

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1954

Primary Highway Needs Are Urgent

GOV. WILLIAM UMSTEAD'S emphasis on a better primary highway system for North Carolina is not misplaced. Something has to be done, and that something will have to be bold and dramatic.

At his press conference this week, the governor indicated he was weighing the relative advantages of two alternatives—a bond issue or an increase of one cent in the gasoline tax.

On the basis of gasoline tax collections in the first six months of the current fiscal year, an extra cent would produce almost 11 million dollars a year additional revenue. State Highway Commissioner A. H. Jordan said last week that North Carolina is spending about 35 million dollars a year on its primary system now. Thus, the extra cent would boost the amount available for primary highways to around 46 million dollars a year.

That may be enough to do the full job on a pay-as-you-go basis. Certainly it would be enough to make a substantial improvement.

We hope, however, that the governor will not discard the idea of another bond

issue for primary roads until he has assessed it thoroughly. It need not be as large as the 200 million dollar secondary road bond issue authorized in 1949. Half that amount, made available now in addition to current revenues, would produce dramatic results.

And if the governor decides it will be necessary to increase the gas tax by one-half a cent or a full cent in order to retire the bonds, we suspect that the people will go along with him. Every time that North Carolina has invested extra money in its road system, the investment has paid rich dividends. And now that the state is beginning to provide the new limited access dual lane highways, with their greater comfort and safety factors, the extra tax will not be begrudged.

The governor says the problem cannot await a new administration, that it must be met by the 1955 General Assembly. In that case, he had best be prepared to meet stronger leadership. In 1953, for example, he will certainly run into strong opposition from the gasoline and trucking industries, as his predecessor, W. Kerr Scott, did in 1949.

A Postscript To The Monmouth Hoax

AFTER SEN. Joe McCarthy's charges of espionage at Fort Monmouth produced sensational headlines in newspapers and serious concern in the public mind, The New York Times sent one of its reporters to Fort Monmouth to find out if the facts warranted the headlines they had received.

His conclusion, similar to the one reached by a Washington Post reporter on a similar mission, was that nothing new had been uncovered at Fort Monmouth, and that the sensational charges had damaged the morale of scientists working there. On its editorial page, The Times said:

"Army investigators found no spies, and neither has Sen. McCarthy, yet the senator was given sensational headlines last October on supposed espionage and communism at Monmouth. . . . For the newspapers, Fort Monmouth has been a lesson that will not quickly be forgotten, but the reading public should understand that it is difficult, if not impossible, to ignore charges by Sen. McCarthy just because they are usually proved to be untrue or false. The remedy lies with the reader."

Two recent developments add to the already considerable evidence that the Wisconsin senator once again showed at Monmouth that he was more interested in personal publicity than in Communists and the truth. In a letter dated Jan. 15 and introduced during Senate debate Tuesday by Sen. Ellender, Secretary of the Army Robert T. Stevens said that "in so far as the Army has thus far been able to determine, there is no current

espionage or other subversive activity at Monmouth."

This development came on the heels of news from Baltimore that Fred J. Kitty, one of McCarthy's "friendly" witnesses at Monmouth who had made some of the sensational charges, was convicted of making a false statement in an earlier proceeding and sentenced to four months in prison.

The conviction was not based on the witness' testimony at Fort Monmouth. But his conviction affords some insight into the reliability of McCarthy's "friendly" witness. And, it is interesting to note, the man was under indictment when McCarthy used him at Monmouth.

People who follow the news closely now agree that the Monmouth affair appears to have been another hoax in the McCarthy tradition. But we share The Times' concern over the newspapers' contribution to that hoax, through the widespread publicity given the original, unsubstantiated charges.

Those who soberly consider the role of newspapers will agree that newsmen are not to be faulted for their part in the task. For if they decided not to report statements which might be proved incorrect, they would be withholding from the public information which it has the right to know and evaluate.

