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WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 1953

NEW HOSPITAL COST WILL BE HIGH

IN THE continuing discussion about new hospital facilities for Negroes in Mecklenburg County, Dr. John A. Ferrell's figure on building costs are revealing. (See story on Page 15-A.)

Those who favor building a completely new general hospital have been talking in terms of a 200-bed institution. Dr. Ferrell, who has supervised the care and treatment of the Negroes of the Medical Care Commission, estimates such a hospital would cost between \$2,000,000 and \$2,400,000.

In past years, state and federal funds would have provided 44 per cent of the cost. But Dr. Ferrell fears that funds will not be available in the next two years because of curtailed appropriations in Raleigh and Washington.

In fact, it is entirely possible that all money for new Negro hospital facilities may have to come from local sources, either public or private.

There is no disagreement over the need for bigger and better facilities, and for higher standards of care and treatment for the Negroes of this community. Within the limits of its resources, Good Samaritan Hospital has rendered valuable service. It cannot carry the whole load today, however.

The basic disagreement is over a site for the new hospital facilities. The Mecklenburg County Medical Society and the Chamber

of Commerce have recommended the building of a new unit on the grounds of Memorial Hospital. Negro doctors, however, urge the construction of a separate institution. A letter in today's People's Platform sets forth this viewpoint.

It seems to us that three factors should get top consideration in plans for new Negro hospital facilities.

1. Most important factor of all is the excellence of the service to be rendered. This includes not only the level of the professional medical and nursing service, but the efficiency and the standards of the hospital administration.

2. Second in importance is the cost factor. If the local community is to bear all the cost, it rightfully will demand that comparable costs between adding a unit to Memorial Hospital and building a separate structure be carefully weighed.

3. Finally, the adequacy of the facilities is of great importance. If Good Samaritan continues in operation, fewer new beds will be needed than if Good Samaritan should be converted to other uses.

Neither the trustees of Memorial Hospital nor of Good Samaritan have taken a stand on the issue. Their experience in hospital management uniquely qualifies them to speak out. The committee discussions will not be complete until they have been heard from.

CONSOLIDATION PROSPECTS BRIGHTER

THERE was a double helping of good news in yesterday's announcement about Dr. J. A. Ferrell. First, he will serve as acting health officer for the County on a temporary basis.

Plagued by a persistent disturbance of the inner ear, Dr. Ferrell was unable to accept the added responsibility when he was asked by the County Health Board to act as acting health officer for the County on a temporary basis.

Although Dr. Ferrell is taking over direction of the county department on a temporary, month-to-month basis, there is reason to hope that full consolidation of the two departments may eventually result from this and other developments.

At yesterday's panel discussion conducted by the League of Women Voters, the flat prediction was made that consolidation will become a reality "before the next election." Dr. James Alexander, head of the Chamber of Commerce health committee, said the prediction in a hard-bitten statement of the inequalities of the present arrangement.

Consolidation is the only long-range answer to the community's public health program and is the best way to provide residents of both the City and the surrounding county with high standards of health services. The demand for consolidation is steadily growing, and it involves, and sooner or later public demand will overcome the inertia among city and county officials and force consolidation.

THE STATE AT A TURNING POINT

GOVERNOR UMSTEAD is following a wise course in giving long and careful deliberation to new members of the Board of Conservation & Development.

North Carolina is at a turning point in its industrial development. There is reason to hope that the greater resource to pay for expanding state services. North Carolina must look to the development of its every resource to increase the earning power of its people and thus increase their ability to pay for state services.

In this picture, the role of industry holds large. The state has much to offer new industry—a good climate, excellent water system, good schools and state institutions, an adequate labor supply, accessibility to raw materials and markets, stable and progressive state and local government.

But North Carolina has been bypassed since World War II by many of the industries that have extended their operations in the Southeastern region. It is Governor Umstead's view that the Department of Conservation & Development—this state agency charged with the overall responsibility of seeking to develop and improve everything in North Carolina—must do a better job in selling industry on the attractions of North Carolina.

