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Editorial Page Editor

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NOT HELPLESS

## On Reapportionment

The Constitution of North Carolina says that the General Assembly "shall" reapportion seats in the Legislature, in accordance with population, after each decennial census. The members of the General Assembly are sworn to support the State Constitution. Thus legislators who, directly or indirectly, block reapportionment violate their oath of office.

Despite that, there has been no legislative reapportionment in North Carolina in 30 years. And the situation is even worse in some other states.

Noting that, The Asheville Citizen looks hopefully to the U. S. Supreme Court for remedial action. "The people", says The Citizen, "are helpless".

On that point, we respectfully disagree. The people in this country are never helpless. If enough of them want something, and want it badly enough, they can get it. If that were not true, then we should frankly admit that our democratic form of government has failed, and turn to some other form.

In North Carolina, as a matter of fact, the people could remedy this situation in short order, with an intelligent assist from the state's newspapers, big and little. With such an assist, they would remedy it.

Why are reapportionment battles so consistently lost? They are fought at the wrong place at the wrong time. The place and the time to win is not in the Legislature, after it meets, but in the counties and senatorial districts, before the legislators are elected.

If, whenever a candidate announced for the Legislature, the newspapers demanded publicly to know whether he would or would not work and vote for reapportionment, that candidate would have either to commit himself in favor of reapportionment or say, in advance, that he planned to perjure himself. Is it reasonable to believe the people would consistently elect confessed perjurers?

## Unanswered Question

In 1957, the Alabama Legislature enacted a statute changing the corporate limits of the town of Tuskegee. The resulting new town limits traced a strange geometric figure of some 28 sides. The effect—and obviously the purpose—was to place most of Tuskegee's Negro voters outside the town.

The Negroes challenged the statute in the courts, and the other day the U. S. Supreme Court ruled on it.

Two questions were before the Court. First, was such a statute, enacted by a state legislature, subject to review by the federal judiciary? Two lower federal courts held it was not. The case, they explained, was outside their "jurisdiction"; that is, it was a purely state matter. The Supreme Court overruled them on this point.

The second question was: Is this statute in violation of the U. S. Constitution? The Supreme Court held it was.

Assuming the correctness of the Court's answer to the first question, few will quarrel with its answer to the second. To the lay mind, such shenanigans just don't make sense.

Left unanswered, however, is still another question: How can the Court consistently invalidate this instance of gerrymandering, while winking at another type that is general the country over?

North Carolina's present tenth Congressional district is a good illustration. When it was created by the Legislature, the admitted purpose was to so gerrymander the district that the vote in heavily Republican counties would be neutralized by the heavy vote in more populous Democratic counties. The result here also is a strange geometric figure. The six-county district is a narrow band, running from Mitchell county, on the Tennessee line, southeasterly to Mecklenburg, on the South Carolina border.

This type of gerrymandering, common prac-

tice from one end of the country to the other for more than a century, continues unchecked.

Does the Supreme Court hold that it is wrong to deprive a citizen of his political influence because of the color of his skin, but not wrong because of the color of his political beliefs?

## Bouquets . . .

. . . to Mrs. Florence S. Sherrill and Mrs. Lloyd Swift. In addition to the Grass Roots Opera, already assured, thanks to their efforts, this winter we'll have the N. C. Little Symphony, too. It isn't a simple matter to raise \$985, but, with the help of their associates, they managed it.

. . . to Mr. J. C. Jacobs. It's always gratifying to have a local person win state-wide recognition, and Mr. Jacobs' election to the general board of the State Baptist Convention is no exception.

. . . to Mr. Carl Tysinger, 26-year veteran of service with the local telephone company, on his promotion to district manager of the Western Carolina company.

. . . to that company on its progress toward making telephone service available to rural families. We've been impatient in the past that that service was so long delayed; now that it's coming, we hasten to praise.

. . . to the men who work on Franklin's garbage truck — Burt Jones, Henry Passmore, and Lloyd Burgess — for providing a really extraordinary bit of service last week. When they got behind on their collection rounds, they worked Thursday as usual. They easily might have let the collections go over a week, but, instead, they worked all day Thanksgiving. Such an attitude deserves emulation by every public servant, from President down.

