

The Franklin Press

and

The Highlands Maconian

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FEBRUARY 3, 1955

Frightening

If you or I should hire a man to run a business for us, we'd expect our manager to keep in mind that the business belonged to us. We'd insist on walking into our establishment at any time we wished, to see how things were going; we'd demand the right, as a matter of course, to sit in on conferences about how our business should be run; we'd want to know not only what our manager was doing, but why he was doing it. Whether we availed ourselves of these rights, we certainly would not tolerate our manager's operating our business behind doors closed to us.

The issue of secrecy about the conduct of the public's business is as simple as that.

Not one of the members of the North Carolina General Assembly would permit secrecy in the operation of a business he owned. But most of them insist upon the "inherent right" of legislative committees to conduct the public's business behind doors closed to the public.

In 1953, the Legislature gave legal authority to its appropriations committee and sub-committees to meet in secret. The 1955 Legislature has authorized all its committees to close their doors to the public.

Because the vote was overwhelming, the legislators may think they have buried the issue. They are wrong. No issue involving a fundamental question of right and wrong is ever buried by mere force.

The most significant thing about the situation, though, is not that the legislators have voted themselves license to legislate in secret, bad as that is. The most significant thing is how this was accomplished, and the public reaction to the methods employed.

A large proportion of the legislators — probably a majority — had publicly committed themselves, before their elections, to repeal of the 1953 secrecy law. And they have repealed that law.

But before doing so, they were careful to amend their rules to permit not just one committee, but all committees, to hold closed sessions. In short, they kept the letter of their promises; they violated the spirit.

Such unvarnished hypocrisy normally would create a storm of criticism. In this case, there has been almost none!

The conclusion is obvious: Deceit and trickery by legislators have come to be taken for granted.

That is a tragic thing. Because popular government in America depends on a balance between administrative, judicial, and legislative branches. Without a strong legislative branch, we would have tyranny by one or both of the other two. And the legislative branch cannot stay strong without the confidence of the public.

It is a danger signal when public confidence in legislators sinks as low as it appears to be today.

A Wasm

Nearly a year ago this newspaper predicted that Senator McCarthy's days of power were numbered.

In its issue of last March 25, The Press remarked:

It is our guess that Senator Joseph R. McCarthy is on the way to oblivion. It would not surprise us if his name disappeared from the front pages within the next year . . . The reason is simple: A few persons have at last summoned the courage to challenge McCarthy . . . and have kept their heads. Others will take courage . . . A bully can continue bullying only so long as his bullying tactics create fear.

The facts appear to bear out that prediction.

Perhaps even more significant, the wisecracks do. The latest wisecrack in Washington is:

"McCarthy is no longer an ism. He's a wasm."

Party Liability, Too

Before the North Carolina General Assembly is a proposal to give local school boards "complete authority" over assignment and enrollment of public school pupils. Final authority now rests with the State Board of Education.

Whether that proposal makes sense, we don't pretend to know.

But we do know it would make sense to give the people of the counties "complete authority" over their school boards — by permitting the voters to elect the board members.

Under the present system, members of most county school boards are "nominated" in the Democratic primary. (North Carolina Republicans are supposed to have no interest in the schools their children attend.) Then the General Assembly, in Raleigh, "appoints" the board members.

The law says the General Assembly "shall" appoint those nominated. In practice, it often appoints whomever the local legislator (if, of course, he is a Democrat!) asks it to appoint.

To say that that system is archaic is to put it mildly. To say it is undemocratic is understatement. To say that it is a liability to the Democratic party itself is to state what is obvious — so obvious we are, hopeful even Democratic political leaders will see it one of these days.

Letters

WHAT'S WRONG WITH U. M. T.?

Editor, The Press:

Just what is wrong with Universal Military Training, or the new ready reserve program? Your editorial (Smells No Better, issue of Jan. 27) never went into any of the merits or demerits of either. How else maintain an army? General Hershey, a man respected by friend and foe and a man who has been closer to the problem than perhaps any other, has endorsed the plan. It seems equitable, necessary and good to me. We could possibly bribe men into military service but the idea that such a thing is necessary in our country is revolting to those of us who considered our military service a privilege and a duty.

Sincerely,

Dahlonga, Ga.

JACK CARPENTER.

ABOUT U. M. T.

