



The Nonvoting Habit Is Dangerous

By any standard precious few southerners exercise the rights of citizens in a democracy.

—V. O. Key Jr. in SOUTHERN POLITICS

WHAT Prof. Key said of Dixie in general is disgracefully true of Charlotte in particular.

Electoral apathy in yesterday's city primary assumed colossal proportions.

In a city of approximately 150,000, a few well-organized neighborhoods—voting in blocs—could have completely reversed the results.

Only by turning out in respectable numbers for the May 3 election can Charlotte erase some of the shame. And by doing so, they can also restore much-

needed vitality to the city's political scene.

The faith in the good judgment of yesterday's voting minority was touching. But this could develop into a dangerous habit.

A limited electorate does not inspire good government.

It does not make for a healthy democracy either.

The marking of a ballot—an act by which the citizen may participate in the government—while simple and unceremonious—symbolizes the entire democratic process.

That symbol was weak and flickering in Charlotte yesterday.

Religious Prejudice & Public Office

THE atmosphere of political campaigns is seldom Olympian.

The arguments often lack the highest intellectual touch.

A certain amount of lively abuse is expected. It is usually forgettable and forgiven.

But the kind of charges hurled at the Rev. Edward A. Cahill, an unsuccessful candidate for the City School Board, was a different matter. An organized attack was made on the Rev. Mr. Cahill's religion.

It so happens that the Rev. Mr. Cahill is a Unitarian minister but that makes no difference. He could be a Baptist or a Catholic, and it would make no difference. The Rev. Mr. Cahill's religious beliefs have nothing to do with his candidacy for a public office.

Appeals to prejudice on religious grounds cut deep into the tissues of community life.

They threaten us with something thoroughly repugnant—something compounded of hate, fear, suspicion and meanness.

The Rev. Mr. Cahill, in answer to the charges, said:

Making qualification for holding public office contingent upon belief in a particular theological doctrine goes against the weight of fundamental American procedure.

It is a sorry day when in free America a man's religious beliefs become a political weapon.

We thoroughly agree with these sentiments. We believe that most Charlotteans, whether they supported Mr. Cahill or not, also agree.

When Americans anywhere stoop to malignant, intolerant political campaigns, based on religious prejudice, they turn their backs on a proud tradition.

Tobacco Tax: A Reasonable Remedy

IF THE SKY over Raleigh was dark today it was because the General Assembly's fiscal problems had flown flapping home to roost.

After 110 days, the showdown on taxes was at hand.

Storm center of the revenue bill served up by special Senate and House finance subcommittees was a proposed tax on tobacco products.

If the choice is truly between this and the alternatives offered by the farm bloc, the legislator's duty is clear.

The tobacco tax should be enacted.

The decision is necessarily a difficult one. North Carolina has avoided it for years. But the time has come to face the fiscal picture realistically.

We are not unmindful of the vast importance of tobacco growing and manufacturing industries to the state's economy. However, careful studies indicate that there has been no appreciable change in the demand for tobacco products in states which, in recent years, have imposed excise taxes on those products.

At present, 41 other states and the District of Columbia have consumer tobacco taxes.

But suggested alternatives to a tobacco tax would either hit necessities or harm the state's economic growth.

This raises a fundamental question:

Where can North Carolina afford to seek new revenue?

From Mantle to Murphy, we hear that the state needs new industrial and agricultural development. By North Carolina will hardly be encouraging this development if it raises its income or corporation taxes, puts additional taxes on necessities or puts new levies on items whose taxation would have a disastrous effect on the state's economic health.

The answer then lies in taxing luxuries or "nonessentials."

This is what Gov. Luther Hodges and his advisors had in mind when they proposed a tobacco tax Jan. 22.

It will amount to very little for the individual.

It will not drive business away from the tobacco currier.

The retail prices will still compare favorably with those in other states.

It will not injure North Carolina's economic development.

The outcries from the tobacco districts were echoing across the state today, however. Pressures are severe. But it is General Assembly's duty to look over the heads of the special interests and see the state and its financial problems steadily and as a whole.

If they respond to this challenge legislators will agree that the tobacco tax is a reasonable remedy for North Carolina's worst fiscal headache in years.

