

Published every Thursday by The Franklin Press
At Franklin, North Carolina

VOL. LXIV Number 5

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Entered at Post Office, Franklin, N. C., as second class matter.

Telephone No. 24

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

One Year	\$2.00
Six Months	\$1.25
Three Months	.75
Single Copy	.06

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Time To Change Strategy

SOME Southern leaders in congress teamed up recently with northern Republicans in a vain effort to restore the old house regulation under which the rules committee held the power of life and death over all legislation. The Southerners' motive, of course, was to defeat President Truman's civil rights program by preventing its coming up for a vote in the house. Fortunately, the plan failed, for nothing could be more undemocratic; and the house may pass the President's measures.

If the program should pass in the house, Southerners in the senate will seek to defeat it by use of the filibuster.

In short, the single Southern tactic is to keep civil rights legislation from coming to a vote.

A lot of Southerners who have little patience with the so-called civil rights legislation are coming to the conclusion that that is bad strategy.

In the first place, it has put the South on the defensive. We are placed in the position of opposing equal rights for a minority, and of resorting to undemocratic methods to keep the Negro in the South in bondage. The question of whether that is true becomes secondary; that is the position we are placed in.

That only adds fuel to the flame or northern fervor. Each time the South wins by these methods, the honest non-Southern crusaders become even more zealous; and to the northern demagogue, the situation presents a perfect issue for catching the Negro vote.

The Southerners have held this position so long that the issue has become inflamed, and today there appears little doubt that we are going to have some sort of civil rights legislation. It is in the cards; if not at this session of congress, then at the next, or the next.

A change in strategy is long overdue. The time has come for Southern congressmen to let the civil rights program come to a vote.

Most of them, no doubt, are quite honest in believing that the proposed laws are wrong, wholly unworkable; and that they will add to, rather than lessen, racial friction. So they could hardly be expected to vote for these measures; but they can let them come to a vote.

What would happen if they did?

The first result would be to take the Negro in the South out of the role of a downtrodden martyr. And the South out of the role of an oppressor and an obstructor of democratic processes. That would tend to restore discussion of the subject to an intellectual rather than its present emotional level.

In the second place, it would completely rob the northern demagogue of his chief issue. Incidentally, too, if the Southerners want to embarrass the President—and many of them do—they could find no better method. With an election coming up, it is quite possible that the administration would find means to prevent enactment of the program into law—even the President is too good a politician to deliberately forfeit an issue that might give him the balance-of-power Negro vote.

The Southerners have repeatedly sought a compromise, and been rebuffed. If they permitted a vote on civil rights, the chances are they would get their compromise. Civil rights advocates, faced with the prospect of an easy victory, would feel a sense of responsibility now absent. Either in this congress or the next, they probably would pass a greatly watered-down program; if in this congress, almost certainly one that would sound good but mean little.

But suppose the whole drastic program proposed by the President were enacted?

In the long run, that might be the best thing that could happen. For the South either must accept a civil rights program or discredit it. And no better way to discredit it—in fact the only way—is to enact the President's program and let the country see for itself that it is unworkable.

And of course it is. Because, basically, it involves good will between the races. And you can no more create good will by legislation than you can create personal morality by legislation. By comparison, enforcement of prohibition was no problem at all.

Election Machinery Questions

Macon County's board of elections will meet at the courthouse tomorrow to hear the public on two questions: Shall there be a new county-wide registration of voters? and shall Franklin township be divided into two precincts?

Board members report there is opposition to both proposals. Tomorrow the board will hear those who favor and those who oppose them.

Whether a new registration is necessary to put the registration books in order this newspaper does not claim to know. But it does know that something needs to be done.

The registration books should contain the names of all eligible voters who are enough interested in voting to take the trouble to register; they should not contain the names of those who long since have died or have moved their legal residence to other counties or other states. It should be possible for any citizen to determine at any time who is and who is not registered, and how many qualified voters there are in any precinct or in the county. That certainly is not the case now; even election officials can only guess at how many of those whose names are on the registration books are alive and still citizens of this county.

The books ought to be put—and kept—in A-1 shape. Whatever steps are necessary to accomplish that end ought to be taken. If it takes a re-registration, then let's have a re-registration.

As to the division of Franklin township, here are a few facts: In the 1948 election, 1,804 ballots were cast for President in this precinct. In that election, and every other recent election where there were many races, the election officials had to count all night and far into the next day. In area also, the township is large; it extends from the old Lyle place on the Dillsboro road to the old Lenoir place on the Murphy road, and from Foutstown on the north to the Morrison church on the south.