## Consistent?

(From a Letter to The New York Times)

President-elect Kennedy rushed to the defense of the absurdly abused Martin Luther King. I noted at the same time, however, that few politicians expressed proper concern over the 81-year-old Negro woman who had been unjustly and stupidly imprisoned in New York for three years. Is it possible that her case was not considered newsworthy, vote-worthy, or glamorous enough for consideration?

## Fine Kettle Of Fish

(Suffolk County, N. Y., News)

Here we are debating the merits of air raid shelters as a protection against a thermonuclear attack and subsequent radioactive fallout as though this is the sole weapon with which mankind has elected to commit suicide.

Survive the attack in a family shelter, we are told, stick it out underground for two weeks, and while the world to which we will emerge will not be a pretty nor a comfortable one at least some of us will live out our lives and produce enough children to keep the human race alive.

If there is small comfort in this argument, consider, please, that thermonuclear attack is not the ultimate weapon. Chemical warfare is. It is a subject that is being handled with the utmost secrecy in every capital in the world, but one day the truth will be known. There are gases that will kill tens of thousands in a matter of minutes; gases that will make lunatics out of whole metropolitan populations, gases that will paralyze but not kill. We possess such weapons. So, presumably, does the Soviet Union, which is known to have 50,000 tons of Tabun, a nerve gas powerful enough to wipe out 1,000 cities the size of San Francisco. The U. S. Army Chemical Warfare Services are familiar with these gases but are afraid to tell the people.

Doctors in this country point out that while the scientists know what to do about protecting the public against an atomic attack, the medical profession hasn't been told what to do about chemical and biological warfare. The weapons are unknown to doctors because Uncle Sam—and the Soviet Union—talk about them only behind closed doors. Isn't that a fine kettle of fish?

One wishes that these weapons could be on display so that all the world could see the folly of its ways. Air raid shelters? What about, protection against chemical and biological warfare? Are we destined to live in shielded caves to emerge into the sunlight only if equipped with mobile anti-gas chambers?

It is time the world was told about the ultimate in weapons, the gases that poison and kill, the bacteria sprays that can decimate a civilization by ending its food and water supply. This is a matter for the United Nations, and it should be discussed openly.

ARTHUR KROCK

## Kennedy Has No 'Mandate' To Carry Out Pressure Group Demands

In The New York Times

There is a word much in use by the pressure-groups, which managed to transmute nearly all their special-interest programs into Democratic platform pledges, that can only add to the crushing weight of the burdens the next President must assume. The word is "mandate," and the latest to employ it was President Meany of the AFL-CIO. Not unexpectedly with particular application to the planks drafted by organized labor's representatives at Los Angeles.

But in his charge that only "those who opposed John Kennedy" deny that the knife-thin winning margin in the vote was a popular mandate to carry out all the Democratic party pledges, Meany demonstrated that insistence on the theory, and the use of this word to express it, can only make it more difficult for President Kennedy to get the public and political support he must have in the nation's paramount interest. For "those who opposed John Kennedy" on Nov. 8 were matched almost evenly with those who supported him. And under our form of government, especially when the winning party is deeply split on such platform pledges as Meany invoked, no assorted group of 33.9 million votes as opposed to another assorted group of 33.7 millions can give the President the political strength to enforce them. This hard fact remains, even if the absurd assumption is granted that the narrow division merely represented the popular preference of each group for the platform of the candidate it supported.

But President-elect Kennedy, by acquiring a majority of the electors, and regardless of the closeness of the popular vote, has one clear "mandate" from the American people in the dictionary meaning of the word as "an authoritative command, order or injunction." This is to assume the responsibility of national leadership that is centered in the Presidential office, and to execute the oath he will take on Jan. 20, 1961. The oath is as follows: "I, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

That John Fitzgerald Ken-

## LETTERS

From Mr. Cox

Editor, The Press:

Your recent editorial ("Question Settled") concerning the November 8th election. Seems to have used only the facts you wanted to prove your opinion. So I would like to state a few that have been omitted.

