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NEWS LETTER

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THE NEW DAY IN NORTH CAROLINA

EXCESSIVE RURALISM

North Carolina has long been an agricultural civilization both in population and in wealth production. An overwhelming majority of her producers of primary wealth live in the countryside, and the bulk of her new wealth from year to year has been farm wealth. The aggregate of this wealth has grown into enormous proportions. In 1919 it was seven hundred and fifty million dollars, counting crops, livestock, and livestock products; it was more than a half billion dollars in 1920, or something like three times the total of ten years ago. In agriculture the producing unit is the farm family, and our farm families are scattered throughout the vast open spaces of North Carolina, not in farm communities but in solitary dwellings, only seven to the square mile the state over, fewer than four to the square mile in ten counties, and fewer than seventeen in our most populous county. They were settled in social insulation in earlier times, and so they remain to this good day. Agricultural production is small-scale production by small producing groups that are or may be self-sufficing, existence necessities considered. The inward urge to mass organization for business or social or civic advantage is therefore feeble, and the result has been poor country roads, poor country schools and excessive illiteracy, inadequate attention by country people to health and sanitation, an inadequate sense of civic as well as social responsibility in local areas, honest but inefficient and wasteful county government as a rule and, all in all, small-scale thinking about the big-scale concerns of the commonwealth. The mass-mind of North Carolina—what we call the genius of our people—must be spelled at in abc terms of this sort, and he knows little of the state who knows the story of political events apart from radical conditions and causes like these, for out of them our civic structures have grown.

The glory of North Carolina lies in the fact that it has always been a land of free democracy—unpurchasable and unroutable, unafraid and unabashed. We have always been what Emerson celebrated—free, untrifled American citizens. But also it is a land of overweening individualism, and imperious localism. It has always been so and inevitably so, because our civilization has been rooted in ruralism. Our fish and game laws perfectly illustrate this fundamental fact. Think of fourteen different deer seasons in nine contiguous counties, forty different quail seasons in the state at large, and even a larger number of local laws in our fish and oyster areas. And so it has always been in every field of our civic life. The excessive private-local public laws of the state, perfectly express the dominant private-local mindedness of North Carolina. The rural mind is private and local—almost inescapably so. And the culture of the countryman has long been the mainspring and the measure of our civilization. As the countryman thinketh in his heart, so are we in North Carolina—or so it long has been. Both the best and the worst of us lies in this fundamental fact.

A New Day in Carolina

But there is a new day in Carolina. The transformation has been wrought in quite unconscious response to the elemental urges of life and livelihood during the last few years—mainly the last five years. Agriculture has given place to manufacture as the primary interest of North Carolina. A machine-made civilization is conditioning and supplanting the old-time homespun, hand-made civilization of the state. The day of great cities is at hand, and the fullness of their greatness in the coming years does not yet appear. Out of fractional we have moved into integral suffrage and sovereignty. Out of private-mindedness we are moving into civic and social-mindedness; out of pinching poverty into abundant wealth; out of small-scale into big-scale thinking about the vital matters of a noble civilization.

The new day in North Carolina is a day of industrial establishments and enterprises, a day of swiftly growing cities, a day of abounding wealth, a day of increasing willingness to convert our wealth into commonwealth culture and character, and a day of undivided civic privilege, undivided social wholeness, and undivided sovereign integrity.

A Day of Industrialism

The day of industrial supremacy is at hand in North Carolina. We lead the South in the number of industrial enterprises, in the number of wage earners employed, in the variety and value of our industrial output. And we are distinguished among the states of the Union by a large number of small enterprises rather than a small number of large enterprises. Which means that so far we have escaped the concentration of wealth that has always meant in every land and country progress and poverty, magnificence and misery side by side. The remarkable diffu-

sion of wealth is a fundamental fact in North Carolina. None of us are very rich as yet, but few of us are very poor. We have more cotton mills and more spindles, we consume more raw cotton and produce a greater volume and variety of cotton textiles, than any other state in the South. In cotton manufacture, we doff our hats to Massachusetts alone, remembering the while that her almshouse and outside paupers outnumber ours five to one. We have right around 600 cotton mills—nearly 100 in a single county. We are expanding our textile industry more rapidly than any other southern state. Last year we built thirty-one new mills and brought into operation more than a half million new spindles. Three-fourths of the new spindles and new looms in the South last year were set going in North Carolina alone. Not only does North Carolina lead the industrial South, but factory communities in North Carolina at last produce greater wealth than all other occupational groups combined.

