

WEIMAR JONES
Editorial Page Editor

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1959

HAVEN'T HEARD IT Any Good Answer?

Congress has passed a bill amending the veterans' pension law.

Whether the new measure is an improvement on the old law we do not pretend to know. But it has served one useful purpose. It has brought out into the open what many Americans did not know—that this nation is paying out millions of dollars to ex-servicemen whose present disabilities have no connection with their wartime service.

It would be hard to do too much for the man who was disabled while serving his country. But why pension those of us who came out with whole skins and are suffering from a disability—even as little as 10 per cent disability—that's solely due to age or other natural causes?

If there's any good answer to that question, we're yet to hear it.

Later's Too Late

It may be that the best solution—possibly the only solution—of Franklin's water problem is to pump water out of Cartoogechaye Creek, as proposed.

If and when there is convincing evidence that that is the case, we'll go along 100 per cent.

In the meantime, two things have made us question the desirability of the plan:

1. We can't understand how you can get better water from a polluted creek than from an unpolluted watershed.

2. We can't understand how it can be cheaper, in the long run, to pump water uphill than to let gravity pull it downhill.

After Franklin has already spent a third of a million dollars on a water system, it will be too late to discover we've made a mistake. The time to make sure what is the best plan is now—before we spend the money.

It is with that in mind that we respectfully express the hope the town board, before it goes farther with this project, will carefully investigate the possibilities of a watershed system.

We don't mean a mere conversational going-through-the-motions. Nor do we mean a mere survey by any engineering firm that's already been over the ground; human nature being what it is, it would be extraordinary for a firm to reverse its own recommendations.

A really careful, open-minded investigation, it seems to us, might involve hiring other competent, independent engineers—preferably a firm not engaged in construction, but serving solely as consultants—and saying to them substantially this:

"We'd like to put in a watershed gravity system. Please survey all the possibilities and tell us if it's possible and practicable and give details of cost, amount of water obtainable, etc." After that, there could be comparisons of initial cost, long-time operating costs, quality of water, and so on.

That would cost some money, but it would be better to spend it now than to wish we had, later.

Our Letters

This newspaper always welcomes letters to the editor.

If such letters applaud a stand taken by The Press, we are gratified; but if they disagree, that's even better—it gives readers the benefit of two viewpoints instead of one.

To be published, though, a letter must bear the signature of the writer.

Right now we have on file a letter dealing with Franklin's water problem and another critical of careless, low-flying pilots. We'd like to publish both. But they'll get into print only if and when the writers put their names to them.

I am an old man and have known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened.—Mark Twain.

Less Than Convincing

Sometime ago, it was learned that radioactive wastes from atomic energy plants were being dumped off the coast of North Carolina.

Alarmed Tar Heels poured protests into Washington.

Now the fears of North Carolinians have been pooh poohed.

In Raleigh last week, Governor Hodges made public a letter from the Governors Advisory Committee on Atomic Energy and other officials. The letter said there is no danger, period.

"There is no danger", it read, "to the people living permanently or visiting temporarily on the coast of North Carolina—either directly or from eating seafood"—in the disposal of radioactive wastes and trash in the ocean.

Well, we find that reassurance somewhat less than convincing. We suspect the persons responsible for that statement either do not know what they are talking about or are not telling the truth.

We base that suspicion not on any knowledge of the competence or the character of those responsible. We base it on the fact there is so much difference of opinion among scientists on this subject that it seems to us no responsible, informed person who was honest would make such a sweeping, unqualified statement. The truth probably is that nobody, so far, really knows whether there is danger from the dumping of atomic wastes, and if so, whether it is small or great.

Many eminent scientists feel the dangers from radioactivity have been exaggerated. Other equally eminent scientists feel the dangers have been vastly under-estimated.

There seems fairly general agreement among scientists, though, that there is danger. Yet the Governors Advisory Committee dismisses the whole matter of atomic waste disposal with a flat, sweeping statement!

Here's what one scientist says on this very subject of dumping atomic wastes in the sea:

"Is the creation of atomic energy for peacetime purposes safe? Well, what are you going to do with the waste? It is true you can put it in containers before you drop it in the sea, but have you any assurance such containers will keep it safe for hundreds of years?"