Perhaps newsmen can do better Tuesday by Sen. Ellender, Secretary of the Army Robert T. Stevens said that "in so far as the Army has thus far been able to determine, there is no current

Distortion And Neglected Aspect

IF we seem to devote an undue amount of space to criticism of the Bricker amendment it is because its advocates so frequently misrepresent the facts and neglect vital aspects of the argument. The letter in today's People's Platform headlined "Immunize G. I.'s From Foreign Law" is an example.

In the first place, Sen. Bricker is quoted as saying that "the Senate consented to ratification of a treaty in conflict with the Constitution." That statement simply is untrue. Sen. Bricker might think that the treaty is unconstitutional. But no court has so held. Sen. Bricker not only wants more authority over the executive branch of government, he also takes it upon himself to pass on the constitutionality of treaties, a task reserved for the courts.

Furthermore, the NATO Status of Forces Treaty he refers to, which permits foreign-court trial of NATO service-

men, was ratified by a 72-15 vote in the Senate.

Then Sen. Bricker, as quoted in the letter, wraps the flag around himself and gets emotional:

"I shall never vote for any agreement that treats the American G.I. as a second-class citizen of America. A Communist judge or one who is violently anti-American cannot be trusted to give an American boy a fair trial."

Okay, let's flip the coin over and look at the other side. If American troops overseas should be exempted from prosecution in the courts of countries whose laws they violate, should not foreign troops in this country be immune from prosecution by American courts when they violate U. S. laws?

One can imagine most everyone's answer to that question by visualizing thousands of foreign troops in Mecklenburg County, behaving just like thousands of American troops do in comparable overseas communities.

From The Asheville Citizen

QUOTE

SEARCHING the records for the author of "that country is governed best which is governed least." THE CHARLOTTE NEWS, THE GREENSBORO NEWS and other newspapers debunk the traditional authorship of Thomas Jefferson's philosophy the idea fitted Jefferson's thought to a T.

Noting Elbert Hubbard's claim to the governmental epigram, THE GREENSBORO NEWS objects that nobody can find where he said it.

This recalls Hubbard's being credited with the famous "mystery quotation" about the beaten path to the door of the man making a better mousetrap. Emerson also said it in his JOURNALS, 1855, Vol. VIII, p. 528. In 1871 Mrs. Sarah B. Yule remembered, and wrote, that Emerson did include the mousetrap in the inventory of better things made by the competent man; but she wasn't quite convincing. The critics think she reported an Emerson lecture without taking notes.

Emerson did say "The less government we have the better." But he had probably heard his friend and neighbor Henry O. Thoreau say something almost identical with the supposed Jeffersonian maxim. In his recollections, Jeffersonianism, 1840, Thoreau wrote: "I heartily accept the motto, 'That government is best which governs least.'" The rugged nonconformist of Walden Pond apparently thought the quotation well known, but he did not identify the author.

A rather timely paraphrase of the mousetrap homily was written in 1935, THE AMERICAN MERCURY, by Newman Levy in his article, "The Right To Be Left Alone."

If a man builds a better mousetrap than his neighbor, the world will not only beat a path to his door, it will make newsworthy of him and his wife in beach pajamas, it will discuss his diet and his health, it will publish heart-throb stories of his love life.



George Amendment Support Reflects Confidence in Man

By JOSEPH AND STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON

WHEN the old gentleman takes the floor and shakes those silver locks, the Senate of the United States sits up and takes notice." This remark by Senate Democratic Leader Lyndon Johnson of Texas is about the best simple definition of the special position that Walter F. George of Georgia has long occupied in the Senate.

George has just performed a truly remarkable feat. In his dignified, leisurely, unforced way, he walked into the middle of the hot, nasty fight over the Bricker amendment. Everyone wanted him in at the beginning, from Sen. Bricker and his strange allies to President Eisenhower himself, who personally pressed George to take the lead in arranging a compromise.

In the end, George found he could agree with no one. He did not want any of the things that Bricker wanted. He wanted something Eisenhower did not want, and he feared other things the State and Justice Department were prepared to accept. "Mr. Bricker," he says, in his measured way, "seems to be a rather odd Attorney General." As a result, he quietly put forward his own substitute.

