

What Does It Mean?

What is the meaning, and what will be the effects, of the events that transpired at the Swain County courthouse a week ago today?

The most obvious effect, of course, is that this district has a new Democratic nominee for Congress. How strong a candidate Mr. David M. Hall will prove and, if he is elected, how good a congressman, remain to be seen. To even the most skeptical, though, he has at least two things in his favor: No man could achieve what he has, in the face of a crippling disability, unless he were a fighter. And at 40, he is young enough—if the voters think he is good enough—to stay in Congress a long time, and thus gain the influence seniority gives in that body.

The second, and almost equally obvious conclusion, is that a long-dominant political organization, already discredited by its own actions, now has been soundly thrashed. Thus its aura of invincibility—an aura that gave great weight to its promises of reward and threats of punishment—has been destroyed.

The mountain people are long-suffering, but once they are aroused, they fight hard. And possibly more significant than either the new nominee or the defeat of the Buncombe organization is the vivid demonstration to the people of the six counties west of the Balsam Mountains of what they can do, once they unite. This area is a unit. Its people are homogeneous; it has common traditions of independence, courage, determination, and good neighborliness. And, being relatively unspoiled, it has almost limitless possibilities. The Bryson City meeting illustrates what we could accomplish, if we worked together along economic, social, and cultural lines as we did last week, politically.

WHAT ABOUT ROLLMAN?

No honest discussion of what has happened can ignore Mr. Heinz W. Rollman. He cannot be ignored, because he got nearly 19,000 votes. Yet he was ignored in Bryson City.

That is significant, it seems to us, not because of its effect on Mr. Rollman's personal political fortunes; but because, when the committee ignored him, it also ignored nearly 40 per cent of those who cast ballots in the primary.

It can be argued, of course, that, while Mr. Rollman got nearly 40 per cent of the vote, a man of a totally different political complexion got a majority; thus the committee was merely carrying out the wishes of the majority in selecting someone other than Mr. Rollman.

That perhaps is a valid argument. But, frankly, we doubt if it was such philosophical reflections that influenced the committee. The evidence is they wanted none of Rollman; that they might, even, have accepted an Asheville-dictated candidate—provided he was "regular"—with better grace.

That, it seems to us, points to a serious crack in the Democratic party's armor: Nearly 40 per cent of the Democratic voters are unrepresented in the councils of the party.

One thing more about Mr. Rollman. If every criticism that has been made of him is 100 per cent true, it remains a fact he has done this region and the Democratic party a great service by restoring to the political vocabulary such almost forgotten terms as "decency", "honesty", "fairness", and "good sportsmanship".

CONCEPTS CONFLICT

Two conflicting concepts met at Bryson City. Most of those who set up our government had scant faith in the people. They carefully provided that the people—and the franchise was narrowed to a relative few—should select representatives, every four years, who, in their greater wisdom, would elect a President. It also was provided that members of the important U. S. Senate should be elected not by the people, but by the wiser heads of the state legislatures. A primary election was undreamed of.

Today we have moved far toward democracy. And in doing so, we have been inclined to sweep away as "undemocratic" the regulations that seek to guard minorities from the majority that can sometimes be so tyrannical.

The rule that, when a congressional executive committee meets to replace a nominee who has died or resigned, a little county like Clay shall have an equal vote with a big one like Buncombe, is an example.

We'd do well to take note of how that apparently unfair arrangement protected the minority that lies west of the Balsams. In the 150 years since this region was settled, it never has had a member of Congress. Without this regulation, it probably would have been another 150 years before it got one.

We aren't suggesting a retreat by democratic government. If a primary is a good thing in May, it would be a good thing in August or September, and we think a committee of 20 should have neither the power nor the responsibility of picking a nomi-



Probably no point in Western North Carolina is more photographed than Macon County's Bridal Veil Falls. Above is an unusual shot of the waterfall over a highway.

nee for Congress—except on the very eve of a general election. We think, in a case like this, the law should provide for another primary to pick the nominee.

But we do think, in this and other areas, it's important to hold on to these rules that safeguard minority rights.

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As the curtain goes down on this drama, there stands in the wings a tragic figure, the man whose break-down in health precipitated such heated controversy.

In all the discussion, this newspaper has directed no criticism at Rep. George A. Shuford, personally. It has no word of criticism now. Instead, it goes along with a recent comment of the Greensboro Daily News, that now that Mr. Shuford has resigned, he "is entitled to rest and recover in peace".

Friendly Franklin

(Asheville Citizen)

A New Yorker, entering Franklin by car recently, was stopped by citizens, given a cordial handshake and was handed a special "Welcome to Franklin" packet.

It contained gift certificates valued at some \$25 and Chamber of Commerce literature.

The visitor was astonished. He said:

"I'll tell you this much. I've never had anything like this happen to me before. I've heard you Southerners were friendly, but this beats all."

Maybe it does beat all. Franklin hopes it does.

