

# The Daily Tar Heel

The official newspaper of the Publications Union Board of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where it is printed daily except Mondays and the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Holidays. Entered as second class matter at the post office of Chapel Hill, N. C., under act of March 3, 1879. Subscription price, \$4.00 for the college year.

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Wednesday, March 2, 1932

### Aiding The "Bosses"

The ideal system of election would have each voter, after careful thought, cast his ballot for the one man whom he deems best qualified for office, without interference by intimidation, party considerations, or "machine" politics. Such a system can never be attained here or anywhere else, but we can do much to make our present system nearer like that. There will always be organized machines to nominate candidates. Voters will always be bound by promises to party leaders to vote this way or that. When election time comes, the students who are not actively engaged in politics will find their choice limited to two men for each office, in whose nomination they had no voice. There is not much that can be done about this situation, but the machines should certainly not be allowed to go farther and dictate the voter's choice between the two.

Under the present system of elections at Carolina, the would-be voter is pounced upon by pickets of each party who hand him lists of their candidates, try to cudgel him into voting for them, and seek to tie banners reading "All-Campus" or "Non-Fraternity" about him. When the battered student finally forces his way through the mob and is given a ballot, he enters a room where he is supposed to have an opportunity to vote secretly. The room is small, however, and several men are usually there voting with several others who are not voting often standing near by. There is abundant opportunity for them to learn the voter's choice. Finally, every ballot cast must be signed. This rule is probably of some value as a check on ballot-stuffing; but it also gives the members of the student council, among whom are always "bosses" of both parties, an opportunity to see, when the votes are counted, just how each man voted.

While such a system of voting probably does not have a great effect upon the results of any election, it does deny the voter his right to cast his vote in private and violates the principle of the Australian ballot, which is supposed to be in force

on the campus. It strengthens the machine in politics by allowing the political leaders to check up on the loyalty of each of their followers. If the student council is to carry out its obligation to establish the Australian ballot, it must adopt some ruling to provide the voter strict privacy in casting his vote. A large room should be provided for the voting so that the voter will not have to stand near others while marking his ballot. No one should be allowed in the room except those who are about to vote. The requirement that every student must sign his ballot should be abolished.

The adoption of these regulations would not clean up politics on the campus, but it would go a long way toward giving every student a chance to vote as he wishes and loosening the grip of party politics on campus elections.—D.M.L.

### Can The Democratic Party Last?

The highly problematical future of the Democratic party in the present age of chaos and change especially deserves the attention of college students in southern states, the sectionalism, traditions, and community of interests of which have composed the principal basis and in part the excuse for the existence of that party since the Civil War. The unusually favorable chances for Democratic success next fall should prove a godsend to the party, which has won only one victory over a united opposition since 1892, and that one (in 1916) by so close a margin that victory was at first conceded to the Republican candidate, our present chief justice. Since the Civil War, in fact, only once (in '92) have the Democrats been swept to power by a majority decisive enough to resemble the landslides with which Republican policies have often been endorsed.

If an age of liberalism, of reason, and of a politically critical and interested public should finally emerge from the current confusion, it is probable that the two great national parties will undergo some degree or revamping, but more especially the Democratic, made up as it is of such diverse constituents as the southern dries, Tammany, and the genuinely liberal elements, North and South. The incongruity and mutual hostility of these divisions, excelling easily the division within the Republican party between "Stand-patters" and Progressives, have been reflected in the severe factional conflicts that have repeatedly shaken the party conventions. The farcical affair at Madison Square Garden in 1924 offered undoubtedly the supreme portrayal of Democratic factionalism—in its intensity, almost fanatical and apparently utterly indifferent to consequences. In 1928, again, the Protestant dries of the rural south, rather than support the wet, Catholic, urban Smith, cast their votes for Hoover, the Republican nominee.