This substitute has nothing behind it but George's personal authority. Yet it already has more support in the Senate than the Bricker amendment, which is being pushed by the mass legions of all the patriotizing lobbyists. If there is to be an amendment to the Constitution, it is likely to be the George substitute.

Achieving this sort of personal success in the midst of a hot, dirty fight, and achieving it without angering anyone, is a feat on a par with the performance of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in their fiery furnace. Yet the feat itself is not so interesting as the spirit that inspired Walter George's cool intervention in the Bricker amendment row.

Talking to him, you catch the authentic resonances of the grand tradition of American political conservatism—the deep attachment to the Constitution, the distaste for hasty innovation, the sense of the American future as

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.

Policemen Too Should Get Traffic Citations

Derita

I SEE by the paper that City Detective W. F. Hucks was injured in a traffic accident after an automobile stopped ahead of his car in a non-parking zone.

Why didn't Detective Hucks get a citation for following too close?

We have noticed similar cases when policemen are not involved, and those involved receive citations. Are policemen privileged characters?

—M. R. COLE

Why Didn't The News Speak Out Sooner?

Charlotte

I JUST read your editorial "What Will The Council Say Now?" (which dealt with the Police Department's failure to enforce adequately laws against gambling and lotteries). I, too, am wondering what the council will say about the subject when the grand jury does not find any of the police involved characters?

—M. R. COLE

Immunize G.I.s From Foreign Law

Charlotte

FOR those who feel that our Constitution does not need the additional protection of the Bricker Amendment, I would like to bring to their attention the following:

On Oct. 9, 1953, Sen. Bricker in addressing the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, stated:

Those Anti-McCarthy Folks Make Him Sicky

Charlotte

MR. H. A. CHEEK writes that McCarthy is so bad, but it seems to me he never read Sen. Joe's book that he wrote

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON

THIS is the story of Jimmy Roosevelt, a boy of great promise, whose political life and that of his brother Franklin now hang in the hands of a wretched woman and her bitterly anti-Roosevelt attorney.

It is a story of a man with his father's charm, considerable ability, who has made mistakes, plenty of them, but who started out with a promising political life for himself in California. It is also the story of two brothers, who in a sense, were political rivals, one an ambition to be governor of New York, the other to be governor of California, both of which ambitions may be wrecked by Jimmy's marital troubles.

Running through the story also is an overtone of intrigue by certain political enemies who see in Jimmy's "woman trouble" a chance to kill off two men who might come to or even enter the White House.

Jimmy Roosevelt's marriage with Romelle Schneider can be divided roughly into two categories. The first years, according to their friends, were a period when he made every effort to make their marriage successful. The second period includes the last four years or so, when it was apparent to friends in California that the Roosevelt marriage was pretty well on the rocks.

SUCIDE ATTEMPT PICKUP

This period began when Jimmy was for governor of California and

Jimmy Roosevelt's Career Damaged

WASHINGTON

When Romelle made an attempt to commit suicide, the incident was brushed off as a mistaken overdose of sleeping pills, but unfortunately it was not. For a time, Romelle received psychiatric treatment at a Santa Monica hospital, and for a time Mrs. FDR Sr. had her own psychiatrist on the treatment. But Romelle rebelled on the ground that her religious training did not permit such treatment.

It was just before the 1950 campaign for governor of California that Romelle threatened to publish the now-famous 1945 letter involving Jimmy in intimate relations with nine women. This letter, it now develops, had been hanging over Jimmy's head for some time and shortly before his campaign for governor his wife demanded that he do three things or she would publish it.

The three things were that he take her abroad; that he transfer one of his partners in the insurance business to the eastern part of the United States; and that he heed to her one half of his insurance business.

Jimmy complied with all three, taking his wife to Europe before the campaign for governor started, and also transferring his business associate, a former Marine Corp veteran to whom Romelle had been married, to the east coast.

During the gubernatorial campaign that followed, Romelle was a good sport, accompanying Jimmy on most of his trips, though toward the end she got irked at

Helen Gahagan Douglas, The Democratic Candidate for the Senate, and Stayed at Home.

