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PEOPLE VS. INTERESTS

FIRST reports from Washington indicate that President Truman's plan to reorganize the Reconstruction Finance Corporation under a single Administrator is finding little favor in Congress. This is understandable, although there has been some sentiment in Congress for such a plan. It is understandable because a single Administrator would be no better than five board members, and might even be worse, so long as the Truman philosophy of Presidential appointments holds. Mr. Truman believes in "government by cronies." He believes in rewarding faithful party members. He believes in repaying with high office those who contribute generously to the Democratic Party coffers. And he apparently condones the use of White House prestige to influence government bureaus and agencies in what should be non-political decisions.

Putting the RFC under one man instead of five would not be any great improvement, so long as Mr. Truman clings to his philosophy. In fact, it would smooth the path for influence peddlers, since they would have to deal with just one man rather than three or four. One truism of democracy is that the system doesn't matter nearly so much as the people who administer the system. The same system that produced a Woodrow Wilson produced a Warren G. Harding. What is needed is a basic change in the Truman philosophy of Presidential appointments rather than a change in the RFC system. If Mr. Truman would pick men of merit for high government posts, and relegate his political buddies to menial positions, there would be no reason for the current outcry about mismanagement in the RFC.

ON LIMITING PRESIDENTIAL TERMS

THE proposed 22nd amendment to the U. S. Constitution—to limit any future American President to two terms—may be ratified by the necessary 36 states before many more weeks are past. The N. C. Senate should its approval yesterday, but there is still a chance that the House will give the matter more thought. A good case can be made out for limited Presidential terms. Proposals along this tradition set by Chief Executives and argue that the burden of Presidential responsibilities is so great that no man's health can stand more than eight years in office. Others cite the need for new faces, new ideas, new leadership, that come from a change of Presidents, and point to the tendency toward ingrained political power inherent in long regimes. But all of these reasons, and others, do not alter a basic point of democracy—that the people are the final judges in such matters, and they should be free to make whatever choice they see fit. If the people

cannot be trusted in electing or rejecting a man for a third term, they cannot be trusted in electing or rejecting him for a first term.

We hold no brief for the argument that ratification of the amendment would be a slap at the late President Roosevelt, or at those who served with him. The amendment is useful as an example. The people clearly wanted him in office in the war-thrashed year of 1940 and the war year of 1944. And who knows but that a similar situation might prevail at some time in the future.

The U. S. Constitution must be a flexible document if it is to meet the demands of changing times. To encumber it with such restrictions as this would be to rely too much upon the past. If our democracy is to survive, we must never let the dead hand of the past have too firm a grip on the future.

THE HEART OF REDEVELOPMENT

ALTHOUGH little has been said about Asheville, there are various reports from Raleigh that the power of condemnation may be the snag upon which the urban redevelopment enabling act introduced yesterday will hang.

Anyone who has studied the subject at all recognizes that the power of condemnation is the very heart of urban redevelopment. Without it, any law would be utterly meaningless. Without it, urban redevelopment agencies would be powerless to move into blighted areas and eliminate them, for the very simple reason that slum property is generally very profitable and no owner of slum property would voluntarily surrender a source of big income.

The power of condemnation, as embodied in our laws, is an expression of the right of eminent domain which, in turn, recognizes that the public welfare takes precedence over the vested property rights of individuals. Every form of democratic government, and many agencies thereof, not to mention public utilities, are clothed with the right of eminent domain in certain well-defined areas.

The basic philosophy of urban redevelopment envisions the elimination of municipal blighted areas and their restoration for other purposes. Without the power of eminent domain, no master plan for an entire area might fall because of the recalcitrance of a single property owner. Any member of the General Assembly who thinks that an urban redevelopment act is an unconstitutional master plan for an entire area is utterly mistaken. If he is under such a misapprehension, he should either readjust his thinking or forget the whole idea.

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EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

REP. JOSEPH H. WARREN'S resolution to bar executive sessions by General Assembly committees probably doesn't have any more of a chance than a snowball in the tropics, but it's still a good

saying the State Fair Coliseum. The other was held by the House Finance Committee when it was considering the Royster bill calling for a referendum on a one-cent gasoline tax increase to aid city streets.