It is big enough, both in area and population, to be divided into four or five rather than just two precincts; such a division would seem to make registration and voting more convenient for the citizens of the township.

We need either a division or a voting machine.

One other change, too, ought to be made. The polling place or places should be on the ground floor. The courtroom of the courthouse not only is inadequate; it is not right to expect the elderly or the crippled to climb the courthouse stairs in order to vote.

Can You Vote?

It is a citizen's duty and responsibility to vote in every election. That is doubly true of the school bond election February 21. Furthermore, every citizen of this county has a personal interest in the outcome of that election.

On the one hand, if the bond proposal is approved at the polls, it means that this county will assume a debt of half a million dollars, and every man, woman, and child in the county will have to contribute, directly or indirectly, to repay that debt.

On the other hand, if the bonds are defeated, it means that the children of this county must suffer—your children, or your grandchildren, or your neighbor's children. It means also that the entire progress of the county will be retarded.

The school bond election, therefore, presents an issue in which each one of us has a personal stake.

But can you vote in that election? You cannot, unless you are registered.

The proposed new county-wide re-registration does not apply to the school bond election. But at every election a lot of folks go to the polls to vote, only to find that their names are not on the registration books. Are you sure about yours?

The registration books close February 11. But to be safe, don't wait till then. Check with your registrar, at your polling place, this Saturday; make sure your name is on the books.

Wire Tapping Again

Again wire-tapping has been given official approval, this time by President Truman's attorney general, Mr. McGrath.

He and J. Edgar Hoover defend the practice on the grounds that it is employed only in serious cases. The FBI, Mr. Hoover suggests, taps the wires of only the worst criminals; good citizens are safe.

That, it might be remarked, was exactly the argument Hitler advanced in defense of some of his practices.

This is not the first time federal officers have been upheld in their resort to the questionable practice of tapping wires to trap those apparently too smart to be trapped otherwise. But to date none of those who uphold the practice has been able to answer the argument of Justice Brandeis.

In a dissenting opinion, that great defender of American civil liberties had this to say of wire-tapping:

"It is immaterial that the intrusion was in aid of law enforcement. Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficent.

"Men born to freedom are naturally alert to repel invasion of their liberty by evil-minded rulers. The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well-meaning but, without understanding."

A TRIBUTE TO
Senator Frank P. Graham

By Drew Pearson

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following character sketch of North Carolina's junior U. S. Senator is of special interest here, since Senator Graham will address the annual dinner meeting of the Franklin Chamber of Commerce February 25. The article, which appeared in Pearson's Washington column, Merry-Go-Round, January 16, is noteworthy, in that the author of the Merry-Go-Round is much more often critical than commendatory of public officials. The article is reprinted by special permission of the Bell Syndicate.)

WASHINGTON—A modest little man who looks like a small-town hardware merchant has completely won the heart of cynical Capitol Hill in less than a year.

He is Frank P. Graham, former president of the University of North Carolina, now Senator from that State. Graham is as friendly and disarming as a puppy, has a lively twinkle in his dark eyes, and has spare gray hair that looks as though he'd just come in from a wind-storm.

When Dr. Graham was appointed to the Senate last March, John Bricker, rightwing Republican, raised the clamor that the newcomer was a "radical."

Sen. Forrest C. Donnell of Missouri, a conscientious conservative, asked his GOP colleague, Wayne Morse, "What kind of a fellow is Graham? You served with him on the War Labor Board."

To the deeply religious Donnell, Senator Morse replied, "Forrest, I have often said you were the most Christian man I know. Frank Graham is the most Christlike man I know."

Months later, Donnell remarked to Morse: "Remember what you said about Frank Graham being the most Christlike man you know? Well, I share your opinion."

Whenever Senator Graham rises from a Senate desk that almost swallows him—he is the shortest man on the floor—Senators come back from the cloakrooms to listen. This is a tribute few men in Senate history have won. Frank Graham is not an orator, in the manner of dramatic Arthur Vandenberg. He speaks in a soft drawl, but he is able to put in simple words the great problems of the day, and point the way clearly to their answers.

After his Senate speech on the Atlantic Pact, Republican Sen. Charles Tobey, himself a vivid phrasemaker, remarked in awe:

"Frank Graham's speech was the greatest I have ever heard in the Senate. The Senator has given us a pattern, not for my party or his party, but a pattern for America. I commend his State for having given him to us as a Senator."

After another Graham talk, Senator Vandenberg said thoughtfully, "I was profoundly impressed by his grasp of the subject."

