"

Mr. Jones: Yes. We had a committee.

Senator Brewster: You had a committee. And how was that composed? What was it composed of?

Mr. Jones: I say we had a committee. We had a great many people working on it.

Senator Brewster: I am seeking to find out whether or not you undertook to constitute any kind of committee to advise you on this program.

Mr. Jones: We got all the advice we could get from every source.

Senator Brewster: Well, I think, then, we will conclude that you did not constitute a committee. Is that a correct conclusion?

Mr. Jones: That is your answer. It isn't mine.

Willkie Wins

Sometimes a man who has fought all his life for certain goals and been defeated finally wins them in death. Many of the Republicans who attended the GOP National Committee meeting in Indianapolis felt this about Wendell Willkie. What went on there in the closed-door sessions they considered a victory for him.

Two years ago, Willkie lost out at the 1942 National Committee meeting when the Chicago Tribune isolationists elected Harrison Spangler of Iowa. But this time, Willkie's friends were stronger in death, and won out in some significant backstage maneuvering.

Leader of the anti-isolationist group was Willkie's co-campaign manager, shared Ralph C. Baker of Oregon-Cake and Fred Baker of Washington discovered that the isolationists planned to put in their own candidate, Mrs. Dixon P. Hayes, Theresan E. F. Callahan, national committeeman from the District of Columbia went to Oregon's Baker, asked him to withdraw Mrs. Hayes' nomination in the interests of party harmony. He refused to propose Mrs. Cooper B. Rhodes of Washington, D. C., instead.

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Big Dane's Boys

WITH AMERICAN PARATROOPS IN BELGIUM—(AP)—Everybody recognized the big spotted cat in the front seat as his jeep crawled through the mud-plodding paratroopers.

Henry Or Jesse? By Peter Edson

Henry's fans with a statement that the Department of Agriculture now has under its wings the successors to nearly a dozen Government agencies...

Queer Acts By The So-Called Isolationist Party



The Bleeding Heart Of England

By Marquis Childs

LONDON

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL, in his speech last week, pointed to the fact that Britain was entering its 65th month of the war. That goes a long way to explain the irritation and tension that have seethed in recent sharp exchanges across the Atlantic.

America Is Afraid By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

AMERICAN conservative opinion is not less impressive at the moment, because it is so palpably in a state of fear.