As in every marital dispute, there is a lot to be said on both sides. And this dispute would have attracted little attention, certainly would not merit discussion in this column, were it not for its political reverberations—not only in the Democratic Party in California but in regard to the next Democratic governor of New York.

Tall, handsome, with his father's famous charm, Jimmy Roosevelt, Sr., were terribly fond of women. Like the Prince of Wales before he married Wallis Simpson, women literally threw themselves at Jimmy. In a way, that was how he met and married Romelle Schneider, then a nurse at the Mayo Clinic.

It was an unfortunate marriage from almost every point of view. First, FDR and Mrs. Roosevelt were terribly fond of Jimmy's first wife, Betsy Cushing. Second, Romelle was a woman literally threw herself at Jimmy. In a way, that was how he met and married Romelle Schneider, then a nurse at the Mayo Clinic.

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Johnny Matheson's Exit

By THOMAS M. MCKNIGHT
In The Mooresville Tribune

JOHN F. Matheson made his exit Tuesday from Mooresville Mills after 27 years of that firm. He made it in a manner in keeping with those 27 years as he had lived them, with gracefulness, dignity, and a smile.

"I have no regrets," he told this reporter Tuesday night. "I gave the best years of my life, and the best thinking and planning of my life was capable."

A product of South Carolina's pioneer stock, he grew up on a farm near Cheraw. From high school there, he went on to Raleigh and was graduated in textiles from State College, coming to Mooresville Mills the day after graduation. He began work in the dye plant, and in eight years had worked his way through the mill and into the general manager's chair. It was during those early years that he became known as "Johnny" to the hundreds of mill employees. He never lost that nickname of affection and esteem, from either supervisor or sweeper, as he put together nearly three decades among the people he loved.

And Tuesday night it was still in conflict with the multitude of mill employees who came and went at his home on Main St. S. Through the years he had been a statesman who bested the opposition in a man or woman could be seen trying to hide a tear. To them he had proved that a huge textile mill could possess a heart and a soul, something other than man's greed for the material things of life. And tonight

Johnny Matheson's Exit

they were sad and a little bewildered and anxious to show their gratitude.

In the 40 minutes we were there, people were milling all over the place, some in overalls and some in their Sunday best. They were there to pay spontaneous tribute to a man who had built Mooresville Mills from a plant of 800 employees to one of 3,000, with more than 50,000 spindles and 2,000 looms, having a capacity of more than 30 million yards of assorted fabrics a year. He measured his life achievements always by the Golden Rule, and he said his friends Tuesday night who had prospered and lived happily under such rule.

COMPLIMENT FROM CIO

The greatest compliment we ever heard paid to Johnny was from a man who wanted to be his enemy. Two years ago, when the CIO had lost a one-sided election here, two of their main organizers came by our office. Everett Jones was leaving the office center and we were standing behind it.

"Want to shake?" asked one of the organizers, holding out his hand.

"Sure," we said. "We've got nothing personal against you, but just didn't agree with your cause."

"Your paper helped," said the other organizer, "but it was statesmen who bested the opposition down there really believe in him."

"Yeah," said his partner, "he must be one helluva decent guy."

And that, coming from a CIO organizer, we'll have to buy.

Johnny Matheson's Exit

The survey showed that 11 percent of the voters in that district would not vote for a divorced man, but 84 percent said it would make no difference. And, of Catholic voters, only 14 percent felt that a divorced man, even in a congressional candidate, while 81 percent believed it should not matter.

The survey also showed that Jimmy could win the race for Congress easily. The district had just been gained by the Republican legislature in Sacramento in order to include as many Democratic votes as possible, thereby making the congressional districts easier for the Republicans to carry.

In fact, Jimmy might be able to win—if he does, however, he will probably kill his brother Franklin's chance to be governor of New York.

And, despite the political rivalry between the two boys, the last thing we'd expect to see is him wanting to do his brother's wants. Actually, they may be seriously hurt anyway. But it is almost certain that a divorce measure of this, Jimmy will bow out.