

J. E. DOWD..... B. S. GRIFFITH

FRIDAY, MARCH25, 1949

CONSUMERS GET A BREAK the story. It does not hear the other side because the average consumer is simply not in a position to engage in a battle of statistics with utility experts.

ONE of the more important Go Forward or proposals—to reorganic and strengthen the State Utilities Commission — has been aboved into the background you it to beginning one its abendance of attention, and the state of attention of the state of attention, and the state of the state of attention, and the state of the state of attention, and the state of the

and:

Our utilities are privately owned and they should be permitted a reasonable return upon their investment, but to justify their monopolistic franchises granted them by the people of the state they must also provide the serve must have greatly and their public utilities or must have far and aggressive administration of fair laws designed to protect the vestor in prible utilities or use a server of the property of the provided provided in the provided provided the provided provided the provided prov

The only logical basis for determining utility rates is a fair and reasonable return on the investment. This is essential if util-ities are to attract investors, and thereby

tites are to attract investors, and thereby obtain the capital necessary for expansion. As a rule, the utility representatives who come before the Commission asking rate increases are well briefed in strategy and well fortified with convincing facts and figures. The Commission hears one side of

not in a position to engage in a battle of statistics with utility experts.

Thus it falls upon the Utilities Commission to represent the public, to subject utility claims to a searching examination in order to determine the need of the requested rate increase. The Commission, in other words, must be a watch-dog over utility rates.

To do this, it must have engineering and accounting experts to investigate rate in accounting experts to investigate rate incumulated the mecsaary information, the Commission must be militant in (1) holding rates down to the minimum level required for a reasonable return, and (2) forcing needed expansion of services. The administration measure approved by the House and sent to the Senate would increase the Commission's membership from three to five; authorize employment of technical personnel and assign an assistant attorney general to the Commission; clarify Commission procedure; and authorize the Commission procedure; and action is the commission of service by utilities.

Favorable action by the Senate will mean better service for North Carolina consumers.

Favorable action by the Senate will mean better service for North Carolina consum-ers, and better protection against unjusti-fled rate increases.

THE RIGHT TO KNOW

NOR many years reporters covering the North Carolina General Assembly have accepted, without arguing too vigorously, the decision of legislative committees to go into executive seasion while considering matters of public interest. As a rule the reporters are permitted: to all with the committees in such sessions, provided they entitled to the committee and the committee action and arguments.

Some of the newsmen agree to these re-strictions; others simply leave the room, trusting their ability to obtain a full report from friendly committeemen after the end of the session.

This week the Appropriations Committee ecision to hold an executive session proceded a storm of protest. Reporters comeded the law requires open hearings on udgetary matters. Chairman Taylor de-

nied this, said executive sessions had been the rule since 1929, Net result was that all reporters except two left the hearing. It seems that the whole argument about what the law requires or does not require is beside the point. What is at stake is the right of the people of North Carolina to know what goes on in legislative commit-tees, to have the benefit of arguments and evidence on both sides of any questions so that they may be better informed. Any-thing which abridges this right is highly dangerous.

dangerous.

Rep Oscar Richardson of Union County asid he thought open reporting "would have a definite bearing" on committee action. If he meant that the Joint Appropriations Committee would act one way if reporters were present and another way if the public was not to find out about it, then all the more reason why the news-paper men should have been there.

THE CONGRESSIONAL PRIVILEGE

A States is made up of human beings, and one could not reasonably expect the Congressmen to be any more lofty or unselfub than other humans.

We've already had one example of Congressmen, based on length of service, and payable no matter what other thomes a retired or defeated solon might have. selfish than other humans.

We've already had one example of Congressional selfathness—the flat pension for Congressmen, based on length of service, and payable no matter what other income a retired or defeated solon might have. This was passed by a previous Congress which refused to extend Social Security benefits to other groups of our people. And now we have a dual standard on rent control. On Monday the House passed and sent to the Senate a rent control bill for the District of Columbia embodying all the rigid enforcement policies President

in the District of Columbia is contained in a New York Times story:

actor rork Times story:
"The national bill as passed by the House provides that to the degree practicable land-ords receive a reasonable return on their property. This is not in the District bill. "The District bill continues controls on apartment facilities in hotels where many members of Congress IIve."

A MILLION YEARS TO GO Then he used weapons to beat his neighbor over the head. Did those clubs and chunks of metal wipe out the race? Never. We got amarter. We learned how to make bows and arrows, to shoot guns, to drop bombs. Finally we learned enough to create the most destructive weapon in history, and used it twice. And so, here we are, smarter than ever before, with an atom bomb and a million more years to go. In that, span we will surely learn new, and even more destructive, ways to beat our neighbor over the head.

"The homo sapiens is exceedingly tough, well survive even if the species has two eads after the bomb is used."