He has asked for an annual appropriation of \$400,000 for a new industrial research program.

The Governor is looking for qualified men

to serve on the state board. They will not be "honorary appointments," as he calls them, but men who are both interested in expanding North Carolina's resources and experienced in the kind of activity. With such an important objective at stake, it makes sense to proceed slowly, and with great care.

LOSS TO STATE

THE DECISION of Gastonia's State Senator, Alvin Gray Rankin to retire from the General Assembly is a loss not only to his county but to the entire state.

In six sessions of the Legislature, Mr. Rankin gave conscientious and able service. He was, first and last, an advocate of economy, but he showed rare perception of the real needs of the state. When the need was clear and overriding, he gave his unstinting support.

This newspaper has not always agreed with the positions taken by Mr. Rankin on statewide legislation, but has always had the greatest respect for his ability and his integrity—respect that was also felt by his colleagues who so often followed his firm leadership.

The Piedmont section needs more men of Gray Rankin's caliber in Raleigh. His desk in the State Senate will be hard to fill.

From The Richmond News-Leader

WE CAN'T EVEN PRONOUNCE 'EM

EVERY YEAR about this time, when quizzing kids about the country comes in spelling bees, we get humped all over again by the orthographical facts of these little shavers. Good spelling is one of the higher arts—one of the more positive proofs of human intelligence—and to find a 12-year-old girl marching confidently through "opportunity" (or "r" in that place) is a marvel right in a class with sign painting or a cappella singing.

Elizabeth Hess of Phoenix, Ariz., won the twenty-first annual national spelling bee on that one in Washington the other day. I never even heard of some of the other words spelled around by 11- and 12-year-olds in the elimination rounds. One tricker was concinnity, which we find in internal harmony or fitness. Another was marcescent, a botanical term meaning "withering or falling off." Still another was chrysalis, relating to collection of literary passages, esp. with music, as he used in learning a language.

Immense is not an emulsion, but rather "the indwelling presence of God in the world," and incubate has something to do with things lapsing over each other, like slingshot or "head rollers" in mechanical brads. The obvious are, of course, that Elizabeth and her fellow contestants will have mighty little opportunity to use some of these jaw-breakers in ordinary conversation. After all,

you don't just walk up to a neighbor and remark that "your procinnity, there by that imbricate root, looks somewhat marcescent today." That sort of thing leads to a poke in the snout.

But spelling is a basic discipline in the educative process, and it's downright delightful to see the renewed emphasis placed on it in the public schools. Goodness knows American spelling is not easy—nowhere has our spirit of rugged independence been better exemplified than in the mysteries of cough, rough, plough, and through—and the endless inconsonances and exceptions of the language are difficult tools to master. Reminds us of the old story about the foreigner who came to the United States to learn English: he was doing fairly well until he passed by a theater marquee that bore a sign reading, "Cavalcade." Pronounced Success? Then he went home.

The young husband, arriving home from his office, found his wife in tears. "I have had a terrible day," she told him. "Baby cut his first tooth and a little while later he took his first step, fell, and knocked out his tooth." "Then what?" demanded the husband. "Oh, Darline," she said in a shocked voice, "he said his first word."—Crispian (N. M.) Current-Argus.

Horatius Guards The Bridge



People's Platform

Letters should be brief. The writer's name and address must be given, but may be withheld from publication in the discretion of the Editors. The News reserves the right to condense.

Shades Of Malthus!

Editors, The News: SHADES of Malthus still fall upon us! Your May 10 editorial urging birth control as the solution to poverty and population would have brought cheer to the birth control convention held in New York last 7, if it had appeared in time. They, too, share the pessimism that Malthus expressed in 1798. He believed that the future would be a time of misery because population would increase faster than means of subsistence.

In the light of realities in our own land, it is difficult to understand how intelligent people can still hold to this discredited belief. We know that our farms, while restricted in acreage, are still producing surplus; and that our industry, while not extending itself, is worried about overproduction, even though it is supplying a war as well as a peace economy. We know that if Agriculture and Industry were given the signal to produce all out, we would soon have a production that would not rest before a much greater population than ours could consume it.