First of all, in making any comparison you have to take things that are alike in nature. In your article you stated Macon County is normally about 60 per cent Democratic. This was based on a state election, held two (2) years ago, not a presidential election. So let's go back to the presidential election of 1956, where the Democratic nominee for representative polled just slightly over 51.6 per cent of the vote cast in that contest. Also I am sure that our local school problem did not enter into the race of our state ticket, of this year's election. So I would like to ask where is the normal 60 per cent for all of the candidates on this ticket? Where the percentages ran from just slightly over 50.5 per cent on the governor's race to a high of 52 per cent in the race for U. S. Senator on the Democratic ticket.

Now then we come to the school law which provides for the method of how school board members will be selected, appointed, or nominated. Section 115-19 states, and I quote, "At such primaries or conventions each political party SHALL nominate members of County Boards of Education to take the place of the members of such boards whose terms next expire." Then under section 115-23 which deals with vacancies in nomination for various reasons. We read, "the vacancy caused thereby may be filled by the action of the County Executive Committee of the political party of such candidate." Therefore if we are to abide by the law—the Republican executive committee slipped, when they did not nominate a school board of their party at the time of the primaries.

Beyond that, we have to look at the election law and procedure, under section G.S. 163-196(11). I quote, "To give or promise a political office or support for political office in return for political support," is a misdemeanor under the law. Thus I ask who is the would-be law maker?

In closing, I would like to say that I can not understand how anyone could think, unless they were led to believe otherwise, that a majority of the people (who are also fathers and mothers of school children) would do anything to disrupt our schools.

W. A. (BILL) COX

Franklin.

## DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press

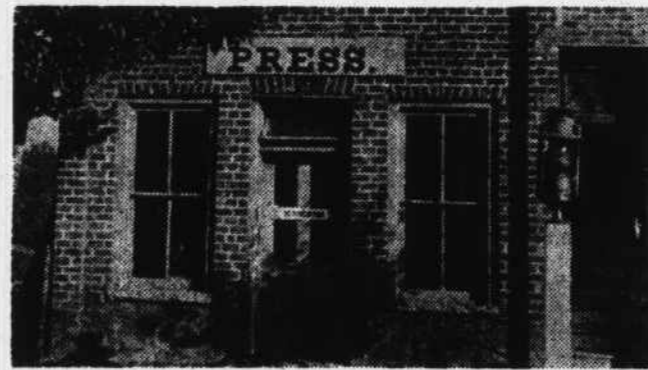
65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

(1895)

The Baptist Church on Watauga has been newly painted. There were a great many people in town Saturday, and trade was lively.

Miss Hallie Porter came home last week from Salem College on account of being sick.

The roads between Franklin and Dillsboro are pretty



good to the top of Cowee Mountain, and bad on the Jackson County side.

While in Andrews last Thursday evening we had an interesting conversation with Mr. E. P. Smith, secretary of the Willard Cooperative Colony. Mr. Smith is greatly enthused over the Colony scheme and believes in its success.

35 YEARS AGO

(1925)

The convicts who have been used on the Bryson City road for the past several months were moved last Saturday to a campsite near the home of Mr. Ed Cruse on the Upper Cartoogechay. They started work on the camp buildings Monday. When the camp is completed, work will begin on Highway No. 28 at the foot of the Nantahalas and will continue through Wallace Gap and on toward Hayesville. The road is now graded from Franklin to a point about 12 miles west.

15 YEARS AGO

(1945)

Weimar Jones, who recently bought The Franklin Press and The Highlands Maconian, has arrived in Franklin and will take active charge December 1.

5 YEARS AGO

(1955)

Bids have been opened for construction of a 12.46-mile link of U. S. 23-441 from Franklin to the North Carolina-Georgia state line.



## STRICTLY PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

What kind of a person is John F. Kennedy?

What sort of President will he make?

The most interesting answers I have seen to those and related questions are in an appraisal by William V. Shannon in The New York Post.

Mr. Shannon appears to have done something that is far from easy. He has been able to look at Kennedy, the man, sympathetically, and yet to see Kennedy, the politician, objectively. Because of that, and because The New York Post writer seeks the answer to the second question in the light of the first, that piece seems worth passing on, with my own strictly personal comments added.

"John Fitzgerald Kennedy," he writes, "is not yet a great man. But there are within him the human materials that could produce greatness. And, most important of all, there is the burning desire, the steady, strong, overmastering will to be a great man and to be remembered in history books for great and worthy achievements."