Dear Weimar:

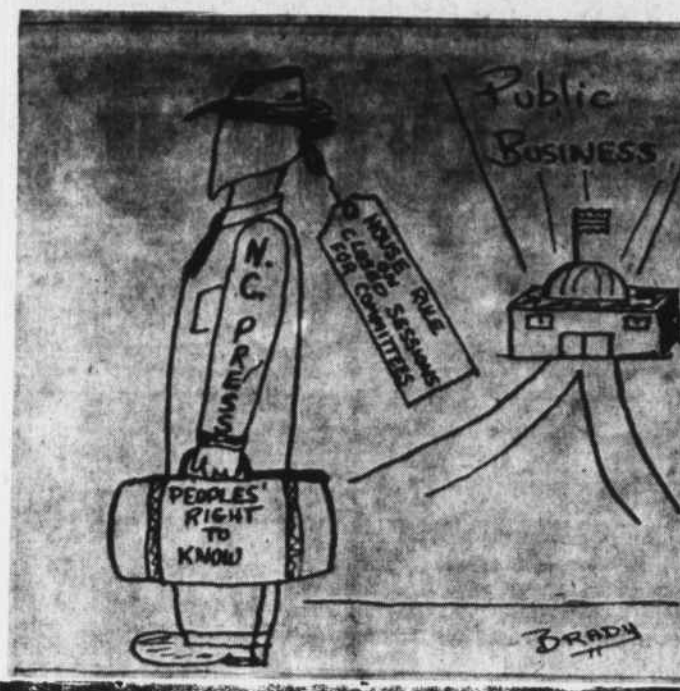
I was very pleased to learn from an item in this week's Press that you have again won a first place award for excellence of your editorial page, in competition with weekly papers throughout the state. Allow me to congratulate you and to say that I, too, am proud of your accomplishment.

I must confess, however, that my pleasure was considerably lessened when I opened to the editorial page and read what you said about universal military training. May I tell you briefly why I think you were wide of the mark in that editorial? I am not going to discuss the merits and demerits of U. M. T. I am sure you already know that I believe military training to be about the most valuable training that a young man gets; and I know that, for some reason I have never been able to understand, you consider such training degrading and otherwise harmful. What I wish to discuss is your appraisal of the situation regarding the positions or attitudes of "the military", the Congress, and the people, respectively.

You say, in effect, that "the military" has long attempted to foist upon the American people unwanted universal military training; that the Congress, representing the will of the people, has firmly resisted all such effort; and that now "the military", represented by our President, is trying to slip over such training under another name. It seems to me that each of the above statements is at variance with the facts. Let's look at each in turn.

To blame the people in our military establishment for Universal Military Training is just as foolish and wide of the mark as it would be, for instance, to blame the North Carolina Educational Association, our teachers and educational administrators for our compulsory school attendance law and the various other laws intended to make effective our efforts at education. These laws express the will of the people, although their details are largely worked out by the professionals in that line, the teachers. Our defense situation is an exact parallel. Defense of our country against all and sundry aggressors is the universal wish of the people, and not many of the people are sure that they know better how it can be done than the professionals.

Next, let's look at the attitude of Congress. Since June, 1951, we have been operating under a law which the Congress designated "A Universal Military Training and Service Act". And it is universal all right. The only persons exempt are veterans who have already given service in the country's defense, ordained ministers, sole surviving sons of parents who have lost a son in the country's defense, certain officers, such as governors of states and similar officials, and possibly one or two other very small categories. The induction of certain men is deferred when such deferment is believed to be in the interest of the country, but the law makes it plain that it is only a deferment, and every man is expected to serve. The original law, passed in 1948, provided for the induction of men between the ages of 19 and 26, but in 1951 Congressmen, evidently fearing that some men might extend their deferments



The Raleigh Masked Man

to the age of 26 and so escape service, extended the liability of all men deferred to age 35. So we are now operating under a law which requires every man to register when he is 18 years of age and, unless he gets in his service earlier, to remain liable for service until he is 35.

It seems to me that President Eisenhower is attempting to give young men a somewhat easier choice when he suggests that they be given the choice between either taking six months training at 18 years of age and remaining in the reserve for nine years or, as at present, remaining liable for service for 17 years unless they get in their two years service earlier.

Of course, when I state that the people of the country are not opposed to U. M. T. I am expressing my opinion, but the action of the Congress years ago seems to support such opinion. The rest of my statements are facts.

Sincerely,

Franklin.

NEVILLE SLOAN, Sr.

Others' Opinions

ANOTHER NEED (Bristol Herald Courier)

Another thing this sad old world needs is an easily convertible plowshare and sword.

NECESSARY (Washington, D. C., Surveyor)

It takes three people to make a really good conversation: two of them here and the other one far enough away so that she can't hear what is being said.

RUSSIAN STORY (C. A. Paul in Elkin Tribune)

Three Russian farmers were hailed before an inspector from Moscow. He asked the first farmer what he fed his chickens.

"Corn, sir," was the reply.

"Corn!" shouted the inspector. "Corn is used to feed people. Take him away to the salt mines."