'Sporting Presidents': It's Not All Work And No Play

FROM DEMOCRATIC DIGEST

IF AND when President Eisenhower decides to hazard a trip to Mars via space ship it will probably be to try out the planet's university if it has a "Burning Card" golf course.

In this vein the White House correspondents, at their recent dinner for him, spoofed the President's passion for the game, wondering what even a monarch craves willingly enough—Mr. Eisenhower is undoubtedly the most dedicated golfer to occupy the White House.

Though he spends more time on the game than any of his predecessors, several presidents have shared his preference for the sport. And all our chief executives—Democrats and Republicans, fat or thin, good or indifferent—have had extracurricular diversions of one sort or another which have helped them stand up under the heavy pressures of their office.

DISMAYING PRIVACY

When Washington had a premature touch of spring for a few days last month, White House sight-seers saw President Eisenhower and his associates in casual attire on the golf course, disarming the privacy he usually insists upon. Old timers recalled similar occasions when President Warren G. Harding practiced shots in the White House backyard—then especially manicured for a professional brand of golf with his Air-leader, Laddie Boy, running interference. Harding, who was addressed an honorary membership in the Chevy Chase Club, but turned it down. Concerning this incident the late Josephus Daniels wrote in "The Wilson Era."

"Though a golfer, he did not wish to join the most exclusive country club. What was the matter with the man? Other Presidents had even felt honored to come into the most aristocratic club and put with its members. They haven't quit talking to this day about the golf player who didn't select his associates, and appointees from his companions in the golf games."

There's a rather fanciful story to the effect that Wilson became so enamored of the sport he played in the snow, using balls

that were painted red.

The first President to play golf to any great extent was William Howard Taft. He was regarded a "good player," according to contemporary reports. In August 1900—his first year in the White House—a man bet another the President would not play the difficult Nevada Golf course outside Boston under 100. The story is that the President went around in 99. That Taft was able to play at all is remarkable, since this hulked of all our chief executives tipped the scales at 354 pounds at his inauguration.

President Ulysses S. Grant, who saw his first game of golf on a visit to England after he left the White House, is reputed to have remarked: "That looks like good exercise, but what's the little white ball for?"

"DEE-LIGHTED!"

The most athletically inclined of our Presidents was Teddy Roosevelt. In his zest for all forms of outdoor exercise, particularly big game hunting, he occupies some of the same position among presidents that Ernest Hemingway holds among writers. As Roger Butterfield in "The American Past" pleases TR's active tenancy at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.: "He bounded into the White House, played six sets of tennis in an afternoon, waded icy streams in

February, dashed off to the Rocky Mountains to shoot sheep, slapped visitors on the shoulder, howled "Dee-lighted!" and "Bully!" at a group of friends who had in fact, his own "tennis cabinet"—a group of friends who played tennis on the White House grounds with him.

President Hoover's contribution to sports history was his Medicine Ball Cabinet. He and a group of sportsmen started the day off at 7:30 a.m. with a medicine ball session on the White House lawn. The President explained he preferred this form of exercise to tennis because it required less skill but provided a brisker workout in less time. In his memoirs, Mr. Hoover recalls he went through the medicine ball routine even on March 4, 1933, a gray dreary morning and the last day of his administration.

PLAIN OLD WORKS

Republican Presidents Calvin Coolidge and Hoover had a certain difference over Mr. Hoover's special tastes in matters of recreation. Mr. Coolidge fished with his trout with plain old worms, but this was not the basis of his criticism of his successor.

President Coolidge's main pleasure according to his naval aide, Vice Adm. Wilson Brown (ret.), was taking weekend cruises on the presidential yacht, Mayflower. The cruises almost always were limited to the calm waters of the Potomac, since the President suffered miserably from seasickness. Adm. Brown surmises this may have accounted somewhat for Mr. Coolidge's lack of interest in a naval building program.

BEACHY MOVE

After he took office, President Hoover got a lot of mileage out of his announcement that as an executive he would not be commissioning the Mayflower and closing down the White House stables. This inspired ex-President Coolidge to break his silence with the tart comment he guessed the sailors and horses (which were sent to nearby Fort Myer) would still have to eat at government expense. As a matter of fact, when Hagelin Camp was built for the Navy, it was a great deal of equipment and furnishings from the White House were used there, and the camp was manned by the Navy cooks and stewards.

