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Old Age Pensions

WITHOUT attempting to pass upon the merits or otherwise of the bill which has been introduced by Senator Wagner of New York and Representative Lewis of Maryland, providing for a national system of old-age pensions, we believe that the great majority of Americans are in hearty agreement with the fundamental principles involved.

We know of nobody who is not in favor of some effective system of providing for those who in old age are unable to support themselves in decent comfort.

We believe that the plan of building up, during an individual's working life, a fund to which the worker, the employer and perhaps the State are contributors, which will provide an annuity for old age, is the soundest possible way of accomplishing this end. It removes completely any possible stigma of pauperism, which is inevitably attached to gratuitous grants of unearned benefits.

As to what the amount of such pensions should be, and whether the compulsory retirement age should be 60, 65 or 70 years, there is a great diversity of opinion.

There is much to be said for the voluntary annuity system proposed for the "self-employed," whereby the farmer, the doctor, the lawyer or anyone else who is not attached to a payroll, can place a small part of his or her income in trust with the Government, from year to year, to accumulate until the retiring age is reached, when an income for life may then be derived from the accumulated fund. We understand such a system has been employed in England for more than two hundred years.

To the hopeful elderly persons who have been looking forward to immediate old-age pension checks from the Government, the bill as introduced offers little solace. Provision is made for joint state and Federal relief for those who are practically destitute, but the age at which this relief shall begin may be placed as high as 70 years. This does not bring much comfort to those in their sixties who have been led to believe there was a chance of getting \$200 a month right now.

At any rate, the Wagner-Lewis bill is a start toward a goal at which the nation, sooner or later, must arrive—Selected.

Iron Is Hot

The North Carolina absentee voters' law is probably the most condemned piece of legislation in the law books. The Republican party leadership has developed symptoms of apoplexy at times in its opposition to it. Countless Democratic individuals have waxed wroth. The Mecklenburg board of elections has expressed its antipathy for it. Governor Ehringhaus in his message to the general assembly berated it roundly. And now comes the state board of elections asking that it be stricken from the statutes.

If anybody has dared to raise his voice in defense of absentee voting the sound has not reached our ears. On the contrary, even the practical politicians turn a cold shoulder toward it.

Well, what are they waiting for? Repeal it, pack it away in that old trunk up in the Capitol's attic reserved for legislative mistakes. But do it now, while Barkis is willing.—Charlotte News.

The home town business man is the fellow who is supposed to contribute generously to every effort to improve his city, help the churches, the women's organizations, baseball teams, and pays stiff taxes and licenses to keep the local government going. On the side, he may look after his own business. If he has a business after 20 years, he's successful.—George W. Greene in The Pocketbook.

The thinking part of mankind do not form their judgment from events; and their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions which deserve success, and those which have been crowned with it.—Washington.

Let's Foil Mister Ground Hog — by A. B. Chapin



THROUGH CAPITAL KEYHOLES  
BY BESS HINTON SILVER

LIQUOR AND GOVERNORS—

Some astute political observers in Raleigh express the opinion that passage of any bill to call a referendum on the question of liberalizing North Carolina's boneyard liquor laws by the present legislature would work decidedly to the benefit of the potential candidacy of Clyde R. Hoey, silver-tongued Shelby orator, for governor next year. These political wise-acres figure that Mr. Hoey would lead once more the fight against liquor and that he would be successful. They say that this would be interpreted as a mandate from the people and that the Shelby attorney would be handed the Democratic nomination for Governor on a figurative silver platter.

DOUGHTON—

The boys who are supposed to know their political stuff have doped it out that the fate of the sales tax may have more than a little to do with Congressman R. L. Doughton's decision on the campaign to get him in the gubernatorial race next year. Mr. Doughton led the fight against the sales tax in Congress just a few years ago. If the present General Assembly adopts a sales tax as a necessity he would either be forced to support it or reverse himself, the dopesters say. It looks like the legislature is going to reenact the sales tax and you can make your bets on Congressman Doughton.

A. H. GRAHAM—

Meantime, friends of Lieutenant Governor A. H. (Sandy) Graham are leaving no stone unturned in smoothing out the ground for him to make the race for Governor. Many friends of the second high man of North Carolina express confidence that neither Hoey nor Doughton will make the race and that Mr. Graham will be the next Governor of North Carolina. It's all being kept very quiet but so far the Senate's presiding officer hasn't done anything that observers classify as a political mistake and he has said that his luck with this General Assembly probably may have decided influence on his decision in the gubernatorial contest.

