

# The Rocky Mount Herald

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## STATE BOARD CONDEMNS ABSENTEE BALLOT LAW

State Board of Elections Recommend Repeal Of The Present Obnoxious, Fraudulent Measure Now On Statute Books

The State Board of Elections recommended to Governor Hoye the "absolute repeal" of the state's present absentee ballot law.

In its place, the board recommended that the 1939 general assembly enact a new absentee law which would make fraud "well nigh impossible, and if committed, certain of detection."

Condemning the law now in force as a "convenient instrumentality of fraud," the recommendation specified that the proposed new act should safeguard the "custody, issuance and subsequent handling" of absentees.

"The majority of this board believes," it was said, "that there is need for an absentee ballot law by which persons legally entitled to vote, but who otherwise could not do so, can exercise their right of franchise."

However, the recommendation continued, if safeguards "are not sufficient to eliminate the prevalent abuses of the absentee ballot law, then the state board of elections would recommend not only the abolition of the present law, but that no substitute statute be enacted, even at the risk of depriving persons physically unable to go to the polls, or temporarily absent from the county, of their right to vote."

The board, which held numerous meetings last summer in investigating alleged primary voting irregularities in a number of counties, also recommended:

Subdivision of precincts in which more than 500 persons voted in the 1936 election; a new state-wide registration, which was held "imperative;" and the abolition of ballot markers at precincts, except in certain circumstances.

The recommendations were announced by Chairman W. A. Lucas, of Wilson, who said that four members of the board voted in favor of the report. He said the fifth member, J. O. Bell, of Henderson county, did not concur in the recommendations.

Lucas explained that the board also believed all primary and election laws should be uniform. Repeal of the present absentee ballot law and abolition of markers would remove the differences, he said, as they are practically the only features of the state's election machinery which vary.

The report stated that a new absentee ballot law should:

1. Make the county elections board chairman the "sole custodian" of the ballots, with their issuance a "non-delegable duty." This step, it was said, would eliminate the "present diffusion" of responsibility among the county chairman and precinct registrars.

2. Permit ballots to be issued only upon "sworn written applications."

3. Limit delivery of the ballots to the voter in person, or by mail addressed to him at his postoffice address. This, the board said, might eliminate "evils growing out of forgeries of voters names, 'market baskets' quest for applications and signatures, the 'hawking' of absentee votes for sale, and the voting of dead men and felons."

4. Permit the county elections board chairman to begin issuing absentees 30 days before an election and require him to cease the issuance three days before the voting. This should be coupled with a requirement, the board continued, that the chairman list the applications, make them open for inspection, and post them at the courthouse door three days before the election, and that each registrar post a list at the polls.

5. Require the county chairman to file with the board three days before the election the original of all applications on which he has issued absentee ballots.

6. Require the voter to mark his ballot in secret and return it in person to the county chairman at least 24 hours before the polls open.

7. Provide "specific penalties" for "specific violations" of the law.

The board held it as "apparent" that the present absentee law "intended to afford an opportunity for voting by qualified voters unable to go to the polls," but instead "open the door for abuses, and may nullify not only the will of the legitimate absentee voter, but may over-

(Please turn to page four)

## ACCIDENTS TAKE EIGHT FOR MONTH

Birth Rate Nearly Doubles Death Rate In Rocky Mount Again In December

Eight persons died in Rocky Mount during December as result of accidents, according to the monthly vital statistics report released today by the city health department.

Five persons died as result of automobile accident injuries, one was run over by a train, one was killed when caught in a belt and pulley and one died of gun shot wounds.

Six persons died of heart disease during the month. Tuberculosis and pneumonia accounted for three deaths.

Birth in the city nearly doubled the deaths during December. There were 78 births, 53 of them among white residents. Deaths 17 of them involving residents of the city, totaled 42. There were seven illegitimate births, one among white residents and six among Negro residents.

Tuberculosis cases on hand in the city totaled 102 on December 1 and 100 on January 1, the report stated.

## Probe Building Filling Station

Citizens and Board Members Join In Angry Protests Against Procedure

Joining several citizens in vigorously protesting the erection of a filling station in the Main street business district at the Marigold street intersection, the city aldermen in a call meeting last night named a committee to find out how the city can successfully thwart the project.

Meanwhile construction on the filling station continued today and E. C. Sykes, the company's representative in charge of construction, said this afternoon that it is expected to be completed in about three weeks.

