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"Our Bob's" Senate Record

SENATOR BOB REYNOLDS' constituency is becoming more and more perplexed and not a little riled over what seems to have become a habit with him—namely, voting against President Roosevelt in vital crises.

First it was the bonus issue; but there was some reasonable explanation for "Our Bob's" vote then, for he stood committed to cash payment of the bonus, and the first law of practical politics is to stick to one's campaign promises. When the World Court issue developed the junior North Carolina senator again was found in opposition to the administration. Forgetful of the principles of his party and the leadership of such of its stalwarts as the immortal Woodrow Wilson, he climbed aboard the isolationist bandwagon, made a spectacle of his own provincialism with senate tirades which would insult the intelligence of a high school debating society, and cast his vote with the ilk of Cabot. But, perhaps, he could claim some justification for his action in this respect. Anyway the folks back home were inclined to forget and forgive Bob's variance from the administration on the bonus and the World Court issues, notwithstanding their strong faith in the guiding hand of Franklin Roosevelt.

But when Bob bolted from the administration ranks in the senate last week to vote for the prevailing wage amendment to the President's work relief bill, an amendment which stands fair to kill the whole four-billion dollar program of public improvements, then North Carolinians sat up in amazement. Didn't Reynolds know that sentiment in this state was overwhelmingly in favor of backing up President Roosevelt's recovery program, especially in this instance? Could it be that he did not realize that even if the four-billion dollar relief bill was adopted, the senate amendment would work untold damage both to North Carolina industry and agriculture. How could thousands of private employers, including many farmers, afford to pay the insupportably high wages which inevitably would result? Couldn't he see that such a situation as would result from a fictitious wage scale, which most likely would be dictated by the American Federation of Labor, would result in greater unemployment in the long run? If Mr. Reynolds represented an area where organized labor predominated, where living costs were considerably higher, his attitude would be more readily understandable. Had he been out-and-out opposed to the President's work relief program, which is the best alternative yet offered to a forthright dole, his vote might have been more consistent. As it is, it appears that his strongest point of consistency is similar to that of Huey Long's—opposition to the administration at crucial times.

All Money Is Good Money

WE have just discovered that it is now legal to pay a bill of \$100 with ten thousand pennies. We haven't yet discovered where to get the ten thousand pennies, but it is cheerful to know that if we had them we could use them to pay for anything that costs \$100, if we knew of anything priced at \$100 that we were willing to spend ten thousand pennies for.

David Lawrence pointed out the other day something that most folk had overlooked in the so-called "Thomas Amendment," enacted in April, 1933, which gave the President authority to cut the gold content of the dollar and to remonetize silver. That is a clause which says that "all coins and currencies" shall be legal tender for all debts, public and private. It used to be that you couldn't compel a man to take more than 25 cents in pennies, nor more than \$10 in silver.

Now all that is changed. If the Government offers us a million dollars all in dimes we'd be obliged to take it. Likewise, we can think of circumstances under which it might be a real pleasure to pay off, say, a mortgage on the old home or the last instalment on that last year's car, all in nickels, and put the other fellow to the trouble of counting them.

The only fault we can find with the Thomas Amendment is that it didn't tell us how to get the pennies and dimes.

THROUGH CAPITAL KEYHOLES

BY BESS HINTON SILVER

UPS AND DOWNS—

The McDonald-Lumpkin anti sales tax plan to tax corporations more, tax dividends from all corporation stocks and levy a tax of from \$5 to \$900 on all individual incomes above \$1,000 per year, rises and falls in popularity like a thermometer. It didn't have much visible support in the early days of the present legislature, then its stock rose as the two sponsors explained its workings and estimated its revenue yield. It took a drop when the lobbyists had their day in court before the finance committee. But merchants came to the rescue and boosted the proposals with their endorsement. It hasn't been adopted yet and you can find plenty of prognosticators that say it will not become law. On the other hand, the McDonald-Lumpkin bloc is still hopeful and working industriously.

SPEAKER—

The grapevine reports renewed rumors that Representative R. Gregg Cherry, of Gaston, chairman of the house finance committee, will be a candidate for speaker next session. Everybody agrees that he is doing his best to make a record for speed on the money bill but sales tax opponents feel that the matter of a month or so is not so important if they can get out from under the tax for the next two years. They are making it tough for Mr. Cherry's political aspirations and he shows no little irritation in committee at times. That isn't calculated to aid his chances in legislative politics.