The rise of manufacture into undisputed primacy is the startling story of a brief five-year period in our history. Agriculture no longer leads in North Carolina; manufacture leads for the first time in the history of the state. It means that North Carolina has moved up from small-scale farm production on domestic levels into big-scale factory production upon commercial levels. The volume of wealth created by our factories has been doubled and trebled and quadrupled in quantity since 1914, and its value has been increased even more amazingly. The creation of industrial values shows nearly a sixfold increase during the last five years, against a three fold increase in the value of our agricultural output during the last ten years.

A Day of Great Cities

Developing industries necessarily mean rapidly developing cities. Our town and city dwellers ten years ago were barely more than a half million all told. Today they number some eight hundred thousand souls. The increase has been around sixty percent in ten years. Until recently North Carolina has been distinguished as a state of small towns and cities; and we still have sixty-eight counties in the state containing no town of as many as five hundred families. Twenty years ago we had only twenty-seven towns of twenty-five hundred inhabitants or more; today we have fifty-seven such towns, and two of them are near the fifty thousand mark. It is a day of great cities founded on great industrial enterprises; and the cities of this state with superior geographic, economic, and residential advantages will grow so large during the next quarter-century that in the coming years we shall many-a-time rub our eyes in amazement. I venture nothing in venturing this prophecy.

North Carolina is at last moving into the flood tide of modern industrialism—belatedly to be sure, but with marvelous speed since the early eighties. We have long been rural, but ten years ago we were being urbanized more rapidly than thirty-six other states of the Union, and the cityward drift has been immensely accelerated of late by the expulsive power of country life on the one hand and the attractive power of industrial centers on the other.

The cityward drift of country people creates a host of new problems economic, social, and civic. Cities are everywhere human aggregations; what they everywhere lack is social integration—on a territorial basis, which is democracy, and not on an occupational basis, which is sovietism. The forces that unite men must somehow become stronger than the forces that divide. The crowds in great cities look like nothing so much as a lot of crabs in the bottom of a bucket, each crawling over all the rest trying to get on top. It is a sorry spectacle. It keeps a body wondering whether or not an enduring civilization can be fashioned in this wise.

The cityward drift spells the doom of drowsy little towns lacking civic pride and enterprise sufficient to develop superior residential advantages. When country people move they go with a hop-skip-and-jump over dull little towns into census-size cities—in this and every other state. As a result, ninety-three of our little towns dwindled in population during the last ten years, and forty more faded from the map. The lesson the 1920 census reads to small-town capitalists who own building lots, enjoy rent, revenues, own stores, and operate banks is, "Make your home town the best place on earth to live in, develop local manufactures set in garden cities, or move in self-defense into progressive centers, or reconcile yourselves to stagnant community life with all its menaces to family integrity and business opportunity." If the 414 little country towns of North Carolina can be brought into right relationships with the surrounding trade areas—as for instance in Garnett, Kansas—they will not only save themselves, but also the country regions round about. The small-town approach to country life problems is

THE GOVERNOR'S PROGRAM FOR BOND ISSUES

I am not unmindful of the solemn responsibility of advising the expenditure of the vast amount which the program I have suggested requires, but the things mentioned ought to be done. Sound business principles require that they should be done speedily and without delay. We cannot progress in our spiritual, intellectual, or material development unless they are done. They will be done, either generously and in a manner to give us as a state the full benefit of doing them, or they will be done by patch work and over a period of years, and in such manner as will largely dissipate the benefit to the state and at greater cost in the long run.

The entire program which I have suggested will require great sums of money, but in our ability to find the money we are one of the most fortunate states in the republic. The public indebtedness of our state is trifling when compared to that of most of the states. If we credit our state's indebtedness with the value of our railroad stocks, it would be almost wiped out.

North Carolina has heretofore created practically no public debt for future generations to pay, and we would, if this program is carried out, transmit to those who come after us a heritage nobler by far with the indebtedness than it would be without it.

The necessary improvement at our institutions for the care of the unfortunate, the large expenditure required to place our university and colleges for higher learning in a position adequate to meet the demands upon them, and for the construction of the state highway system of roads ought to be met by a sale of the state's bonds, and an increase of its public indebtedness.

a hopeful approach, if only country bankers, country merchants and country ministers can be brought to realize it.

But also the cityward drift means that the long neglected problems of the open country must now be attacked with sympathetic intelligence, and by the only people on earth who can solve these problems—namely, the country people themselves. Else the economic and social ills of sparse populations, unrestrained individualism, and social aloofness will progressively destroy our country civilization—as surely in this state as in the great industrial areas of the North and East.