The filling station is being built by the Sperry Distributing Company, a national gas and oil retailing firm, on about 60 feet of land leased from the Atlantic Coast Line railroad company. The site of the proposed filling station is between the railroad and a newly opened section of S. E. Main street, in an area that was formerly used for marketing cotton and unloading boxcars but during the past year has been frequently mentioned by aldermen as a spot that the city should beautify.

Aldermen, Citizens Protest

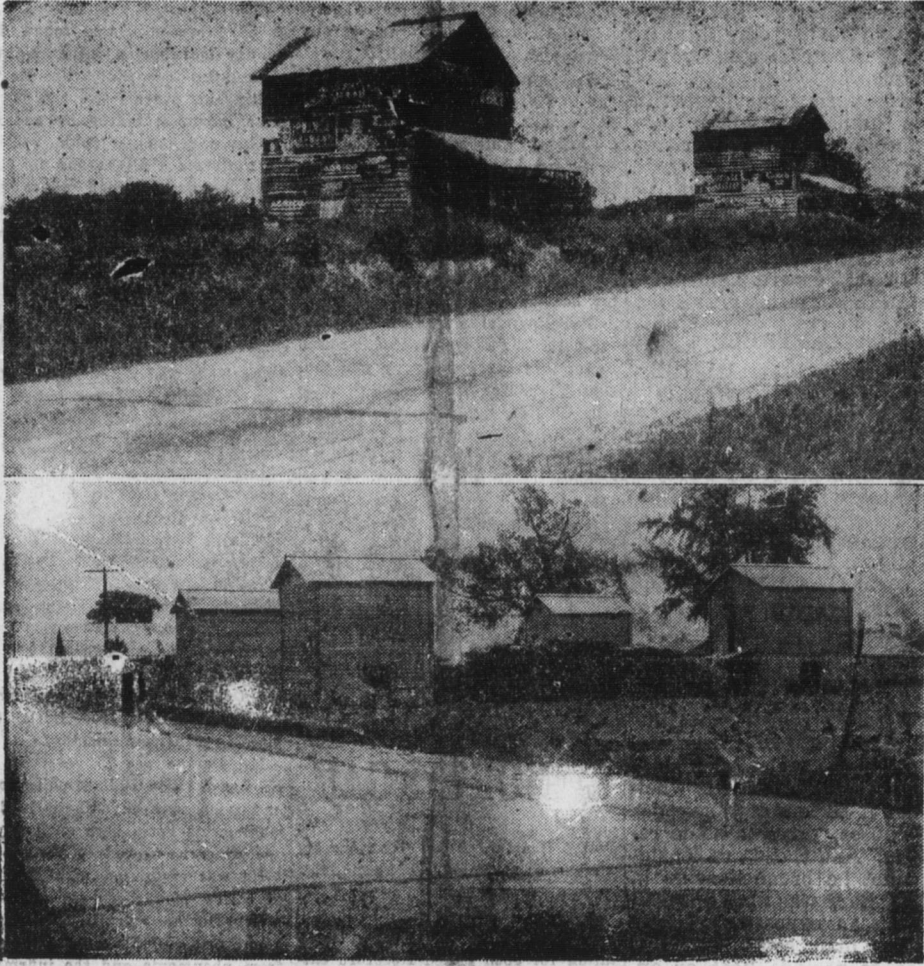
Both aldermen and citizens indignantly protested last night against the fact that for three or four months plans for the filling station has been going on without their knowledge. Practically every alderman who participated in the heated discussion declared that he had known nothing of the proposed filling station until Tuesday afternoon, when construction was already under way and the news of the filling station broke like a bombshell.

After two hours of discussion during which all the aldermen who spoke declared their opposition to the filling station but were unable to say how the city might stop the project the board named a committee to look for a loophole.

Amid a welter of motions and substitute motions, nearly every member of the board present was named to the committee and declined—commented Mayor Q. Robinson, who said he called the special meeting at the request of several aldermen, "This must be a hot potato. It looks like nobody wants it."

Finally the board carried a motion naming on the committee City Manager L. B. Aycock, City Attorney W. L. Thorp, Fire Chief J. E. Sorsby, who is the city building inspector, and Alderman A. J. Mims, chairman of the parks and playgrounds committee—with Alderman Mims dissenting.

## Which of These Roadside Looks Better To You?



If you were visiting North Carolina for the first time, which of the above roadside scenes would make the best impression?