There are enough "executive sessions" in hotel rooms in the capital city without making them official. The two held so far are two too many.

Rep. Warren's resolution may not get far, but the public attention it has drawn may discourage other executive sessions which, after all, is the ultimate objective.

From The Baltimore Evening Sun

BEAUTIFUL, BUT . . .

NOT a little scientific and statistical ink is expended these days, it seems to us, in confirming trite adages and stale saws. The latest to come along is "beauty and substantiation"—is one of the most controversial of all sayings, that beauty and brains don't mix too well. Nobody loses his temper over the question, do drafts cause colds? The stunningly stupid commonplace is often good for a row.

The absence of loveliness does not necessarily connote a high degree of intellectuality. And then when you really look at it—the girls and grades we mean—there is a lot less difference between 1.42 and 1.51 in the matter of intelligence than there is between "beautiful" and "homely" in the matter of face and figure. Even a pedant cannot deny the fact that the least important side of a decimal point influence his judgment as between a honey and a horror.

There are at least 11,569 things that a husband can do that may displease the Little Woman—Wichita Falls (Tex.) Times.

Wear your old clothes, eat scraps, save and loan your money—and you'll die rich and unpopular.—Lamar (Mo.) Democrat.

After all, a woman at the wheel doesn't run down near as many people as she might if she stayed home at the telephone.—Curland (N. M.) Current-Argus.

A few Democrats got price-control jobs without even having been defeated in 1950.—Memphis Press-Scimitar.

There's another thing said about money—those who have it and drink are also those and those who don't have it and drink are drunks.—Nattson (Ill.) Journal-Gazette.

The Gerrymander At Work

Tar Heel Congressional Districts A 'Work Of Art'

By BOB SAIN
Charlotte News Staff Writer

VIEWED from the standpoint of political strategy, North Carolina's "gerrymandered" Congressional districts are wonderful; viewed from the standpoint of political equity, they're awful.

There are enough Republicans in North Carolina to merit a Representative in Congress, but the Democrats who arranged the Congressional districts have kept the Republicans separated in different districts, so that they are not effective.

Through mapping out "bacon strip" districts cutting down from the Tennessee border and across the Piedmont, the district-makers have hitched the small Republican counties of the west to the heavily populated urban-Democratic counties of the Piedmont and near-east.

The result: Republican Congressmen from North Carolina. To the Democratic organization in North Carolina, that is an excellent thing. It is a hill-country Republican, it's mighty frustrating.

What good, they might ask, does it do to elect the Democrats of Mitchell and Avery Counties to go to the polls at all if their votes are going to elect the Democrats of Mecklenburg? How does it happen, they might ask, that Mitchell and Avery, which straddle the Tennessee border, should be in the same Tenth Congressional District as Mecklenburg?

Obvious Answers
Until this week the Republicans had no valid title as gerrymanderers. They didn't mention it in their platform in 1948. On Wednesday, however, Republican members of the Legislature introduced a bill to re-draw the lines of the twelve Congressional Districts. Although President Truman has put his prestige behind more equitable re-districting in the United States, the chances for Republican success in re-districting North Carolina are slim.

Gerrymandering (use either the soft G or hard G) has become a recognized political tool; the Republicans use it where they are in-control of the state legislatures just as the Democrats use it where they are in-control of the state legislatures. It's been done in practice since at least 1812 when the term was originated.

An explanation of the origin of the word might clarify the practice: In Massachusetts in 1812 the Senatorial district of Essex County with the counties, but the State constitution gave the legislature the right to change the Federalists' seat out of the Federalist representation even further.

Republicans strung together such an outrageous collection of counties that the result when outlined on a map resembled a great bird. Gilbert Stuart, the famous artist, helped out by adding wings and claws and a beak to the outline. "That will do for a gander," said Gerry, a Federalist newspaper editor, indignant at the Republican trick that had been signed into law by Gov. Elbridge Gerry, snapped: "Better call it a gerrymander."

Another indignant newspaper editor in North Carolina might have labeled our first gerrymandered districts "gerrymandered" districts since their unfair deal corresponded with the coming to power of Furnifold P. Simmons.