What we have done through the grace of God, and the use of our intellectual and technical knowledge, others can do if we help them. We are hungry, and we are poor, because we have not shared the Christian way. Christ showed us this way when, in foretelling His greeting to the elect He said "Blessed are you because you clothed Me, sick and you visited Me, . . . when did you do this?" as long as you did the least of My little ones, you did it to Me."

So from the Christian view the solution to large populations is not to plow under the unborn, but to provide abundantly for a hungry world. We must remember that while Christ did not command us to have large families, He did (in His Father's name) severely condemn the birth control of Onan.

—PETER J. KING.

Doctor Opposes Annex

Editors, The News: I WAS a member of the committee of doctors from the Charlotte Medical Society that issued their recent release to the public opposing the annexation of the subject of Negro hospital facilities for the Negroes. I did and do agree with the committee. In this letter, however, I should like to say a few words about the whole subject, and in doing so, I speak primarily as a Negro citizen and only incidentally as a physician.

It is a fact that the City of Charlotte woefully lacks adequate hospital facilities for its Negro citizens. This statement must not in any wise be construed as an attack on the Good Samaritan Hospital. To the contrary the Episcopal Church and all those having had connection with the institution are to be praised and thanked. Had it not been for them the Negroes of Charlotte would have had no hospital at all.

But it is not the duty of the Episcopal nor of any other church or group to provide for the Negroes of Charlotte. If they are able and willing, we are glad, but the city and county governments have the duty to provide adequate hospital facilities, as well as schools, parks, playgrounds, etc. And the building of annexes is not the answer.

(Note: See Editorial, "New Hospital Cost Will Be High.")

—S. F. HOGANS, MD.

It is high time that Charlotte awaken to a sense of justice and fairness in its treatment of its citizens. The building of a much-needed Negro hospital and nurses home in the city will be the greatest boost for moral good and for the Negro citizen in many years. This should start us toward improvement in other things good for the Negro citizen. This will go on a long way toward the much heralded statement that "Charlotte treats its Negro citizens with less regard than any large city in the state of N.C."

The two great daily newspapers that mold the sentiment in this area can do much good for Charlotte if they would openly advocate a fair deal for all our citizens.

If the Memorial Hospital has the site, the modern laboratory and clinical facilities, etc., what would prevent a Negro Hospital from having the same? I am a member drumming up sentiment among my people and delivering a radio message in the interest of bonds for the Memorial Hospital. I am happy to do so then and am paying taxes on my action now.

I ask in all fairness, does not the city owe to its citizens something of a like deal? If the expense of building a hospital for two-thirds of the population was worthy (and surely it is), why better about additional expense for the other third?

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residents, then to increase the number of beds by 65 or 70, the ratio of beds to population would be about one bed for every 223 Negro citizens, as compared to one bed for every 115 white citizens—an ugly comparison indeed, even at its improvement. Why go to so much expense for so little good?

The white doctors who made these proposals of annexation know as well as I that for the purpose of fulfilling a need for better hospital facilities for Negroes, this suggestion if carried out does not materially help the situation. They probably can't see a few beds for Negroes out in an annex to Memorial, so that when they have finished visiting their white patients in the hospital proper, they can take the ramp or use the underground tunnel and step over to visit "Old Mose" in the annex.

They would have the city go to such debt for their personal convenience. This is segregation to be sure, but only by the ramp or underground ramp system. I say, place all sick in the municipal hospital without segregation, favor or what have you. But my white friends won't have it. They want to keep the Negroes out of the city. They are going to have it, let's at least do it well. Let's segregate not by the distance of a cemented ramp but by the distance of a tunnel and step over to visit "Old Mose" in the annex.

The question of a Negro hospital in the City of Charlotte is bigger than the mere convenience and advantage it gives to a few doctors or all the doctors for that matter. The question reverts to the fully to a civic one that involves a hospital for the whole population of the county.

I urge the citizens of Charlotte, both white and colored, to use their voices loud and clear to the city officials in favor of the outright building of a Negro hospital of 200 beds, fully equipped, with a few nurses home, all built by the City of Charlotte.