As the first was being hauled away the second farmer was asked the same question. Trying to keep from falling into the trap, he said he fed his chickens corn shucks.

He, too, was ordered to Siberia. The Russians, it seems, make cloth from corn shucks.

Turning to the third man, the inspector said, "And you?"

"Oh," said the farmer, "I just give the chickens the money and let them buy whatever they want."

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

"What is it in the fabric of our society today that keeps us under such pressure—financial and otherwise?" asks a doctor friend of mine, in a personal letter.

"Doctors know", he continues, "what it does to people, and more important, we all know the important things it deprives us of!"

"And yet I know few or no people who do not suffer from this malady."

In those words, he expresses well a thought, a question, that has puzzled most of us.

And, to make it even more puzzling, oldsters point out how, in another period, people had none of the labor-saving and time-saving devices of today — yet they seemed to have more leisure!

Actually, of course, they worked much longer hours than most of us today; but they never worked under today's pressure.

Perhaps a part of the explanation lies in the fact that people, in the old days, had little choice about how they should use their time. Everything, except time, was

in short supply. Most of us had few books; automobiles were undreamed of; there were no movies, no radio and television; a trip (outside the immediate neighborhood) was a rare event. Today the problem has ceased to be: How shall I pass the time? It has become, instead: Which of the many things that call upon my limited time shall I choose? It has become a matter of discrimination — which of many books shall I read? which movie see? which television program watch? which friends cultivate? etc.

And, to a considerable extent, the situation applies to money as well as to time.

I suspect the younger generation, reared in today's atmosphere, is learning this art of discrimination. (Lacking the patience and philosophy of older persons, young people would go crazy if they didn't learn it.)

I suspect, too, that persons over, say, 30 find it a hard lesson to learn because they still are trying to adjust to the swift change from scarcity — of everything but time — to abundance — of everything but time.

News Making As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

The action of President Eisenhower in telling the world that the United States will help the Chinese Nationalists to defend Formosa is correct, we think. Also it was politically smart to obtain the support of Congress in this matter. Certainly, if we plan to prevent the spread of Communism we must draw a line and plainly state that we will allow no nation to advance by aggression beyond that point. However, there are unpleasant results produced by this action.

In making it plain, to the American people and the world in general, that our action is defensive and that we will not help the Chinese Nationalists to return to the mainland of China, the President, has in effect, recognized the existing government there. In short, we have accepted the proprietorship of the mainland of China by the Red Chinese. This, however, has probably been inevitable since the day that Chiang Kai-shek fled to Formosa. America is the only power which could have then or could now restore him to power, and we are not willing to spill the blood necessary of our young men to do the job. In the first place, many feel that Chiang is not a dependable enough character, or that the cause of Democracy would gain much in the restoration of his administration.

A second effect of the recent actions in the Far East is that, unless some unforeseeable event brings about the downfall of the Red government, eventually the Communists will take Formosa. This will probably occur at the death of Chiang Kai-shek. As it stands today, his name is such a symbol of the cause of Democracy in Asia that we cannot let him fall. But when the symbol is gone and time has made us complacent and we have become more used to a totalitarian government in that area will we fight to save Formosa? I think not.

There is the possibility that in the time gained by recent actions, the United Nations will become accepted as the court before which the sovereignty of nations is settled and this body will have a police force which can enforce its decision.

President Eisenhower faced the facts and took the most logical course, but, I fear, we have not heard the last of the advance of the Reds toward the

Continued on Page Three—

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK
Snow commenced falling pretty briskly about 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon and before night the ground was covered, and Monday the earth was covered to a depth of seven inches.

Postmaster Jarrett has received instructions from the Post Office Department to commence service on Routes 2 and 3, as laid out by Rural Agent Dawson in December. The service will commence Wednesday, February 15, 1905, with carriers at a salary of \$720 per annum each, including horse hire.

25 YEARS AGO

Mr. Wilton Cobb, cashier of the Highlands Bank, spent the week-end in Westminster, S. C., and Union Point, Ga. — Highlands.

Dr. Edgar Angel, interne at Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia, came home last week to spend several days. He will return to Philadelphia this week.

Mr. S. R. Crockett, superintendent of the Maxwell Training School, of Route 1, was in Franklin last Monday on business.

10 YEARS AGO

Sgt. W. L. Shope, who is stationed at Camp Fannin, Texas, is spending a 15-day furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Zeb V. Shope, at their home at Prentiss, and other relatives in Macon County.

S/2c Margaret Virginia Slagle, stationed at Stillwater, Okla., is here for a visit with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Slagle, at their home on West Main Street. Following her visit, she will report to Washington, D. C.

Mrs. J. E. Root is expected home this week from a visit with relatives in Charlotte and Charleston, S. C. — Highlands.