The Governor's Committee on Roadside Control and Development believes that almost any one can see the difference between the two scenes—and that a majority of people would prefer the roadside shown at the bottom, with the neat tobacco barns, not marred by any signs and the well-kept fields extending up to the right-of-way, rather than the shaggy, shabby roadside grown up in weeds and the sign-plastered tobacco barns shown in the picture at the top.

The Governor's Committee on Roadside Control and Development is seeking the cooperation of farmers and landowners in an effort to make them realize the value of making their property look as attractive as possible where it adjoins the highways.

## City Should Own Land—Not Compel High School To Trespass

This afternoon we noticed the track team out having one of their first exercises of this season; and where do you imagine they were? The nearest piece of vacant land to the high school was the block of land opposite the Lutheran Church, the very piece of land that the citizenship of Rocky Mount want for a park. Rocky Mount boasts that it is the finest city in Eastern North Carolina, and yet less has been done considering the size of the city and the amount of public money spent, in the way of building parks than any town of its size to be found. We have, in times past, played on private property. This property has been taken up and the children will be compelled to go to the streets, which are death traps for playing, unless something is done to provide park and playground facilities. When you visit a great city the citizenship of that city, if they have decent parks and playgrounds, will show you these parks and playgrounds first. Rocky Mount has in times past always carried their visitors to the tobacco markets, but since the tobacco market does not last but about two months now, we will be deprived of this as a show place to visitors. Rocky Mount has an opportunity to buy a block of land within two and one-half blocks of the business district of the city. This is an unusual opportunity which does not come to a city of our size very often.

## A Visit to The Tournament Of Roses at Pasadena

(R. T. Fountain)

Being one of those who followed the trail of the Duke University football team out to the Rose Bowl for the historic contest between the East and the West, which took place on New Year's day in Pasadena, Calif., being one of the great features of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses, I thought it might be of interest to the readers of the "Herald" to give a few observations. I had looked forward for some time, when an opportunity would present itself, to visit the west coast of the United States, and when the football team of our Duke University was invited to contest at the famous Rose Bowl, I planned at once to attend. And then the Southern Railway, under the leadership of Mr. J. S. Bloodworth, District Passenger Agent, announced that it would run a special train from Raleigh, N. C., to Los Angeles, Calif. I decided that only sickness of my family would prevent me from making this trip. Before going in more details of the trip, will say that it was one of the finest things ever

offered to North Carolinians, most comfortable, wonderfully informing and educational. Our people took advantage of this trip in great numbers. More than 400 made the trip. Two trains were required to carry the crowd. These trains ran about 20 minutes part all the way out to California. We were honored in having Mr. Bloodworth in charge of the train, make the entire trip to Los Angeles, always zealous in looking out for the comfort of all passengers. Mrs. Bloodworth was also one of the party. We never seemed to be away from home on the train, more like sitting in one of North Carolina's hotel lobbies surrounded by North Carolina friends. The passenger list represented all sections of North Carolina and was an enjoyable and cordial group. Being together for 13 days made a tinge of sadness, notwithstanding happiness on getting back home. Railroad travel has been made much more comfortable with the air conditioning of trains. The day coaches are better in many instances than many of the pullmans. With all of its pullman conveniences, this

## MRS. BARNES DIES AT LOCAL HOSPITAL

Funeral Services Thursday From Home Near Nashville

Mrs. Nannie Barnes, 45, of near Nashville, died at a local hospital Wednesday after an illness of only a few hours.

Funeral services were held from the home Thursday afternoon at 3 o'clock and burial made in the Nashville cemetery.

Mrs. Barnes was a member of Elm Grove Baptist church.

Survivors include her husband, K. M. Barnes; one son, R. B. Barnes of this city; five daughters, Mrs. Herbert Wood, Mrs. Joe Ayers, Ruby, Geraldine, and Dorothy Mae Barnes, all of Nashville; two brothers, Sidney and Chris Smith of Nashville; two sisters, Mrs. P. W. Jenkins of Nashville and Mrs. Minnie Overman of Warren Plains; and her mother, Mrs. Nannie Smith of Nashville.

## Looking at WASHINGTON

By Hugo Sims, Special Washington Correspondent

LOOKING AT WASHINGTON ...  
DIPLOMATIC IMPASSE  
WAR NOT INEVITABLE  
OUR INTEREST IN CHINA  
TRADE PACT IN FRANCE  
MUST BUY IF WE SELL  
GERMANY'S AIR FORCE  
WPA AND POLITICS  
NO COALITION LIKELY

Diplomatic relations between the United States and Japan have reached the point where war is inevitable if both these powers insist upon what they consider their rights. The Japanese proclaim a "New Order" in the Far East, under which Japanese have superior rights to other powers, regardless of their treaties with China and Japan. The United States rejects this thesis and reserves all rights, refusing assent to any impairment of them. So far as the exchange of notes is concerned, the clash could not be more complete.

