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Education At The Crossroads?

NORTH CAROLINIANS need to know more about the comprehensive report of the State Education Commission completed several weeks ago and embracing what is perhaps the most thorough study ever made of North Carolina's educational resources and needs.

The report achieved some prominence in the press partly because its membership of eighteen citizens disagreed on several fundamental school problems. Their disagreement was so basic that it promises to be one of the major issues of the forthcoming 1949 General Assembly.

The area of controversy centers on the advisability of further equalization of school financing to the end that all sections of the state may launch an ambitious school building program. To understand the conflict it is necessary to recall a few facts about the present State education structure.

Since 1933 the State Government has paid the "current expenses" of all State schools. This includes salaries, heating, water, lights, power and transportation. The counties, on the other hand, continue to finance capital outlays — which cover the construction of new buildings and the addition of new permanent equipment. (This also includes the payment of debt service.) A major item since most school building money comes through issuance of bonds.)

Eleven of the eighteen members of the Education Commission say that the current system makes for waste and inefficiency in school administration. More importantly, they contend, it does not "equalize" the total tax effort for both State and local sources. These members believe that the unequal capital outlay system exclusively for local financing, some children are receiving poorer education opportunities than others since it is well known that communities differ greatly in their ability to provide what is termed "educational deficiencies."

Seventy-two out of 100 counties, the majority reports, do not have sufficient borrowing capacity to provide for even their immediate and urgent building needs and will require approximately \$150,000,000 to bring the public elementary and secondary school plants of the state up to an acceptable standard. At least \$100,000,000 of the total is urgent and immediate. Many of the counties cannot finance their urgently needed plant programs from local sources. State financial assistance is essential if all North Carolina school children are to receive adequate, decent and safe school facilities.

To meet this need the majority proposes that the dividing line between capital outlay and current expenses be erased and that "equalization" be set up in which local governments would support their school programs in keeping with their ability to pay. This would make the State a sort of financial back-stop for the poorer counties who may be unable to erect adequate buildings as adequate as the richer, more populous counties of the state. The whole situation might be compared with some of the bills reaching Congress during the last several years for the Federal aid to education. The Federal Government, in this case, would help the poorer regions of the nation keep up with their wealthier cousins.

That the inauguration of such a program would cost money is a point of view shared by almost all members of the Commission realize, and even the most conservative know the State needs to spend more money on education. But on the equalization item, the majority is more adamant. (Forward-looking reasonable proposals) eight mem-

bers — most of them representing a business background — balk with determination. They back up their argument with a "minority report" full of hard business facts which must be weighed for what they are worth in the current controversy.

Here are some of those points:

The minority, agreeing on fourteen of sixteen items of the report, contends, in disagreement with the majority:

(1) No States save New Mexico and Delaware assume so high a percentage of the current expense of schools as does North Carolina (from 46 to 70 per cent of total general fund appropriations for education).

(2) The present system makes it possible for a maximum of each State school dollar to go into the salary of teachers rather than for other school expenses. ("Buildings would be erected at the expense of the teachers.")

(3) The plan would shift to local property taxes a part of the current costs of the standard State-supported school term, which would present financial difficulties for many counties. This would have undesirable consequences for many counties, the minority contends. (It also believes the plan would call for an increase of about \$2,000,000 in local revenue to complement non-property taxes.)

(4) The change would represent an unnecessary departure from the plan of school support which the state deliberately adopted in 1933 after the old equalization plan was abandoned because it failed the schools in time of crisis.

The minority's strongest argument aims down to its belief that the majority's proposal would require the drastic upward movement of property taxes. The majority members of the state. Minority members feel that these taxes are already high enough. They think any further upward revision will retard the state's economic development. "It is not wise," they say, "in the last analysis, the future of the schools depends... Unless North Carolina is to educate a large proportion of its children for the benefit of the rest of the country, it must expect to bear the burden of the school system along with the improvement of its schools." These members of the Commission do not believe raising property taxes will aid the state's economic development.

So there, in brief, the controversy stands. It is a fight between the people who believe the State cannot provide adequate educational opportunities unless it calls for further and more exacting financial support from all sections of the state on an ability-to-pay basis, which would perhaps call for heavier taxes, and the people who think heavier taxes will work to the economic detriment of the state and that therefore we must move more slowly in meeting the very real needs of education.

This newspaper has already expressed general approval of the majority's recommendation and it stands by the belief that North Carolina must be willing to sacrifice a great deal for the welfare of its children. Whether this sacrifice (as proposed by the majority) is a sacrifice or not, it would defend its own ends is a question that needs further consideration and debate throughout North Carolina. Certainly it behooves all North Carolinians — especially all members of the General Assembly — to familiarize themselves with the details of this distinguished survey of our school needs. As Charles B. Aycock's spirit of the fight at the turn of the century demonstrates, the people of the State, for decades, so this report may represent another crossroads in Tar Heel progress.

If Not Registered, Do So Tomorrow

Democracy is on trial in the world, on a more colossal scale than ever before.

