

MUTT AND JEFF—Oh, look who's trying to get on the police force!



STATEMENT OF PAYNE ON BETHLEHEM AUDIT

Former Chairman of Shipping Board Gives His Version of Abadie Incident

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21.—A statement giving his version of certain incidents in dispute before the Walsh committee, investigating the shipping board, especially in relation to the testimony of Colonel Abadie, former comptroller-general of the shipping board, concerning auditing, was made here tonight by Secretary of the Interior Payne, who was chairman of the board at the time the incidents in dispute occurred.

The statement follows: "Colonel Abadie presented to me a written statement (probably in February, 1920) recommending that the books of the Bethlehem Shipbuilding corporation be audited. At that time Colonel Abadie was general comptroller in charge of the accounting for the shipping board and had approximately 5,000 men on his payroll. I immediately issued an order directing that the audit be made, assuming that Colonel Abadie would have the audit made by his own accountants in the neighborhood of \$500,000. I immediately telegraphed Perley Morse and company not to proceed and directed Colonel Abadie to make the audit with his own force.

"This resulted in an interview between Perley Morse and myself and with Colonel Abadie, and after giving consideration to the matter I decided that notwithstanding the cost I would be wise to permit Morse to proceed with the audit.

Charges meantime were preferred against Morse by the Bethlehem people and a hearing was had. This was participated in by Commissioners Stevens, Donald, Scott and myself. The result was that we declined to interfere with Morse and directed him to proceed with the audit. The Bethlehem people then declined to permit Morse to have access to their books. When this came to my knowledge I notified the Bethlehem company that they must submit the books to Morse for audit and that we would charge the company for all of the expense occasioned by their refusal. Morse and his men were meantime idle because of the refusal of the Bethlehem company to permit the audit to proceed. It was this expense that I insisted should be charged against the Bethlehem company.

"This was the status of the case when I left the shipping board. "The voucher to which Colonel Abadie refers (\$260,000 for personal expenses in October, 1918 of an officer of the Bethlehem Shipbuilding corporation) was not called to my attention, and did not figure in any of the proceedings with reference to the audit. "There was a general statement made that large sums had been included in the expense items which were not properly chargeable against ship construction."

GRONNA MEAT PACKER BILL DRAWS FIRE IN THE SENATE WASHINGTON, Jan. 21.—Proposed government regulation of the meat packers and allied industries drew fire in the senate today from two senators, Sherman of Illinois and Fernald of Maine, both Republicans. The two senators opposed the pending Gronna regulatory bill as an unwarranted interference with a particular private industry, a principle, which they said, might be extended injuriously to other lines of business.

Opposition of both senators to the measure, which was voted on next Monday, also included attacks upon the Federal Trade commission which has supported the legislation. A substitute for the Gronna bill was introduced by Senator Sterling, Republican, South Dakota, proposing transfer of government regulation of the meat industry to the Federal Trade commission instead of the new livestock commission provided in the Gronna bill.

ENJOIN WESTERN UNION NEW YORK, Jan. 21.—Judicial action in the form of a preliminary injunction, rather than forceful measures by the armed forces of the United States was the plea here today in the federal court by the government in its action to prevent the landing of the Western Union Telegraph company's Brazilian cable at Miami, Fla.

The government halted the laying of a connecting link of this cable from the Bahamas to the American mainland on the grounds that concessions granted by the government of Brazil amounted to a virtual monopoly in favor of the defendant company.

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR., HAS MILLION FOR EUROPEAN FUND NEW YORK, Jan. 21.—John D. Rockefeller, Jr., son of the Standard Oil magnate, has contributed \$1,000,000 to the relief of starving European children. This announcement was made tonight by Herbert Hoover at the conclusion of a dinner given to Mr. Rockefeller's Bible class.

On Fee System "Arguments"

By M. S. WILLARD

One can draw a very logical conclusion from any proposition if permitted to state unchallenged his own premises. A favorite method of arguing when one is not satisfied with the strength of his position, is to stand up a man of straw and then proceed to demolish him. In the consideration of the question whether a salary or fee system is best for the county no one has been accused of graft or any other irregularity but one of our county commissioners argues very eloquently that all of our county officials are "able, honest and efficient" and should not be accused of graft. I do not know what his conception of graft may be but I do know that no official could be accused of graft who collected three or four or even ten times as much as his services were worth if that elaborate and conspicuously posted fee bill permitted him to do so.

It is not a capital offense to accept graft or to fail to discharge the duties of an office after it has been accepted on a fixed salary, but either is a rather unbecoming habit and ought to be condemned. Our county commissioner indicts the officers receiving fees very severely himself when he makes the general charge that they do not perform their duties while working for a salary. It is a sad condition if the time has arrived when matters affecting the public business cannot be discussed calmly and without acrimony. It may be "wearisome" to the commissioners to have any act of their criticized but even a county commissioner may be mistaken sometimes, particularly if he is content to work out the destiny of our community without being guided by the experience of others. County government is not confined to New Hanover county or the state of North Carolina and if the editor of The Star has lived in a community where the same abuses existed as we have here and they have been successfully met and eliminated I am glad to learn of him even though he has not lived in Wilmington all his life. I believe I have learned something about county government from persons who have never had the honor to have been in New Hanover county at all.