—Dr. Ralph C. Linton,
Yale Anthropologist.

DISMISSING as irrelevant the point that if man had used his one head in time there would be no possibility of his having two, we plunge with some joy into Dr. Linton's theory that man will be around for a

while.
"At least a million more years," says Dr.

Linton.

This optimistic prediction, a forecast which may long be remembered, was birthed inauspiciously—in a department store tea room before a group of teachers of elementary schools.

Man, Dr. Linton explained, has a hardy history. He came down from the trees (yes, most anthropologists are Darwinians) and began to use fire and clothing.

From The Greenville (S. C.) News

DRINKING LESS LIQUOR

A DVOCATES of temperance can find some ground for satisfaction in the evidences that consumption of liquor is on the decline in this country.

Louis M. Schneider, a business columnist, cities some striking statistics, on the poor lot, as he calls it, of the fluor makers. Whisky output is running ahead of consumption. On next July 1, 55 million gallons of 1945-made stuff will attain fouryear age maturity; and another 55 million gallons will become of "age" in 1950.

gallons will become of "age" in 1999.

But consumption is now down to 50 mil-lion gallons. Sales, Mr. Schneider reports, now run ten per cent below those of a year ago. And for 1948 sales were six per cent below 1947; while 1947 showed a drop of 22 per cent below 1946

The fight to counteract the evils of li-quor has taken a more constructive turn in recent years we think, in efforts to create a stronger public sentiment in dis-flavor and discouragement of immoderate, inappropriate and excessive use of intoxi-cants. Greater emphasis is being given to the particularly dangerous use of any li-quor at all under certain-conditions and circumstances; and, for instance, there is developing a definite thumbodown public attitude against drinking, while driving automobiles.

The tragedy of it is that we are not yet mart enough to settle our difficulties with our neighbors by soom method less primitative than head-beating. Perhaps, after the next atomic war, when we are all running around with two heads, we will put them together and work out a way. After all, four heads are better than two.

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Trouble Making Him Drink



People's Platform

Fears Prohibition Return

Editors, The News:

A FEW weeks ago, while in your fair city, I read
with some interest a featured editorial letter by
the Rev. G. W. Fink, pastor, Grace Methodist Church,
Kings Mountain, urging Prohibition's return to your
state.

state.

If Dr. Fink believes that a return to the former Prohibition era is best for the citizens of your state; for the citizens of our country, does he recall the the Capones the Dutch Schultzes, etc., whose small minority groups practically dominated and controlled by purges, etc., all those who dared stand in their way of continuing an illegal business.

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Scores Slum Conditions SPARTANBURG

SORTANBURO

Editors, The News

MAY I applaud Parks A. Yandle, a candidate for
Math Charlotte City Council, who in a letter publiber of the Charlotte City Council, who in a letter publiber of the Charlotte City Council, who in a letter publiber of the Charlotte City Council, who in a letter publiber of the Charlotte City Council, who is a letter pubwhich are used by two and three families,"
But come to Spartanburg M. Yandle, and Ill
show you house after house without even a prity on
the city limits and some of them border a college
campus! To think such a condition can exist in this
year 1840.

The News is to be commended for its stories
and pictures on this stucky subject. Not every pagier
has the courage to perform this public service for a

It is a shame and disgrace when the subject of
Inside toilets and baths for every house in a city becontroversy intested of an objection. And I care not
whom this last shee fits or pinches. It is high time
someone raised a atlink about a sink!

—WILSON HAMEISON.

Marquis Childs

The Scare Word

Gill Robb Wilson

An Air Line Story

(Reprinted from The New York
Herald Tribune). N. G.
What price from enterprise! With
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And I care not prinches. It is high time with a bound a stinct of the countries of the coun Merry-Go-Round West Point, Annapolis May Be Combined

No definite decision has been made as yet, but one thing in the back of Johnson's mind is to ask Congress to abolish Annapoils and West Point as traditional training schools for the Army and Kavy.

Johnson has already been talking the matter over with Johnson has already been talking the matter over with points they have placed before him.

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Civil Rights Again.

Civil Rights Aggin,
HIOHLIOHT of President Temman's private meeting with
HORTHOHT of President Temmediately following his return
from Key West was a decision to make another try for enactman and the state of the

Lucas observed that Republican Senators who joined with Southern Democrats in the recent filibuster already are beginning to feel the backlash of public opinion from their states.

Mail Bag

Mail Bag

SEN. CLYDE HOEY of North Carolina—Apologies for getting the wrong Mrs. Ernest Howard with whom you were photographed the other day; and glad to know that the lady in the photograph was not the Mrs. Ernest Koward, wite of the Mrs. Breast Mrs. Mrs. Walter Winchell, New York—The Mooper Survey people

Merry-Go-Round