Charles Fletcher Dole
The Spirit of Democracy

It has been the custom of this newspaper and others to print before each major election a reminder to its readers that qualifying one's self to vote and the act of voting are the prime responsibilities of each citizen. These reminders have not been put forth simply as a matter of routine, for it has been our sincere belief that the freedom and prosperity this nation enjoys cannot survive if an anesthetic people place assumes no responsibility for government.

We have felt and we continue to feel that the ballot box is the heart of the United States and of democracy. Victory or defeat of this heart will result in the death of the nation as we know it and in the death of democracy. The domestic consequences of such neglect or abuse would be appalling, since that time there have been two opportunities to register for the general election — tomorrow will be the last.

Although the Elections Board has not completed figures on the two occasions this Fall when the books were open for registration, members of the Board are certain that many more persons in the approximately 160,000 who reside in Mecklenburg County who are potential voters but who have not registered.

Mr. C. W. Gilchrist points out elsewhere on this page the value of your ballot. It should be remembered that the right to vote properly used — is his most valuable possession. All of us decry the systems of totalitarianism where the ballot is little more than a piece of paper; at this moment your taxes are going to Italy and Greece, France and China and to many other nations so that people might be free to choose their leaders.

How, then, can we allow our own power to go for nothing? How can those persons who are tired of democracy, who are tired of this heart will result in the death of the nation as we know it and in the death of democracy. The domestic consequences of such neglect or abuse would be appalling, since that time there have been two opportunities to register for the general election — tomorrow will be the last.

Those of us who are complacent must remember that, other nations which have extended the right to vote have fallen because they refused to take that right for granted. Privilege must be defended. If you are not now registered, register tomorrow and on Nov. 3 cast your vote.

History Shows Importance Of Every Ballot Cast
Every Vote Counts

By C. W. GILCHRIST

(Reprinted from the November edition of The Rotarian, official publication of Rotary International, by special permission of the editors. Gilchrist is a member of the Charlotte Rotary Club.)

THOUSANDS of men and women were packed into the great square of the medieval city, eyes fastened on a huge wine cask. For days they had been bringing and emptying their jugs into the massive tun. Today the wine would be sold to help build a cathedral.

Terminously, the first of the waiting merchants took a sip. A brown crossed his face. He tried another. He frowned still more.

"This is not wine," he declared. "It is water!" The truth was out. The astute townspeople had brought not wine but water as their contributions. Each had noticed, thinking "My little vessel of water will be shirked in that big cask." And the wine was water.

The same thing can happen in a public election. A single vote may seem worthless, but do you know that many big issues have been settled by just one vote?

A single-vote majority elected Oliver Cromwell to England's famous "Long Parliament." This was the vote that sent Charles I. to the scaffold, and started the English on the road to freedom. The vote was cast in the course of world history; as probably, did that one-vote margin by which the U. S. Congress approved legislation for the draft law passed immediately before the Pearl Harbor disaster.

A humble farmer in DeKalb County, Indiana, is said to have brought Texas into the United States. He was undecided whether to go to the polls and vote, or to remain at home and wait. He waited, and he went to the polls, voting for the Democratic ticket.

By one vote the district elected a Democratic member of the Legislature. The Legislature by a one-vote margin elected Robert E. Smith to the U. S. Senate. He became president of the Senate when the vote for the annexation of Texas was taken. On the floor the vote ended in a tie and Senator Hannegan cast the decisive vote.

One vote also made California a part of the United States. This had important repercussions, for in 1850 there were fifteen free and fifteen slave states. But when California entered the Union, the North obtained a majority in the Senate.

Early in 1968, impeachment proceedings were pressed against U. S. President Andrew Johnson, who had succeeded Abraham Lincoln and attempted to put his conciliatory policies toward the southern States. Animosity reached such height that the President was charged with high crimes and misdemeanors, specifically with violating the "Tenure of Office Act" in removing Secretary Edwin M. Stanton from office. Impeachment proceedings in the Senate were held in 1868.

The executive order relating to reserve components has not been studied. Forrestal told reporters bluntly on Oct. 18. The President was out of town, confining when he had a chance to study it.

The real truth is, Forrestal not only had studied the directive thoroughly, but he had done his best to stop Truman from issuing it.

The order was first sent over to Forrestal's office on Oct. 9. Although the next day was Sunday, Forrestal marched over to the White House in a sweat. By reinforcement, he brought along Army Chief of Staff Omar Bradley. They tried to talk the President out of issuing the order, but the President was determined to hold it up until the following Thursday to give them a chance to make suggestions. Late Thursday night Forrestal came up with a barrage of recommendations that would have blunted the heart out of the order.

Except for a few minor points, these were rejected. The President wanted the Navy, for its excellent reserve program, to be out of town, confining when he had a chance to study it.

Forrestal was finally made by Presidential assistant Dr. John Stenheim. Yet even as late as the evening before the order was issued, Forrestal was in Stenheim's office still trying to block the directive.