It is high time that Charlotte awaken to a sense of justice and fairness in its treatment of its citizens. The building of a much-needed Negro hospital and nurses home in the city will be the greatest boost for moral good and for the Negro citizen in many years. This should start us toward improvement in other things good for the Negro citizen. This will go on a long way toward the much heralded statement that "Charlotte treats its Negro citizens with less regard than any large city in the state of N.C."

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Benson Caught In A Squeeze

Between Prices And Principles

By MARQUIS CHILDS

FOR ALL the members of the Senate, the Congressional election next year is a small cloud on the distant political horizon. But for the Secretary of Agriculture, has an election coming up in just a few weeks.

The Secretary of Agriculture has a way to avoid that election. But the bounty of the American earth and the nature of the support he will bring what they are, he will probably have to go ahead with it. The 2,600,000 wheat farmers of America will vote by a July 25 deadline on whether to impose restrictive quotas on next year's crop. This presents the Secretary with a personal dilemma. He is convinced that regimentation through programs administered from Washington is evil. In his speeches he talks about freedom and the need to throw off the shackles of government.

BUTTER GLUT A few weeks before the outbreak of a war he was faced with the overflowing abundance of America's dairy herds producing milk and butter out in a surplus. The Secretary decided to support butter at 90 per cent of parity, but the government was buying the price. It meant, too, that the Government had to buy and store away from a million dollars a million and a half pounds of butter a day.

That is still going on and the total bill in storage by the Government is \$170,000,000. The Secretary is 170,000 pounds, on which the storage bill is several million dollars a year. Some \$5,000,000 a year, according to present plan, will go to the Department of Defense so that men in the service will have butter instead of oleo. Commodity Credit will be paid by the Department of Defense at the rate at which Defense now spends for oleo.

As to wheat, the farmers must be convinced that it is in their interest to produce more. A two-thirds majority is necessary to carry the election. A certain number of declassifying salesmanship . . . has been considered necessary in the past.

This is a sharp dilemma. Benson's dilemma. He says that he understands now that he cannot have high prices for wheat and low prices for butter. Therefore he and his department will present the facts to the farmers and let them decide. But to the facts forcefully could be the equivalent of plumping for the kind of regulation that Secretary Benson deplores.

The white men whom Benson has surrounded to help him in an overwhelming job understand what this means. They see a party with a platform of high prices for wheat and low prices for butter. And they know the farm voters will react in that other and bigger election in 1954.

Farm income is estimated to drop appreciably this year. The price of wheat is down to a declining prices, since the crops will still be there. But the price of butter is down to a point where the farmer must buy to produce his crops are still going up.

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The first step is to point out the consequences if two-thirds of the Senate vote against the law, the support price then drops to 80 per cent. In terms of current prices, that would mean a drop from about \$2 a bushel to \$1.60.

Furthermore, if the farmers reject the quota system, Secretary Benson, who said himself in the Senate of 1954 that what is likely to be the greatest surplus of wheat in history. The price of wheat will fall below the support price of \$1.25. And such a drop would unseat the Secretary of Agriculture on the eve of his Congressional election.

On next July 1 the Commodity Corporation is expected to hold in inventory nearly 500,000 bushels, which is the largest amount of wheat ever stored in the United States. Benson is looking about desperately for places to store the surplus. It is a real problem with corn when stocks on hand will be 700,000 bushels.

The law which provides that an election must be held when the price of wheat falls below a certain level also provides an out. The Secretary can find that an emergency exists and suspend the law. Charles H. Benson, a predecessor of Benson, did this in 1941 when the Korean emergency was still of sufficient magnitude so that the imposition of quotas could be avoided.

If action had been taken last year and the wheat farmers had been allowed to produce more wheat, the price of wheat would not have been hampered by the nightmare of wheat surpluses. The price of wheat would be in every warehouse and storage bin in the country. Twice before wheat prices had fallen to a point where the farmer must buy to produce his crops are still going up.

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