The widespread condemnation of the Hoover administration, whether justified or not, combined with the possibility of a more united stand by the party against prohibition, may enable the nation's Democracy to survive as now constituted for several more elections. Even here, however, history is not very reassuring. Grover Cleveland, reelected in the presidency '92 by a large majority, was within a short time in bitter conflict with his own party leaders of Congress, and after a stormy and violent tenure of office witnessed a party candidate (whom he himself openly spurned) sharply defeated. Wilson, given a second term in 1916, left office in 1921 a broken man, his party and the League of Nations overwhelmingly repudiated by the people.—K.P.Y.

### What This Country Needs . . .

Ever since the memorable phrase "What this country needs is a good five cent cigar" first came from the lips of Vice-President Marshall, humorists, movie scenario writers, and musical comedy fops have twisted it about to suit their particular mode of repartee until a mere utterance of the first four words evoke immediate derision from the hearer, irregardless of the sober purpose of the speaker. Eddie Cantor has added the latest connotation with some such as "What this country needs is five cents." This is certainly expressive of current feeling, but this as well as other misapplications of such a phrase may be a contributing factor in the light attitude many of us are taking at this time on the question of our national needs.

What does this country need? Few persons really know, and the vast majority who do seem to spend their time writing syndicated newspaper humor articles and prattling into a loud speaker. If a time ever existed for sane analysis of such a question it is today, and all our Walter Winchells, Eddie Cantors, and Frank Sullivans cannot benefit the cause in their trite phraseology. The time has come for a political and economical journalistic dictator who can point the way soberly and sanely.—D.C.S.

### It Is Worth Knowing That—

The public debt of the United States in 1931 totaled \$16,801,485,143 or \$134.40 per capita. This does not include gold, silver or currency, certificates, or treasury notes of 1890.

The tallest light house on the eastern seaboard is located at Cape Hatteras, N. C.

New York has been the most populous state in the union since 1820.

### With Contemporaries

#### Dead Brains

Last night while we were watching the Linit sign from our balcony we decided we knew what was wrong with the country. It wasn't a moment's dazzling revelation. Indeed, no. We had been thinking about it seriously for exactly a year. Perhaps the temperate air last night and the smell of livestock from the New York Central tracks gave startling flight to our thought processes.

Before we tell you what our grisly conclusions were we shall take you back to February 22, 1931, a year and a day ago, when we, in company with four of our lewd friends and drunken companions, decided that the United States was in one hell of a fix. We knew there was a fix but we didn't know what caused the fix. We were, in a sense, crusaders. That night, cigarettes glowing and slightly cockeyed, we resolved to meet again in a year and exchange results around the dinner table. The results of our parley were to be published in letters to *The New York Times*, *The London Times*, *Le Matin*, *Pravda*, and the *Berliner Tageblatt*.

Alas for the welfare of those to come after us! There was no round table conference last night. In the course of the year our four friends had shuffled off cares of this world. You will recall that one of them was killed in a drunken brawl; another of them had died in agony, the victim of phoney liquor; an-

other of them fell from an airplane at a height of 4,000 feet. (Some say he jumped.) The last of our friends was given a decent burial by the good fathers of Mt. Carmel in Mexico. There was no one left of our company but us. The year had elapsed.

We ate dinner alone last night. After the coffee had been cleared away we lit a cigarette and wandered out to the balcony. It was 9:45 P. M. For ten minutes we stood looking at the lights of the river. We lifted our eyes to the stars and then we decided we knew the answer to the question which four dead men had asked a year earlier.

We scrawled on a piece of paper the following words:

To our four dead friends, greeting:

A year ago tonight we pledged ourselves to answer a question. You four are now dead, but we are alive. It is our duty to set down an answer to the question we propounded. A year ago tonight we asked ourselves this question: What is wrong with the United States?

Tonight we feel that the answer can be set down in a few words, namely: The United States worships its dead slavishly. Its Washingtons, its Lincolns are its religion. The utterances of a Washington made some 156 years ago and the utterances of a Lincoln who lived more than half a century ago comprise the catechism of the United States. Deviation from the divine sayings is punished with moral excommunication.