I wonder if it is true that the "aver-

age person is not interested except for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not it would be a saving to the taxpayers." If I really thought this was true I would never again interest myself in a matter of public concern. This argument would fatten upon us again the old system of regulating matters concerning public health and abolish our present consolidated health department; it would prevent advanced methods of administering school affairs; it would give us sand roads instead of macadam and hand fire engines instead of a motorized fire department.

The county commissioners should not become "weary" even though they are "constantly besieged to raise salaries," but should try to strike at the root of the whole evil. County government has been considered and discussed more within the past 10 years than in the whole of the preceding century and more changes have been made in this short period than have been made since the Lord's proprietors planned the creation of a great feudal state of eight counties palatine.

In an article published in the University of North Carolina Record there appears the following: "County government is without ideals. County officers serve with no manual of duties, responsibilities and procedures—except in a bare half dozen states. It is a headless affair, uninformal, unregulated, irresponsible and governed by local custom mostly—regardless of law."

It will be a calamity if we fail to do our part towards bringing order out of chaos. There ever was a chaotic condition in that brought about by perpetuating a fee system of paying county officers. The county commissioners should place their influence behind a movement to so amend our county government that they will be given full authority to require efficient service from county employees who should be paid proper salaries. They should denounce a system which will permit the legislature to create a new office, appoint the office holder and fix his salary, even over the protest of the commissioners themselves. This was done a few years ago and can be done again whenever the county's representative in the legislature sees fit.

BITTER FIGHT LOOMING ON COMPENSATION ACT

Organized Labor Will Have More Than One Fight This Legislature

Morning Star Bureau, Yorkborough Hotel.

By R. E. POWELL RALEIGH, Jan. 22.—Organized labor is going to have more than one fight in this general assembly. If coming events cast their shadows before, there are going to be several.

It is hard, this early, to say which is going to be the warmest but there is no question that there will be a bitter fight over the compensation law and an equally bitter fight over the proposed immigration laws which the Department of Labor will ask.

The Delaney compensation law, which differs from the law drafted by the Bickett commission in a number of particulars and differs in many respects from the so-called Virginia law, will be favored by the labor unions throughout the state. The commission draft, introduced in the house by Representative Luke Young "by request" is more satisfactory to the manufacturers and opposed stoutly by the unions although it comes with the label of a strong labor member.

The fact that there is a radical difference in the two laws is leading many leaders as well as members of the legislature to predict that neither bill will be passed and that the 1921 session of the general assembly just where it was on this principle advanced relations between employer and employe before the legislature met. Each side is confident that it can muster enough votes to defeat the other bill but there is little talk of changing enough votes to bring about the passage of either bill.

Little is known of the immigration proposals the labor unions will ask other than that some kind of an immigration law is favored also by the legislative council of the league of women voters.

The recent importation of a hundred Italians at Canton, in the western part of the state, and the influx lately of other foreign help on public works has moved the legislative committee of the state federation to propose some drastic and far-reaching immigration laws. One regards purely the public works of the state while another, draft of which has not been completed, might be classified as a health measure and provides for the physical examination of every alien admitted into the confines of North Carolina.

This correspondent has been permitted to see the draft of the bill affecting the public works of the state

as it will be introduced by Senator Mark Erwin, of Asheville. It follows: "That in the construction of all public works by persons contracting with the state, or by persons contracting with the state or any county, municipality or sub-division only citizens of the United States shall be employed and in all cases where laborers are employed on any such public works, preference shall be given citizens of the state of North Carolina. In every contract for the construction of public works a provision shall be inserted to the effect that if the provisions of this section are not complied with, the contract shall be void.

"Each contractor having a contract with the state or any county, sub-division or municipality for the construction of public works shall keep a list of his employees which shall set forth whether they are naturalized or native born citizens of the United States or aliens and upon demand of a proper officer of the state or of the county, sub-division or municipality for which the work is being done, shall furnish said list of employees."

Contracts made not in keeping with the provisions of this law would be void under the terms of the bill, and violations would be penalized either by fine or imprisonment or both.

The boast of Carolinians has for a long time been their pure Anglo-Saxon citizenship and this will carry much weight with the proposal to restrict measurably immigration into the state. Objections now are not so much to that which has filtered in during the past few months as it is to the potential influx. Women are interested in the measure but it is understood they favor an amendment permitting German and French servants to come into the state.

DR. DOBYNS AND DR. VANCE ARE HONORED GUESTS

Dr. William R. Dobyns, of Birmingham, Ala., and Dr. James I. Vance, of Nashville, Tenn., were honored guests at a delightful luncheon and oyster roast given by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Sprunt, on Thursday, at their home on Greenfield road. Other invited guests besides Dr. Dobyns and Dr. Vance were Rev. and Mrs. J. Oscar Mann, Miss Miller, Dr. and Mrs. J. M. Wells, Rev. and Mrs. J. Edwin Parrott, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Sprunt, Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Worth, Mr. E. F. Hall, Dr. James Sprunt, Dr. and Mrs. James S. Hall, Rev. W. W. Morton and Rev. Mr. Murray.

FORTY-THREE INDICTMENTS AGAINST BUILDING TRADES CHICAGO, Jan. 21.—The federal grand jury late this afternoon returned 43 indictments under the Sherman anti-trust act, charging violation by the building trades, contractors and union labor bosses. It was alleged that they conspired to keep up the price of building materials in the Chicago district.

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