"The crucial personal story of the next four years will be whether the flame of his personal ambition and the pressures of the Presidency will fuse the human materials of heart, mind and character to produce the greatness for which he aims and for which the country hopes."

"He is a stranger to complacency, self-satisfaction and laziness. This country is about to have as hard-working a chief executive as ever occupied the office. He is likewise a stranger to humility and self-doubt; no feelings of inadequacy or fear plague him. Nor does he lack conviction about his capacity."

"He knows that greatness is still a prize to be won, but he does not look in the mirror and doubt that he is the man to win it. Yet, unlike Franklin Roosevelt, he does not communicate a sense of buoyancy and unflinching self-assurance."

"He is even-tempered and coolly self-disciplined. He is not cold, and he can be a most charming and companionable man, but there is a part of himself always reserved, kept aloof, not completely dissolved in the chemistry of the situation."

"That is why he is always a dignified figure even though he has ruffled hair and everybody calls him 'Jack.' That is why some people call him shy even though he is aggressive as a truck driver. That is why people often describe him as cold even though he has extraordinary emotional intensity and verve."

"Somewhere along the way he acquired the habit of reading. He is one of the few top politicians who regularly read serious books as a form of relaxation. There will be no Westerns on his night-table."

"In the last five years, Kennedy has achieved his own political style and consolidated his political independence."

"He stands on his own two feet and is his own master. He knows where he wants to go and where he wants to lead America."

"He knows already in his head, but perhaps not in his heart, that no President who wants to accomplish anything enduring can expect to remain as popular and unscarred throughout his term as he is today."

"If the physical courage is matched by the political courage, if the intellectual bril-

liance is touched with enough compassion and imagination, if the canny political skill is ennobled by an occasional act of reckless daring on behalf of moral principle, then John Fitzgerald Kennedy will take his place in the lofty company to which he honorably aspires. And his country will be the gainer thereby."

That piece leaves you with a pleasing picture of an eager, an intense, an admirably independent young man.

Indirectly, it emphasizes the youth of the President-elect. For you get the picture of a person with such an "overmastering will to be a great man" as to be reminiscent of adolescence. Who cannot recall, in his own adolescent years, after some slight or injustice, the feeling that "I'll show 'em!" the "overmastering will" to become a great person just to prove his lack of inferiority!

Does this compulsion within Kennedy grow out of a resentment and resulting determination to "show 'em" handed down to him from the period when Americans exploited, and looked down upon, the Irish, and especially upon the Irish Catholics?

Ironically, his very determination to become a great man may serve as a roadblock. For you get a picture of a man who would serve his country, to be sure, but for whom that is not an end in itself, but a means to the end that he may be "remembered in history books."

If this picture is a true one, and if it remains true, the President-elect can never become a great man. Greatness demands the submergence of self, with personal ends and ambitions incidental to the cause that is served. It is only through self-forgetfulness in something bigger than one's self that "reckless daring on behalf of moral principle" becomes possible.

Finally, you get the picture of a man who is "a stranger to humility."

That lack, previously noted here, and so obvious it must have been remarked by many, is not surprising. For consider this man's background! Never once has poverty placed on him any limitations. Blessed with a brilliant mind, he was given the best possible education, and had the good sense to make the most of that opportunity. His heroism in World War 2 brought him fame. He has had remarkable success as an author. In politics, except for his failure to win the vice presidential nomination in 1956, he has been uniformly successful. And now he is the youngest man ever elected to the Presidency. Of course he lacks humility!

Yet there can be no such thing as greatness without that virtue. Other men, like Kennedy, have acquired power and won success without it; but no man ever yet has become great without it. In all the truly great, there has been the recognition of personal limitations, and so of the need for help—a recognition that usually, in its desperation and agony of self-doubt, turned to the divine.

Happily for him, Mr. Kennedy is young; he may yet learn humility.

But unless he is different from most of us, he can learn it only through frustration and failure and defeat. How heavy a price that may prove remains to be seen. It could be far more costly to the nation than to the man.

Yet it is characteristic of this generous America that most of its people earnestly hope he may achieve "the greatness for which he aims."