Religions must change to fit their communicants. Or religion is unchangeable, immutable. Today it remains what it was decades and centuries ago. Our government tailors us to fit the creed. Can we expect anything but aimless wandering when twentieth century problems are attacked with dead brains?—*Columbia Spectator*.

#### The Good Bishop Is Much Mistaken

The great sin of today is represented by the "godlessness that sits in the cathedrals of our universities, and parades under the pageantry of learning and progress." It is Archbishop Streich of the Roman Catholic church speaking, voicing again the old complaint of the theologian who lives by the ignorance and superstition of the masses.

Colleges have been criticized again and again because on rare occasions they have dared to encourage their students to raise their eyes from the dust and look frankly at the Gods they have been worshiping, because on rare occasions they have encouraged their students to ask their gods questions and to ponder their gods' answers critically.

If the good Archbishop and the rest of his fellow critics only knew what a tame and dogma-hedged sanctuary for sacred cows an American university really is, if they only knew how rare the occasions they complain of really were, they would hold their breath for fear of disturbing the status quo and encouraging the very crimes they bemoan. The bitter truth is that neither intelligent godlessness nor intelligent godliness are to be found in the "pageantry of learning" as it unfolds on the average college campus.

There are few men on the faculty who dare to raise their voice above a whisper when they are speaking of religion. They know that any word they may utter is sure to fall with a thud on someone's pet sectarian corn, and they are afraid. There are men on our own board of trustees who would rave if they heard of an instructor speaking his mind on God or on any of the petty sects that have grown

fat on man's ignorance and superstition in the name of God.

Religion, as represented by the dogmatism of Methodist, Roman Catholic, or Holy Roller, has lost its hold on youth. Institutional religion has become an empty cocoon from which the living organism has fled. As a result, youth has no religion, no God. One would not quarrel with its atheism or its agnosticism if it were the result of intelligent questioning, but the current brands are not. They are merely indifference.

Men like Archbishop Streich are, by their very fanaticism, defeating their own purpose. They condemn free and open discussion of religious questions, and by that act, they raise an insurmountable barrier against any true religion. We, being young, refuse to take anyone's authority who forbids us to discuss their edicts or their own reason for being. If discussion is forbidden, we will shrug our shoulders and turn away.—*Daily Northwestern*.

#### Unfair Criticism . . .

*National Business Review* finds it deplorable in the extreme that a worthy organ, freely expressing what happens to be the opinion of the majority of American citizens has been banned by police orders here from being distributed. We refer to the "Herald of Good Times," published by the Republican Citizens Committee Against National Prohibition, headed by Raymond Pitcairn, and the secretary of which organization is the well known Harry B. Finn.

Superintendent Mills contends that this publication is being banned not because it is anti-

prohibition, nor because it publishes fictitious information, but merely because it is falsely included among "papers, pamphlets and circulars" which later were discarded and littered the streets. This seems too thin and flimsy to be given credence. The real motive is obviously to check the dissemination of opinions that actually conform to the real feeling of the nation and is subversive of true freedom of speech and of the press guaranteed by the federal constitution.

The worthy purpose of this publication, which was distributed in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Chicago and other cities, was to stimulate national interest in a meeting to be held soon in Chicago designed to force prohibition repeal into the Republican Presidential platform. Besides, the committee has covered the entire nation by direct mail containing the same information. We are vigorously in favor of this movement and look forward eagerly to the removal of this unjust check on the expression of opinion. We are glad that this committee is determined to distribute the paper regardless, and that this is consonant with the opinion of Philadelphia citizens was revealed by the numerous letters to them containing voluntarily contributions to the committee, in substantial amounts.

Prominent men from all parts of the country have signified their hearty approval of the movement in its entirety, including the noted Nicholas Murray Butler, and other well-known national figures in all walks of life. No better indications of its worth and popularity could be had than this.—*National Business Review*.

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