It was Simmons who organized the Democratic campaign in 1898 to regain the legislature from the fusion of Republicans and Democrats.

Whether justified or not, organized labor is near the breaking point with the Administration, with top labor leaders as full-time members of the Truman as a Union League Club discussion of the late FDR.

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In 1891, the General Assembly of North Carolina established these districts from which Congressmen would be elected to represent this State. The districts were arranged with some logic, with the exception of District Six

stretching from Mecklenburg to the sea. The reason for this string-bend district was based on some forgotten political objective. (Certain minor liberties have been taken with district lines since some single counties of 1891 are now two or more counties.)



Ten years after the re-districting of 1891, the re-districting of 1901, which had defeated the Republican-Populist coalition and regained control of the Legislature and the governorship. Shortly after the machine

lines of maturity in 1931. Not much was accomplished in the re-districting of 1941, when the present Tenth District was formed, but the gerrymander lost none of his strength.

The Present Map
Anyone who will look at the present map of North Carolina's Congressional Districts—be he Democrat or Republican—must certainly recognize the gerrymander in full flower.

It will be observed that only the Twelfth District—in the west—has any sensible contiguity. Even there the geography is misleading, since the sizable Democratic majorities of Asheville in Buncombe County and the Republican vote from Cherokee, Clay, Graham et al.

The Eighth District, which bears a remarkable resemblance to Mr. Stuart's original salamander, is the most obvious example of "bacon strip" districts in a heavy Republican vote. (Sampson Republicans are the spawn of voting Populists who number can still be found, holding out for the Populist Party went kaput early in the century.)

It is, of course, in the West that the Republicans are strong and must be controlled by gerrymander. Along the Blue Ridge, which Southern political observer V. O. Key Jr. calls "the District of Republicanism which runs down the back of the South," Republicans in number can still be found, holding out for the Populist Party went kaput early in the century.)

When the Democrats were through with the re-districting of Mecklenburg was the Eastern-most county in the Ninth District.

Without Mecklenburg's heavy Democratic vote, the Tenth District would have elected Charles A. Jones, Republican, to Congress in 1948.

Employing the gerrymander technique, the Simmons group established Mecklenburg as a Republican vote in the Western-most county in the Sixth District, with all other counties in the district, with the exception of Pender and New Hanover, being on the South Carolina border and extending to the sea.

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Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round Labor Near Breaking Point With Truman

WASHINGTON.

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It's Mutual

LABOR's coolness also had an effect on the 1950 elections where Democratic losses in the cities are heavy. What brought the rebellion to a head were:

1. Truman's failure to consult with labor chiefs on the price control program.

2. The absence of a top-flight labor man on Charlie Wilson's staff. When Stuart Symington ran defense mobilization, he appointed a labor advisory council, but not Wilson.

3. Truman's craft comparing railroad strikers to Russian. This convinced labor chieftains that the President was against them for keeps.

Now it's mutual.

Heretic Second Division

ONE of the best things about a new and victorious advance in Korea is the way the gallant 2nd Division has staged a comeback. Last November, in the tragic retreat from Korea, the 2nd Division took the heaviest punishment of all. It was given the toughest assignment of holding off the enemy while the rest of the 8th Army pulled back behind the Pusan perimeter.

This resulted in some bitter, bloody punishment, with casualties so heavy that General MacArthur cabled Washington that the 2nd Division was "unfit for further combat."

However, the 2nd Division has now staged one of the most magnificent comebacks of the Korean war. Under Lieut. Gen. Matt Ridgway, it went back into the line along the Taekheon Mountains in the bitterly contested Wonsan area and heroically stopped a North Korean end run around the U. N. fight flank.

back twelve miles, drew the North Koreans into a trap, hit the trapped Communists on their flank and wiped them out. It was a brilliant maneuver, proving that this was the best record in two previous wars, is now carrying on its tradition as proudly as ever.

Cow College Diplomat

It's not what you associate an Oklahoma cow college professor with career diplomats, but Secretary of State Acheson has now mixed the two together. He has placed Dr. Henry Garland Bennett, president of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, in charge of the Foreign Four program in the State Dept.

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