The country civilization of Carolina can be saved if the culture of the farmer can be rightly related to the farmer's agriculture; if his home and children can be set distinctly above his fields and farm animals and barns and bank balances; if the eighteen hundred thousand open country dwellers of the state can come to a keen realization of country-life deficiencies and develop mass organization for community advantages. But in the main it is the job of the country people themselves, and so far their attention has been absorbed by the hazards of farming as a business and by business organization for economic advantage. Country people have given scant attention to the social problems of the countryside; they only dimly realize that country homes, country schools, country churches, and county governments must function on far higher levels if the country end of our civilization is to be a rich asset in commonwealth development in the days at hand and ahead. To this end there is need for a Country Life Association in North Carolina—an association of country people related to the State Social Work Conference on the one hand and the American Country Life Association on the other. The State College of Agriculture and Engineering could organize and lead such a movement with clear chances of success.

A Day of Abundant Wealth

The new day in Carolina is a day of abundant wealth, town and country, farm and factory. We have grown rich during the last five years and apparently we are innocently unaware of it. The state has at last moved definitely and finally out of a long period of pinching poverty into overflowing wealth—out of two and a half centuries of deficit-economy into a new era of surplus-economy; and what we need to learn is to reckon with present problems and future necessities in terms of wealth instead of penury. Since 1915 our farms and factories, forests and fisheries, mines and quarries, have been creating brand new wealth at an average rate of a billion dollars a year—all told, five billions of brand new wealth within this brief period of time. And the increases have not been in values alone, but in quantities as well—in larger crops of cotton, tobacco, and corn;

in the doubled and quadrupled output of our cotton mills, tobacco factories and furniture establishments, in immensely increased trade activities, bank resources, and bank account savings; in material good things in multiplied abundance in and around our town and country homes. We have two hundred and fifty million dollars safely laid away in liberty bonds, war stamps, and bank account savings, and we are drawing an interest income of ten millions a year from these investments alone. There has never before been anything like this state of affairs in the entire history of the state. True, we shall have two hundred and forty millions less of farm money this year, and it is a cruel calamity for merchants and bankers as well as farmers; but it is childish to conclude therefore that the state is facing bankruptcy, and it will be fatal to sacrifice birthrights for potage in the famine-fashion of Esau. The fundamental fact is five billions of gain against two hundred and forty millions of loss. The people of this state are still solvent by a safe margin of many billions. We are still rich enough to spend one hundred and fifty-seven million dollars a year for manufactured tobacco, automobiles and automobile parts, carpets and superfine clothing, and candy.

What the people of this state spent last year for state support, church support, and college education, was forty-three thousand dollars a day. What we spent for motor cars, manufactured tobacco, rich apparel, and candy—these four luxuries and comforts alone—was four hundred and thirty-two thousand dollars a day.

It is plainer than print that we have money in abundance in North Carolina to spend for anything we really want, and if we do not spend money abundantly upon commonwealth enterprises, church causes, and college education, it simply means that in our heart of hearts we do not believe in church causes, commonwealth enterprises, and college education. If we will not invest liberally in public schools, public health, public highways and public welfare, it simply means that in our heart of hearts we do not believe in public schools, public health, public highways, and public welfare. Debates upon commonwealth investments can no longer turn upon the poverty of the people of North Carolina—not when we are rich enough to pay one hundred and sixty-three millions of taxes into the federal treasury in a single year—not when we are rich enough to spend one hundred and fifty-seven millions a year on tobacco products, motor cars, luxurious clothing, and sweetmeats alone.

People who spend fifty millions a year on manufactured tobacco and twelve millions on public schools, forty-seven millions on motor cars and six millions on churches, thirty-five millions on fine apparel and seven millions on state enterprises, twenty-five millions on confectons and two and a half millions on colleges, may be poverty-stricken in spirit, but they are not poverty-stricken in purse. And if we will not mend these shameful ratios somewhat we stand convicted of wanton self-indulgence and graceless unconcern about the vital things of a noble civilization.

Our leaders need not hesitate to lead. The highway of civilization is strewn thick with the wrecks of parties, but it is yet to be recorded that any party was ever wrecked on a program of progress in education. Party supremacy in North Carolina is and forever ought to be related to statesmanship in education, health, and highways. That party will live longest that dares most for the vital causes of the commonwealth.