GASOLINE TAXES—

It looks like everybody and his brother want to get their hands into tax money paid by automobile and truck owners of North Carolina. Around legislative halls can be heard many different proposals for using gasoline and license money for other purposes than roads.

Some want it to pay local government debts; others to establish employment offices and others for the schools. But the State's roads, especially the secondary highways, are not in the pink of condition and legislators from rural counties know that. Also some bridges still levy tolls for passage. It's likely to be a merry fight before the question of diversion of highway funds is settled.

MORE MONEY—

The General Assembly has been in Raleigh long enough for it to become apparent that the membership favors boosting salaries of public school teachers even higher than the recommendations of 15 per cent made by Governor Ehringhaus. The tutors will get it if the Legislature can find the money but finance committee meetings have indicated that no members have discovered a tax gold mine.

SAFETY—

It now appears certain that some sort of automobile drivers' license measure will pass the Legislature and become law. Several measures have been introduced and the committees on roads of House and Senate will reduce these to a committee substitute. If it is reasonable the chances of passage are good but it is generally agreed that with any effective drivers' license law must go a substantial increase in the number of State Highway Patrolmen to enforce it.

MARATHONS—

The bill of Dr. John T. Burrus, Senator from Guilford county, to abolish "walkathons" and dance endurance contests didn't make the motion picture operations angry one bit. The film exhibitors can figure that a lot of dimes and quarters going into the walkathons will not come back to the picture shows. Outside that also, there has been much objection voiced to walkathons from many section of the State.

FILLING STATIONS—

Representative W. L. Lumpkin, of Franklin, wants a tax to reach filling stations operated in chains by oil companies, or others, something after the manner of the chain store tax. He hopes to get around the possibility of leasing such stations to individuals by a provision in the revenue law which would make the tax he has in mind apply to stations operated or leased by the same company.

ON THEIR TOES—

Heads of State Departments and institutions are making good use of the hearings accorded them by the appropriations committees of the House and Senate. In most cases the Advisory Budget Commission cut their requests and having been on what they consider near starvation rations for the past two years (and not much wealthier the

two preceding years) the boys and girls hope to impress the appropriations groups with the gravity of their situations.

FOUNTAIN—

In some quarters on Capitol Hill the Wags are asking if former Lieutenant Governor R. T. Fountain, of Rocky Mount, is a political fountain of youth. In Raleigh last week Mr. Fountain admitted to newspaper men that he is "seriously considering" running for the Senate in opposition to Senator Josiah W. Bailey next spring. Mr. Fountain seriously considered running for Governor quite a while before stepping across the line that made him a candidate in 1932. There is considerable opinion that Mr. Bailey will also face opposition in the person of Governor Ehringhaus but the Governor is holding his peace on the subject.

NEW STAR—

Arising in the political heavens is the star of Senator Harris Newman, of New Hanover, shining on the office of Lieutenant Governor. From close personal friends of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance comes word that he will make the race. Senator Newman is silent. If he runs he will face potential opposition from two other Senators, W. G. (Cousin Willie) Clark, of Edgecombe, and President Pro Tem Paul D. Grady, of Johnston. Definitely in the race is former Senator George McNeill, of Fayetteville, a foe observers believe cannot be safely discounted.

SALES TAX—

If membership of Senate and House finance committees is any index to the complexion of the General Assembly, the three per cent sales tax will be enacted without prolonged opposition. Of course, there will be violent opposition but the votes in committee do not indicate any real threat of defeat or an impasse on the retail levy. Practically all proposals against the sales tax have been promptly voted down in committee meetings.

SLOT MACHINES—

Past legislatures have attempted to run slot machines out of the State by passing laws against them. The present legislature is of the same mind but since the penal laws have not been successful, according to many members, this General Assembly hopes to tax them out of existence. That explains the upping of taxes on the little machines with holes for your nickels, dimes and quarters rather than any hope of increasing State revenues.

The Great Bell of Moscow was cast in 1730 and weighs 193 tons. Three other bells in Moscow are of great size.