Despite the praise showered on him, Frank Graham is still a modest, unassuming man with a great affection for people. He will spot a friend, a Senator, an elevator boy working his way through college, or a reporter, and trot up to him. "Hey, there," he will say, "got something to talk to you about."

Senator Graham is one of the most conscientious men in Washington, and a story is told of how President Roosevelt exploited this. Dr. Graham's university trustees had asked him to resign from the War Labor Board and give all his time to the university. Graham stayed up all night writing and re-writing his letter of resignation to the President.

When he arrived at the White House, Mr. Roosevelt, who had been tipped off, got in the first word. He said, "Frank, what would you think of a man who deserts his nation in time of war? I have a businessman here who wants to resign from the War Production Board and go back to his company?"

Later, when Dr. Graham returned to his hotel, a friend asked, "Well, did you resign?"

Meekly, Graham drew from his pocket the crumpled but still unopened letter of resignation.

Others' Opinions

THE FOOTBALL BANQUET

Seventy-five miles is a long ways to drive for your supper, but it was worth it. . . . Our thanks to the Franklin Rotary Club and the ladies who prepared the delicious ham for the invitation to the annual Franklin High School football banquet last Wednesday evening. . . . Also, to Dr. Edgar Angel for an extra large helping of ice cream in his spacious kitchen following the banquet. . . . There's nothing like a large hunk of ice cream and cake as a just before going to sleep snack. . . . And if you don't believe us, ask Coach Carl Snavely. . . . Incidentally, that's the first time we ever saw the dour Dutchman of Chapel Hill shove his plate back with some ice cream still remaining on it. . . . If there's one thing Snavely likes better than winning football games it's eating ice cream, but Dr. Angel had his number—there was just too much of the luscious cream and not enough Snavely appetite.

During our short stay in the Macon County metropolis we learned enough to convince us that Franklin High will be a team to contend with on Western North Carolina gridirons very soon. . . . The town is firmly behind Coach Milburn Atkins in his work to give them a winner. . . . They have built him a concrete stadium of 4,000 capacity with the latest type lights, and they are giving him more than just a pat on the back. . . . Atkins, who not so long ago was quarterbacking for the Carson-Newman (Tenn.) Eagles, has brought the tricky Frosty Holt "T" to Franklin and it is beginning to click. . . . Right now his material is a bit on the small side, but judging from the way the boys were putting away the food they won't be that way very long—Red Miller in his Asheville Citizen-Times sports column, "Straight Talk".

PUBLISHING COURT PROCEEDINGS

As always with newspapers, some News-Herald readers are prone to fine objection to publishing the proceedings of the County Recorder's Court.

We have been criticized for publishing them and we have been criticized for not publishing them. We realize there will be criticism, either way.

Proceedings of the court are public information, like the Superior Court. Anyone who desires can go to the records in the courthouse and read them. That is Democracy—our chosen way of life.

The best way to keep your name out of the court proceedings is not to get into court. The News-Herald has nothing to do with who gets into court, trial proceedings, or the verdict.

This newspaper only reports the court proceedings after they have taken place. We do not wish to condemn or condone the behavior of anyone. We only want to report the news as it happens.

Another problem that we cannot solve is two or more people in the county having the same name. One is a defendant in court. His name appears in the proceedings. His "name sake" is often ribbed by his friends, even though he is innocent.

The address of each defendant is not given on the warrants. There is no way of telling when a name is published, how many more people in this county have the same name.

It might help to check crime or law breaking, if the defendant knows that his, or her name is going to be published. Other newspapers publish the court proceedings. And The News-Herald will continue to do so.

If you do not want your name in the paper, stay out of court.—Morganton News-Herald.

Almost everything that is great has been done by youth.
—Benjamin Disraeli.



Families in N. C.
Paid \$17,684,000
In Life Insurance

North Carolina families received \$17,684,000 in life insurance death benefit payments in the first nine months of this year, compared with \$15,315,000 in the corresponding period of last year, the Institute of Life Insurance has reported.

The number of policies becoming claims in the first nine months was 17,965 which compares with 15,067 in the corresponding period of 1948.

Louisiana's sugar plantations, after a battle against mosaic and other diseases that began a quarter century ago, are now better than ever and improving year by year.

LEGAL ADVERTISING

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE

Having qualified as executor of Mary Gibson Henry, deceased, late of Macon County, N. C., this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 16th day of January, 1951, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate settlement.

This 16th day of January, 1950.
FRANK POTTS,
Executor.

J19-6tp-F23

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