When President Roosevelt took office, he promptly reactivated the Mayflower. The fleet was distinguished as both a yachtman and small-boat handler. For week-end fishing in the Chesapeake he used small, converted coast guard patrol boats, the Sequoia for a time and later the Potomac.

His hunting and fishing have ranked high among presidential preferences since Washington. As President Grover Cleveland, who tipped the scales at 250 pounds, found leisurely recreation as a fisherman. He drew censure from some golf fans for playing on Memorial Day.

RACING FAN

Andy Jackson added thoroughbred racing to the White House stables and entered them at nearby tracks under the name of his nephew, Andrew Jackson Donelson.

Several of our early presidents liked to take early morning dips in the Potomac. It was John Quincy Adams' habit to rise at dawn,



"What have you got that will make the world seem better and people nicer, that can be sold, without a doctor's prescription . . . ?"

The Haunting Problem Of The Atom

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S plan for a new atomic-powered merchant ship to circle the globe on a peace mission is a prodigious coin with two vastly different sides.

As a demonstration of America's devotion to the development of peacetime uses of nuclear energy, it is an admirable idea.

But the announcement also has military significance. It indicates that U. S. plans for a nuclear Navy may be closer to reality than has been generally supposed.

The prospect is that the U. S. Navy—and perhaps the British and Soviet navies as well—will eventually be propelled by atomic power. Several developments during the past three months have bolstered this possibility.

One was the success of the submarine NAUTILUS. The actual performance is secret but naval officials have not concealed their extreme satisfaction.

The Sea Wolf, a second atomic submarine, will be launched this spring. Two more atomic subs have already been approved and three are in the

1954 budget now under consideration.

Another new twist of the Navy's proposed program for mobile sea bases as a bulwark of global offense in case of another World War. These bases would consist of several small task force spread over a considerable area—too large for a single Atom-bomb or Thor-bomb to reach tactically. These facilities would be launching bases for guided missiles and long-range aircraft. If the ships were atomic-powered, the bases could be self-sufficient for long periods of time. Nuclear reactors providing propulsion do not require refueling for many months at a time.

One unofficial report has the goal for conversion to an atomic navy set at 1975. But rapid development in the shipboard reactor field may cut the period by five years, say experts.

Clearly, the atom has come of age. The next step: Nuclear flight.

The men in the laboratory are providing all of the necessary technical controls to harness atomic energy for man's use. Now if the social scientists can provide the necessary political controls the world will be profoundly grateful.

DIXIE ACCENT AND BAD GRAMMAR

ENGLISH film makers in depicting American characters are bringing in the southern accent. In Alex Guinness's picture, *THE DETECTIVE*, a rich Texan is made to indicate his southernness by speaking idiomatically as in some sentence like, "Them sheeps is yours," as if bad grammar and a southern accent were the same.

In an account of an Illinois man caught hunting illegally in Wisconsin, it was said that the arresting game protector became suspicious because of the hunter's southern accent. Maps will have to be readjusted; hitherto it has been

Four-Cent Letters? A Reluctant Congress Will Decide

By CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY

WASHINGTON

Should the U. S. mails be sold as a hard-headed business or as a public service?

This perennial question is a corollary to the postal service's perennial deficit.

The problem of whether or not to meet this deficit will soon face Congress when it begins hearings on bills to raise additional revenue for the Post Office Department.

A bill introduced by Chairman Tom Murray (D-Tenn.) of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee would provide about \$12 million in additional postal income.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO

Most of the increase would be derived by increasing the postage of first-class letters, second-class newspapers and magazines, and third-class books and advertising circulars.

The Murray bill has the approval of the Eisenhower administration, which, since taking office in 1953, has sought a rate increase to cut the deficit and put the mails on a pay-as-you-go basis.

But others contend mail delivery is a service of the federal government and should be expected to support itself entirely. They say the postal service is a government monopoly; everyone must use it or do without.

Postal rates were last increased in 1951, but the deficit continues. In fiscal 1954, the department lost \$200 million.

Postmaster General Arthur E. Summerfield estimates the fiscal 1955 deficit will be \$313 million.

The 1955 deficit, however, would skyrocket if Congress passes a pay hike for postal workers.

In 1954, President Eisenhower vetoed a postal pay raise measure because it didn't contain provisions for increasing postal revenues to help pay for the higher wages. The administration has indicated it won't hold up a pay bill this year while awaiting a rate increase, but it expects the rate increase to follow.