Old Lobbying Tricks

OLD lobbyists, like chickens, always come home to roost. One of the oldest lobbyists, who has tried his hand at all sorts of little games, is Robert E. Smith, who once held fort in a swank mansion in Rock Creek Park where Congressmen drank champagne and listened to sweet words whispered by Smith.

Smith was then lobbying against the Holding Company Bill. When his lobbyist was expected, he slipped quietly out of the limelight, only to come back later with another high-

tailed by a single vote of attaining the necessary two-thirds majority.

One of the most remarkable examples of the power of the single vote was the Hayes-Tilden contest for the U. S. Presidency in 1876. After the election, it appeared Tilden had won for the electoral votes, but a minor dispute over the electoral college in Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina—South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana—had sets of conflicting returns.

The country was in an uproar. There was no provision in the Constitution and no legislation for the settlement of such a dispute. Finally Congress passed a special act providing for a commission of fifteen members. This body deliberated until March 2, two days before the official inauguration date. Then, by an eight to seven vote, it decided Hayes had been elected by a vote of 185 to 184!

The United States was divided in 1918 over prohibition of intoxicating liquor. Ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution required the vote of one more state Legislature—and Louisiana was deadlocked. William Jennings Bryan, the great orator and prohibitionist, persuaded a wavering legislator to change his mind. That single vote carried Louisiana and caused the amendment (later repealed) to be ratified.

Are these special cases that have been cited? Not at all. They have been taken for the most part out of American history, with which I happen to be more familiar, but other countries doubtless could provide examples as numerous but certainly not more impressive.

Come election day and the busy citizen is tempted to say, "Why should I stand in line at the polls? My little vote won't be missed."

Honorable! That reminds me of what those people said who put water, not wine, into that cask!

Quote, Unquote

A professor at the University is reported to have told members of a political-candidate class the next morning that they need not meet on the campus Friday, provided they went to the polls. The professor's words were: "The ten-point report under the title, 'Political Behavior at a Whistle Stop'—Lindholm (K.) Leader."

To back prices, a local housewife tries out a no-sugar, no-butter, no-sugar recipe, and announces her findings, vs. No cake—Bakeless IN. C. Times.

Pome in which is outlined briefly a proposed organization for the examination of those who have had to convince:

Cynic Clinic

—Atlanta (Ga.) Journal

With butter prices still dropping, the Northern Dairy Trust's problem now is to warn American housewives away from the margarine habit encouraged by dollar-baiting—New Orleans (I.A.) States.

Mr. Smith Goes To Tennessee

ATTEST Smith operation has been in jump into the Tennessee campaign with a letter to insurance policy holders asking them to vote for Earl Warren, Reece. The letter begins by inviting the policy holder to "write to me at my home in Nashville, Tennessee, and I will be glad to call on you." The letter is signed "Earl Warren, Reece" and is addressed to "Mr. Smith, 1000 Broadway, New York, N. Y."

Continues lobbyist Smith: "We wish to call to your attention a matter which is of vital concern to every policy holder in the United States. It is the election of Mr. Carroll Reece as U. S. Senator from Tennessee."

Carroll Reece, claims lobbyist Smith, "was quick to realize how fatal New Deal plan would be to those who live is dependent upon their insurance."

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Stewart Alsop

Fight Begins Nov. 2

WITH THE Democratic revolt, the old political pattern of the South has been broken. The old alliance which kept in the same party the Democratic Party and the Democratic Party. The contrasting political situation of Alabama and Georgia will be two different versions of the new pattern which after Nov. 2 may be used to replace the old.

In Alabama, a strangely muted voice is heard. The Democratic Party, which has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction, is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South. The Democratic Party, which has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction, is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South.

Although he is a mild-mannered man who has always been known as a moderate, the Democratic Party, which has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction, is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South. The Democratic Party, which has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction, is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South.

But like any other Southern politician, he is deeply opposed to Federal civil rights legislation. Therefore, the Democratic Party, which has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction, is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South. The Democratic Party, which has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction, is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South.

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Disasters openly Alabama law requires that a would-be candidate must have supported the candidate of the party in the previous election. J. Strom Thurmond is the official candidate of the Alabama Democratic Party. He is a former Democratic Party member who has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction. He is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South.

But it is a matter of time until the election is safely over. Hill will come out fighting. Indeed, he must do so. He is a man who has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction. He is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South.

On one side will be those, like Hill, who generally think like Northern Democrats, except on the race issue, and want to stick with the party. On the other side will be those, like Dixon, who generally think like Republicans on national issues, and who want to break all ties with the Democrats of the North.

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Marquis Childs

The Role Of David

WASHINGTON

WITH some objective evidence to support their claim, Democratic leaders are now making a strong case for the nomination of David L. Boren as the Democratic candidate for President in 1952.

Quite apart from public opinion, Boren is a man of unusual ability and character. He is a man who has been in the South since the days of Reconstruction. He is now in a position to be a powerful force in the South.

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