A Day of Public Spirit

North Carolina is moving at last out of private-mindedness into civic and social-mindedness. The new day is a day of great thinking about the great concerns of the state, and therein lies the immense significance of the inaugural address of our new Governor. We are at last thinking about education, health, and highways in terms of millions instead of paltry thousands. We have been willing to double our investment in public school properties during the last six years. And our public school fund for support rose from six to twelve millions in a single year. In thirty-five years we have moved up from two thousand to three hundred and sixty thousand dollars a year for public health work. And in expenditures, activities, and values, North Carolina ranks among the first ten states of the Union in public health affairs. During the last six years, forty-one laws of social import have gone on our statute books. It is a new kind of legislation in North Carolina, and during the last few years we have moved forward in social legislation faster than any other state in the South. It has been epoch-making legislation, and it ushers in a great new era in North Carolina. Our state public welfare board, our county welfare superintendents, our juvenile courts and probation officers in every county and in every city with ten thousand inhabitants or more, our county school supervisors, our rural township incorporation law, our state commission charged with rural organization and recreation, the social agencies of the state and the public welfare courses of our state institutions, have all together put us distinctly in the lead in the South. North

Carolina is no longer a valley of humiliation located between two mountains of conceit, as we have been accustomed to confess to Virginians and South Carolinians; it has suddenly become the Valley of Decision that the Prophet Joel saw in his dream. But with Virginia lying on the north and South Carolina lying on the south, it has been difficult to get the truth about North Carolina, is the way a wag puts it.

Madam How and Lady Why

But space forbids any discussion of certain large sections of my subject, I therefore hurry on to say in conclusion that the mothers, wives, and daughters of the state at last stand side by side with fathers, husbands, and sons in suffrage rights, civic privilege, and sovereign integrity.

Whatever else it may mean, it means a new kind of attention to civic housekeeping in North Carolina, and, approve it or not the stupidest politician among us is already sensitively aware that hereafter he must reckon with Madam How and Lady Why.

Now, civic housekeeping is one thing and civic housebuilding is another. The one has been the job of men during the long centuries; the other is woman's job—her main job in her new estate. Our civic structures, material and institutional, have been reared by men. Our capitols and our courthouses and city halls, our poorhouses and jails have been built and officered and for the most part filled by men. Our state and national constitutions, our statute laws and municipal ordinances, our court principles, processes, and procedures, have been fashioned by men—primarily to protect property and incidentally or accidentally to safeguard life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and men are great housebuilders but poor housekeepers—so because they lack the housekeeping instincts. Our civic structures have been magnificent to look upon without, but within they have been bare and ill-furnished or unfurnished. Oftentimes they have been offensive to physical senses and moral sensibilities alike and uncomfortable or unsafe for human habitation.

Perhaps our civic structures—that is to say, our social institutions, do not need to be rebuilt from ridgepole to cornerstone, but they do need to be swept and garnished from garret to cellar, to say nothing of deodorizing and disinfecting; they need to be furnished and outfitted throughout and reddeed up daily for society to inhabit in comfort and safety. They need and have long needed the civic housekeeping that is necessary to an improved social order. And if woman can only conceive her particular task in large ways human welfare problems will speedily come to be the largest concern of legislatures, congresses, and courts alike. The rapid multiplication of homes and home owners, the safeguarding of home life and community life, constructive wholesome recreation, the renovation of jails and county homes and chain-gang camps, liberal investments in community and commonwealth progress and prosperity, adequate care of defective, dependent, neglected and wayward boys and girls, child-placing and mothers' pensions, county group hospitals, regional clinics and dispensaries, law and order leagues and so on and on—these are some of the tasks of civic housekeeping that only within very recent years have challenged the attention of our legislators and that are never likely to receive anything like adequate attention until our civic housekeepers get busy at their tasks. Not the filling of offices but the fashioning of offices fit to be filled and the choosing of choice spirits fit to fill them, is the largest detail and the largest order in civic housekeeping.

I have the faith to believe that the part women will play in the new day in Carolina will make a most significant chapter in the history of the state. It is woman's nature, you know, to see the things that ought to be done and straightway to set about doing them whether they can be done or not; to see the Palace Beautiful at the top of the Hill Difficult and not to see the lions in the way. You may remember that it was Christian, not Christiana, that saw the lions ahead, and that Timorous and Mistrust, the calamity-howlers of The Pilgrim's Progress, were men, not women. This keen look into the essential nature of woman is but one of the many flashes of genius that place Bunyan alongside Milton and made these two, in Macaulay's opinion, the foremost figures of the seventeenth century.

I am, therefore, venturing the prophecy that what North Carolina vitally needs she at last stands a chance of receiving in this new day of our history. I close in the faith and in the words of Henry Timrod—
"Ho! woodsmen of the mountain side!
Ho! dwellers in the vales!
Ho! ye that by the chafing tide
Have roughened in the gales!
Oh! could you like your women feel,
And in their spirit march,
A day might see your lines of steel
Beneath the victor's arch!"

E. C. Branson, Kenan Professor of Rural Social Science, University of North Carolina, Presidential address, State Social Work Conference, Raleigh, January 25.