It's a phase of that fine community's "mountain friendship" project that is sponsored by the merchants with an assist from the Chamber of Commerce. The official designation is "Welcome to Franklin." Unofficially, we'd call it "Friendly Franklin Welcomes You."

One day each week, volunteers set up a road block on one of the highways near the town limits. Each out-of-state car with three or more persons in it is stopped and a little welcoming ceremony, with the gift package presentation as a feature, is held.

The visitor reaction is described as one of amazement. But the people of Franklin, friendly as they are and want to be, are not seeking insolvency by giving away too much. The project builds good will and it serves to stimulate business by getting visitors into places where wares are for sale.

But, whether there are sales or not, Franklin does want its visitors to feel they are welcome. It is a good example.

LET'S SERVE NOTICE

This Region's 'Disfranchisement' Pointed Out 12 Years Ago

Editorial Reprint

(EDITOR'S NOTE: It takes a long while, sometimes, to get anything done. It has been more than 12 years since The Press pointed out that, in a period of 150 years, the region west of the Balsam Mountains never had had a representative in Congress. But it was not till last week that anything was done to right that geographical balance of representation. What follows is an editorial that appeared in this newspaper April 4, 1946.)

About 25 years after Americans took up arms in protest against taxation without representation, white men began settling that part of North Carolina that lies west of the Balsam Mountains.

That was about a century and a half ago, and in all the 150 years since, this southwestern part of North Carolina never has had a representative in Congress.

In the early days, of course, it was part of a vast congressional district that stretched far

eastward; but as the population has increased, the area of the district repeatedly has been reduced. At one time, Rowan County (Salisbury) furnished the congressman, and as late as the 90's Caldwell was in this district, as is attested by the record of the election of William A. Bower, of that county, as the district's representative.

Even before the Civil War, however, Buncombe had begun to dominate the situation, with her Thomas L. Clingman, her Zebulon B. Vance, and others. And Buncombe and two populous counties adjoining her have dominated it ever since.

In the 46 years since the turn of the century, whether it was the Democrats or the Republicans who won the elections, every man sent to congress from this district has come from one of three counties—Henderson, Haywood, or Buncombe.

And in this year's election, what choice have the voters? Of the two men seeking the

Democratic nomination, one is from Henderson, the other from Buncombe; and a Buncombe man has been nominated by the Republicans, Henderson and Buncombe again!

Why this disproportionate representation?

In the past, we have been reminded of the greater population of the eastern end of the district. But today this trans-Balsam region, comprising Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Swain, Macon, and Jackson counties, contains more than half the district's land area, six of its 10 counties, and 30 per cent of its population.

If the representation in Congress is to be passed around on the basis of population—and that apparently has been the theory—then this western region is entitled to name the district's congressman for the next 50 or 60 years.

This newspaper has no candidate in mind, and it certainly will not advocate the election of a man solely because he comes from a certain region or

Strictly Personal By WEIMAR JONES

When I found I was going to have a three-hour layover at the air terminal at Paducah, Ky., the other day, I was prepared to be bored.

The fact I couldn't buy a cup of coffee didn't help my disposition; and to that was added annoyance at myself that I had neglected to provide myself with even so much as a newspaper to read.

I was going to have a long, tiring three hours, I knew, with nothing to do of interest; nothing, period, in fact.

Well, you never can tell. That layover made possible for me two of the most interesting conversations I've enjoyed in many a day.

The first was with a mature woman, a teacher in a Mid-Western university school of nursing. In her case, the stimulation came from her personality; she had read widely, traveled much, and reflected often.

A lot has happened since then, and I don't recall exactly what was said, except that she knew a lot about—and was enthusiastic on—the subject of rehabilitation of the physically handicapped.

And while I can't repeat anything that was said, two impressions remain: First, the thrill she gave me in telling of the heroic and successful efforts to rehabilitate persons who 25 years ago would have been considered better off dead; the second, what interesting talk one can have with a perfect stranger; you never expect to see again—both of you forget inhibitions and the urge to keep up, or make, a good appearance.

In the second case, the conversationist was interesting because of his experiences: He was a member of the Arkansas National Guard called out by President Eisenhower to open

the doors of Little Rock's Central High School to Negro children.

A young man, a very serious-minded young man, he appeared to have considerable education and evidently held a position of responsibility.

Among his opening remarks was an apology. I asked the conventional question: "Where are you from?" and he replied, "Little Rock . . . I guess you've heard of it." The apology, I learned later, was not so much for what had happened at Little Rock, though he didn't by any means defend all that happened there; it was, instead, because of what he knew had been said and written about Little Rock, and what he took it for granted people thought of Little Rock.

"How did it feel to be on armed guard duty, among your own people?" I wondered.

"I've never in my life seen such bitterness as among Arkansas National Guardsmen, ordered to Little Rock," he said. "Even among moderates and integrationists—and we do have some of both—there was the feeling they were being forced to take up arms against their own people."

Apparently trying to be fair-minded, he suggested that both Governor Faubus and President Eisenhower were wrong when they ordered troops to Little Rock.