Murray says a rate increase is justified, if for no other reason than to raise money to defray pay boosts.

and his committee reports it will consider any such measure until the House acts.

Twelve Republican senators have introduced a postal rate increase measure.

Postal rates are designed to produce revenue, contends the committee, therefore a rate-increase bill should originate in the House.

UNCOMFORTABLE TASK

If Murray's proposal is passed, it may mark the last time Congress wrestles with the mails' uncomfortable task of raising postal rates. The measure—in effect an administration request—includes a provision to set up an independent commission in the Post Office Department with authority to fix rates.

On the other hand, Johnston has introduced a bill to remove from the postmaster general authority he enjoys to fix parcel post rates, with the approval of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

FOUR-CENTERS

Of the \$428 million the Post Office Department hopes to get from the proposed new rates, \$277

million would result from charging 4 cents rather than 3 to mail letters. A 30 per cent rate-step boost in second-class rates would mean \$15 million in additional revenue at the end of two years.

Newspaper and magazine publishers with second-class mailing privileges contend that large increases in the government. Newspapers and magazines are not too far from many small publications out of business.

NOT WHOLE STORY

They also claim the Post Office Department's bookkeeping ignores in second-class rates. In fiscal 1954, do not tell the whole story.

The loss, they say, includes costs of wrapping and setting second-class mail.

Publishers contend they wrap and sort their own mail, at no cost to the government. Newspapers and magazines are not too far from many small publications out of business.

The 1951 increase boosted second-class rates by 30 per cent over a three-year period.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON

THE American public may not know it, but the power pendulum is swinging over toward Soviet Russia as far as air strength is concerned.

Last May Day the Russians flew a giant jet bomber the size of a B-36 over Moscow. It was their first and only long-range jet bomber known as Type 37.

This May Day the Russians will have 15 of these type 37 giant jets. In contrast, we had two B-52 jet bombers of the same size a year ago. Today we have only three. In other words, the Russians are outproducing us 14 to one!

Phony Democrat

While House forman Sherman Adams has come up with a counterfeit Democrat to replace Securities and Exchange Commissioner Paul Rosen, who made the mistake in Adams' eyes of opposing the bitterly controversial Dixoy-Yates contract.

By law, Rosen's post must go to a Democrat. The SEC is required to have two Democrats and three Republicans—while the G.O.P. is in power.

However, Adams has picked a syn-

Russians Gaining In Air Power Race

etic Democrat, Connecticut's ex-Congressman Johnny McGuire, who made a deal to support G.O. Governor John Lodge for re-election. McGuire's reward was to be a juicy job in Lodge's administration.

Unhappily for McGuire, however, Democratic Senator Cliff Burdick had lodged for the governorship. And McGuire became a lobbyist in Washington. He represents France, Spain and the big natural gas interests which are trying to overrule the Supreme Court and prevent price regulation by the Power Commission.

An independent quasi-judicial agency, the SEC is no more supposed to be run by the White House than is the Supreme Court. Yet Sherman Adams put pressure on the commissioners to approve the Dixoy-Yates contract, awarded without competitive bid to a private power combine to supply power for Oak Ridge, Tenn., for the atomic bomb.

However, Commissioner Rosen denied the White House and, for voting his convictions, will lose his job.

White Collar Workers

Sen. Jim Murray of Montana has been conducting some little-publicized but im-

portant hearings on behalf of the "forgotten workers" of American business—the great underpaid, overworked army of clerks who wait on in chain stores and other retail establishments.

Senator Murray's bill not only would bring retail employees under the protection of the Fair Labor Standards Act from the first time they are hired to the FLS minimum wage for all workers to \$1.25 an hour. It would also lower the maximum net week to 35 hours.

The Eisenhower administration favors the promise of 90 cents an hour, with no change in the 40-hour week.

Corner Grocery Protected

To protect the small corner grocery, the Murray bill would apply only to retail employees who have five or more stores, or who do a gross business of more than \$500,000 a year. The provision is aimed at big chain and department stores, which have always been immune from the government's wage and hour standards.

James Suftridge, secretary-treasurer of the AFL Retail Clerks Union, testified at Senate hearings that big retail estab-