This does not mean, of course, that war is about to break out between the United States and Japan. It does mean very emphatically, that if the United States attempts to uphold its rights in China by force that warfare will result unless Japan abandons the present course of conquest.

If the United States, in support of her diplomatic position, resorts to other measures, such as extending financial aid to China, putting an embargo on the shipment of goods to Japan, or prohibiting the sale of Japanese goods in this country, war might be averted, but only if the Japanese accept the conditions without resort to force. It may be taken for granted, we think, that if any measures of the United States becomes effective enough to impair the Japanese campaign in China, the danger of a conflict will be great.

While the United States has not the commercial investment in China that Great Britain has, it is a mistake to assume that our interests in the Far East are less than that of the British. For generations, the United States and China have been on extremely friendly terms and missionary activity in China has given the people of this country great interest in the Chinese. Transcending the material interests is the concern of the United States over the continued successes of aggressor nations, which flout treaties and the rights of other powers, thus leading the world to a day when force, and force alone, will become the arbiter of national developments.

It is possible, of course, that the United States may follow the course adopted in 1932, when Secretary of State Henry L. Simson reserved American rights in Manchuria after Japan had completed her conquest of that area. Diplomatically, we have refused to recognize the new status in Manchukuo and while Japan has systematically interfered with the commercial rights of Americans in the new state, the American Government has permitted the matter to rest. If this course is followed in regard to the other parts of China, the Japanese will not be concerned with the American attitude nor care much about our "reservation" of rights in China.

The Anglo-American trade agreement, slashing tariffs in this country, England and her crown colonies, became effective on January 1. As the New Year began, warehouses in this country, England and other parts of the British Empire, were stocked with merchandise shipped in under bond to be held until the

tariff reductions provided for under the Treaty became effective. Undoubtedly, trade between the English-speaking peoples will be increased by the new pact. In England, newspapers report large quantities of electrical appliances, dental equipment, foodstuffs of various kinds, lumber, silk hosiery and other products from the United States ready for distribution there. In this country, at the same time, English merchandise was similarly in storage, the largest quantities being in woolen piece goods, cutlery, dinner-ware, cotton cloth and leather products.

Of course, the cry will go up in many sections that these English goods are keeping American workmen from being employed. Those who raise this complaint do not point out that the American goods sold in England and her colonies provided employment for workers here. In Great Britain, and the other parts of the Empire affected by the new Treaty, the same cries will be raised. It will be asserted that the importation of American products prevents British laborers from being employed. Over there, just as in this country, the protesters will say nothing about the employees provided by the goods exported.

We do not know, of course, whether the United States will sell more goods to Great Britain than the people of this country will buy, under the new treaty arrangement. It will be necessary to watch the practical workings of the pact. If it follows the lead of other reciprocal trade treaties, we may expect an increase in the two-way commerce that is necessary if international trade is to be profitable. The people of the United States must accept the fundamental idea that if they expect to sell American products either of our factories or our farms, in foreign lands, we must be willing to purchase some of the products of the other countries. This is true, to some extent, always, but particularly so under present world conditions, when so many nations have difficulty in establishing the gold reserves necessary to finance excessive imports.

Just before the Czechoslovakian crisis in September, official figures, as quoted upon good authority, estimated the fighting strength of Germany in the air at 3,000 planes. The British Empire was credited with 4,000, France 3,000, Russia 4,700, Italy 3,200 and Japan 2,000. While the negotiations were going into effect and immediately following the surrender of the democracies at Munich, the report gained credence that Germany had an air force of 10,000 planes and an air industry which, in an emergency, could produce fighting planes much faster than any other nation. In fact, it was said, that the British and French General Staffs, after reviewing the situation, were convinced that if war broke out the German air force would command the sky completely in about a month.

Recently, S. Paul Johnston, editor of the magazine, Aviation, returned from a tour of Europe. He reported the air strength of the various nations in this proportion: Germany, 10; Italy, 6; Great Britain, 5; United States, 4; France, 2.

From other sources, comes information that Germany and Italy are more than a match in the air for the rest of the world, thus completely destroying the mythical "balance of power" in Europe. Credence (Please turn to page three)

## NOTICE

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