He found it hard to see both sides, though, when it came to the picture that has been painted of the world over, of the Arkansas capital; a picture he feels was colored, distorted, and sometimes downright untrue—especially as it was painted on television and in the news magazines.

Noting his apologetic, defensive attitude, I recalled the Supreme Court's concern with the psychological effect of segregation, and I wondered if the popular reaction, in most sections of the country, to what happened in Little Rock has not had an even more pronounced psychological effect on the people of a whole state.

That experience in the Paducah air terminal, I hope, taught me something: There are interesting things and people all about us, all the time, if we'll just take the trouble to see them. Boredom, that is, usually comes from the inside out, instead of the other way around.

mendable choice in its selection of David M. Hall of Sylva as the party's candidate to succeed the stricken George Shuford.

Mr. Hall is held in considerable esteem by the Democrats of those far western counties. His victory in the committee was decisive. That victory was greeted warmly by the vast majority of the 300 Democrats who were on hand for the proceedings at Bryson City.

Mr. Hall may be handicapped physically, but he will not be handicapped politically as he enters the fall campaign.

He is his own boss. He owes nothing to any king-maker or political machine. His nomination was achieved in spite of, not because of, the exertions of Don Elias and Company, or what remains of a once powerful Western Carolina political organization.

He can enter the campaign knowing that he is not held in mortgage by any individual or by any unit or units of big industry in his district. He was nominated by little Democrats, not by big Democrats.

If elected, he is free to represent all the people of his district. The fact that this has not always been the case in the Twelfth District was an important element in his nomination.

We can readily understand the disappointment of Heinz Rollman in the committee's decision. He piled up almost 19,000 Democratic votes in the May primary against Rep. Shuford, and those votes were totally ignored at Bryson City.

Mr. Rollman fled Hitler's Germany; he has an almost child-like faith in democracy and the processes of free election. He feels, only naturally, that the votes of the people should command more attention in a meeting of party officials.

He will learn—he is already learning—that the facts of power are almost as important in the United States as in the Germany he left. Our rules may be much fairer, but there is often a very considerable difference in how the game should be played and how it actually is played.

For all his disappointment, Mr. Rollman would be wise to abide the decision and work to improve his standing at all levels of his party.

Two Davids And Democracy

(Raleigh News And Observer)

It has been a long time since there has been so much snarling and snafu surrounding the nomination of a Democratic candidate as has just taken place in the 12th District. Now after primary and post-primary charges about news suppression, after the resignation of Congressman George Shuford following his renomination, a nomination that will stick has been made. And Democrats should fall solidly in line behind it.

Of course, if it was known that Congressman Shuford was as sick as it now turns out that he is, that fact should have been made known before the primary. If Congressman Shuford knew he was as sick then as he now realizes, he should have withdrawn before the primary. Whatever the facts may be about those suppositions, they are now part of the past. David M. Hall, of Sylva, has been duly nominated by the party committee set up to act in such cases as this one. He is entitled to the support of all good Democrats in his district.

Certainly Heinz Rollman, who ran second in the primary against Congressman Shuford, should promptly disavow any suggestions that he might run as a write-in candidate. Mr. Rollman is a newcomer to North Carolina but he has added liveliness to Democratic politics in the mountains. He put his money and his energy into a vigorous campaign. Perhaps if the facts had all been known about Mr. Shuford's health before the primary, he would have made a better showing. The fact is that he lost and his defeat was hardly a basis for his selection after Shuford's resignation. Nevertheless, the Democratic Party in Western North Carolina—and everywhere else—needs such ardent newcomers as Mr. Rollman. Having made a good showing in his first political race, more success in the politics of North Carolina may be his in the future. Any hopes of that, of course, would be thrown away if having only lately entered politics as a Democrat he undertook a write-in campaign against the regularly chosen Democrat candidate.

All Democrats, including Mr. Rollman and his friends, should join to give Mr. Hall an overwhelming majority. This is a Democratic year. It should be celebrated as such by the election of all the Democratic nominees, including the two new faces among the Democratic nominees for Congress, David Hall in the 12th and David Clark in the 10th District.

These two Davids strengthen the ticket and deserve the active support of all North Carolina Democrats.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press

65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

(1893)

Be it known far and wide that The Press will take wheat at cash prices in exchange for subscriptions.

Postmaster Frank Smith has been absent from the office during the past week on account of sickness.

Nearly a dozen of our young men and young women will leave for college about the first of September.

25 YEARS AGO

(1933)

The Macon County Baptist Association, meeting in its 30th annual session at the Briartown Baptist Church, elected the Rev. A. S. Solesbee as moderator.

"Bobby" Jones, the finest golfer of them all, is scheduled to play in an exhibition golf match at Highlands Saturday.

The annual Macon County farm tour, sponsored by the Franklin Rotary Club, will be held Wednesday.

10 YEARS AGO

Homer Cochran was employed as night policeman by the Franklin Board of Aldermen, at its meeting Monday night.

The board of trustees of the Highlands Community Hospital has announced the purchase of a combination X-ray and fluoroscope unit.