WORRIED—

Senator W. P. Horton, of Chatham, is worried about the state forcing parents to send their children to school in busses that grand juries say are unsafe and then refusing to pay expenses in cases of death or injury. He has introduced a bill to require the state to pay up to \$600 damages in school bus accidents. From all indications at present his bill will pass but it may be amended to cover only actual expenses and with maximum or minimum amounts not mentioned.

MUD-HOLES—

It looks like you boys and girls living off the concrete may get your roads and bridges repaired pretty soon. The general assembly has made a special immediate appropriation of \$3,000,000 for that purpose. A lot of folks are still hanging around the capitol hoping to get a slice of your gasoline tax for this, that and the other and nothing but a stiff fight and constant vigil is going to prevent a raid on highway funds before the legislature adjourns. The highway department could do better if it didn't have to devote so much time dealing with propaganda dished out by those who would divert road taxes.

BIG SCRAP—

The public school fight will be just half over when the biennial appropriation is agreed upon. The school machinery bill, which is the rules and regulations of the state system, must be drafted and it is already apparent from many individual bills introduced that considerable liberalization of the present law is going to be demanded. The school forces want the question of local supplements arranged differently from the present law, which requires local elections. So far these elections have been so well for the school folks.

TRANSPORTATION—

Something else that may happen to your gas tax has been mentioned more than once in the legislature. There appears to be some sentiment for placing transportation of school children on the back of the state highway and public works division. Highway officials say this would be expensive and would just about wreck the organization they have left under the hand-to-mouth appropriation of their own money by the last general assembly.

CHEAPER BOOKS—

The bill to establish a state system of renting public school books at nominal rates has considerable support in the general assembly and Governor Ehringhaus has wished it Godspeed, but it will have its troubles before it ever becomes

law. Representatives of book publishing houses, which would stand to lose business by a rental system, are in Raleigh for some purpose. Astute observers say they are opposed to the book rental bill. You might inquire of the lobbyists their business in the Capital City. They have been very successful in past sessions.

ANTI-SALES TAX—

The bloc headed by Representative Ralph McDonald, of Forsyth, and Representative Lumpkin, of Franklin, will not cease its fight on the general sales tax until the biennial revenue bill becomes law. They plan to carry their fight to the floor of house and senate where they have no little strength. Leaders of the Ehringhaus administration still avow the sales tax is necessary to properly support schools and other essential state services and predict it will be re-enacted.

LIQUOR—

Opinion among many legislative leaders is that legal liquor has little chance of approval by the present general assembly. Some measure calling a referendum on the subject may get by but the odds at present are against even that sort of a bill. Too many members come from counties that voted overwhelmingly dry in the repeal election of 1933 and the lawmakers still interpret that, in most cases, as a dry mandate. Those entertaining future political aspirations are not so hot for kicking mandates over board.

CREDIT—

When the first hearings on increasing the price of tobacco were held in Washington back in 1933 Governor Ehringhaus, Congressman Warren, Hancock and the late Edward W. Pou were present with farmers, warehousemen, and federal officials. Since that time the tobacco program has been a practical political proposition and recent hearings have been attended almost one hundred per cent by the North Carolina delegation in congress. The old band-wagon ride, you know.

DIVIDENDS—

One thing the McDonald-Lumpkin bloc has proposed is catching favor with the general assembly and has wide popular appeal. It would put dividends from domestic corporations in the same class with dividends of foreign corporations and tax them at six per cent straight. That may not pass but it is probable that domestic dividends may be put in the same pot with all other income and taxed at the graduated income tax rate with the same exemptions allowed. A big fight is being waged against the proposal but the legislature hasn't adjourned yet.

GOVERNOR—

As the general assembly has waxed warm speculation on probable candidates for governor on the Democratic ticket next spring has waned. It is generally accepted in Raleigh, however, that Shelby's silver-tongued Clyde R. Hoey and Lieutenant Governor Graham will make the race. Congressman R. L. Doughton is a more uncertain quantity and some politicians predict that former Lieutenant Governor R. T. Fountain will change his mind and not run against Senator J. W. Bailey. Mr. Fountain recently said he intends to do that little thing. Governor Ehringhaus is still being urged to oppose Senator Bailey but answers all questions with the statement that he is now busy trying to be a good governor.

Letter-Press

N. C. GETS RAW DEAL FROM NEW DEAL

Editor, Franklin Press:—
I see in this week's Press an account of the reaction of the County Commissioners of Macon and the Board of Aldermen of Franklin to the request of the State Planning Board for a program of public works for the county to be financed from the proposed four billion dollars federal appropriation for relief. While this appropriation is still encountering opposition in Congress which may wreck it in whole or in part, the probability seems that some amount will be allotted by congress to the President for distribution among the states. If and when this is done, North Carolina certainly should come in for a substantial portion of the fund.

There are considerations both for

and against the Government's further distribution of funds of the treasury amongst the states for relief plans, but there can be no debate, in case this proposal is carried out, that North Carolina is entitled to stand at or near the top in the amount to be distributed per capita among the states. Up to this time, in appropriations for federal relief she has been given a "raw deal," as the following figures will show:

In 1934, the grand total of federal taxes paid by North Carolina was \$260,405,991.00, being second only to New York with \$568,022,279.00. The population of New York is 12,852,000 and of North Carolina, 3,244,000. North Carolina, paying practically one-half the amount of New York in federal taxes, and with only one-fourth of its population, considerably out-pays the Empire State per capita by the ratio of \$80.27 to \$43.88, almost two to one. In fact, the per capita federal tax of North Carolina (\$80.27) leads every other state, the next nearest being Delaware with a grand total of \$18,018,630.00 and a per capita rate of \$75.97. At the other end of the list is Mississippi with a per capita tax of \$1.13, Arkansas with \$1.52, and South Dakota, \$1.90.

When we examine the records as to where these federal taxes go, we find that the situation is practically reversed. The heavy paying states are down at the foot of the list as beneficiaries. Including allotments up to July 31, 1934, for F. C. A. (Farm Credit Administration), to October 1, 1934 for building financed by the U. S. Treasury, to August 31, 1934, for A. A. A. (Agriculture Adjustment Administration), to September 30, 1934, for F. E. R. A. (Federal Emergency Relief Administration), to October 12, 1934, for H. O. L. C. (Home Owners Loan Corporation), to August 1, 1934, for C. C. C. (Civilian Conservation Camps), and to August 1, 1934, for P. W. A. (Public Works Administration), there had been distributed on these dates by the various agencies to the inhabitants of South Dakota \$74.93 for every dollar of federal tax paid by that state. North Carolina had received 43 cents for each dollar paid in taxes, which placed it at the bottom of all the 48 states as beneficiaries of federal relief. The nearest state to it is Delaware with 61 cents received to the dollar tax paid. You will notice that Delaware stood next to North Carolina as the second highest state in tax paid per capita. These two states with Virginia, which received 79 cents back from each dollar tax paid are by a large margin below any other state in proportion of federal relief received to federal taxes paid. On the other end of the list, standing next to South Dakota, is North Dakota which received \$68.97 from the Government for every dollar paid to it in taxes, and next to it New Mexico with \$44.90 and Idaho with \$44.31 received to every dollar paid.

There may or may not have entered an element of politics in these appropriations, but the outstanding fact these figures show is that North Carolina has been left far behind in the distribution of funds by the "alphabet" agencies. The state is justified in bringing all the pressure she can on the Federal Administration for a just allotment in further relief, whether through the proposed further grant to the President or through the agencies already established. North Carolina taxes have been used to finance strikes in Rhode Island, Georgia and Massachusetts, to build model villages in West Virginia, tenements in Atlanta and dams in Tennessee. It is time more consideration be paid to the source of these taxes.

Yours very truly,
T. B. HIGDON.

Atlanta, Ga.
February 25, 1935

ANCIENT NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers can be traced back to antiquity. The Romans and Chinese had issues similar to our modern newspapers. The most noted in Rome was the Acta Diurna. The Peiping Gazette was published from 714 to 741. The earliest newspaper in the United States was Public Occurrences issued in the year 1690 in the form of a small quarto sheet. The first daily in the United States was the Pennsylvania Packet and General Advertiser, published at Philadelphia, September, 1784.