That comment, in response to a question, came from Dr. Carl C. Lindgren, director of the biological research laboratory at Southern Illinois University, at a recent newspaper meeting.

Dr. Lindgren, one of the nation's leading geneticists, has made a long-time study of the whole subject of radiation, particularly of the hereditary effects of today's radiation on generations yet to be born. In that connection, he expressed this opinion:

Any dose of radiation, no matter how small, produces an incurable, irreversible, hereditary damage proportional to the dose.

It is on this simple basis that one may affirm that there is no safe dose of radiation. The shocking fact about the effects of radiation damage upon the hereditary apparatus is that it requires an average of 40 generations for one of these incurable, irreversible characteristics to be eliminated from the population by natural causes.

This means that the original effect of a single radiation damage on a single person (who may be totally unconscious of the effect on himself) may be perpetuated on the average of about 800 years through the suffering of all the individuals involved before they are eliminated from the population by a higher death rate than their neighbors.

Now Dr. Lindgren's fears may be exaggerated. It may not be as bad as that. Conceivably, it may not be bad at all.

But that is the considered opinion of one responsible scientist. And nobody knows enough about the subject to say that he is wrong.

In the light of that, we can all breathe a sigh of

GROWING PAINS



One Way Street

Jimmy and Grandpa should respect each other, understand irritating little habits. Different generations have different needs. Acceptance of this fact can make a happier home.

relief at President Eisenhower's decision last week to extend America's suspension of nuclear weapons tests till next January.

State Of The Union

(Putnam County, Tenn., Herald)

Following is a kind of report on the state of the Union which some politicians and wasters of public money would prefer the people didn't see. It is a report made by Edwin Vennard, managing director of the Edison Electric Institute, to the Rotary Club of New York City and to all fellow citizens interested in preservation of freedom under self-government:

Federal government non-defense spending, per family, has increased from \$86 in 1930, to \$543 in 1959, or more than 500%.

Federal non-defense spending has increased from \$2.6 billion in 1930 to \$28.1 billion in 1959, or about 1000%.

Exclusive of the armed services, the federal government now employs 2.1 million people, as compared to 644,000 in 1930, an increase of over 200%.

In May, 1959, Senator Harry F. Byrd said: "Nearly 40 million Americans will receive direct payments from the Federal Treasury this year!"

In December, 1954, Rowland R. Hughes, then Director of the Bureau of the Budget, said: "(The federal government) is, among other things, the largest electric power producer in the country, the largest insurer, the largest lender and the largest borrower, the largest landlord and the largest tenant, the largest holder of grazing land and the largest holder of timber land, the largest owner of grain, the largest warehouse operator, the largest ship-owner, and the largest truck-fleet operator. For a country which is the citadel and the world's principal exponent of private enterprise and individual initiative, this is rather an amazing list."

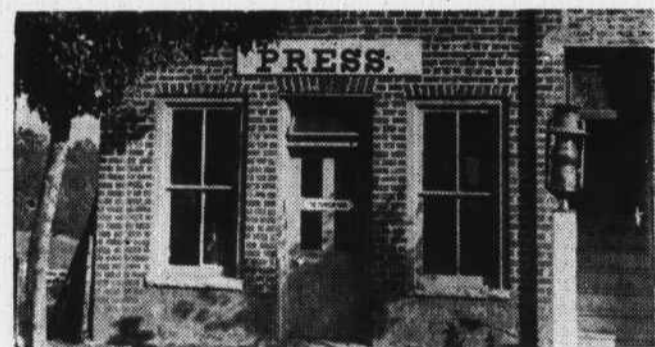
All taxes in 1930 took 13% of the national product, as compared to 20% in 1958.

The national debt has grown from \$540 per family in 1930 to \$5500 per family in 1959, an increase of more than 900%. And in this year of great prosperity, we are not requiring that our government live within its income from federal taxes. We are about to go further into debt, meaning we will borrow from future generations and may devalue the dollar in order to get more government hand-outs today.

Mr. Vennard says: "If these trends continue, what will our children face 30 years from now? Isn't it about time that we take a serious look at this situation and do something about it? And by we, I mean you and I—not someone else."

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press



65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK (1894)

The new "fixings" for the courthouse vault are coming in. Bishop Cheshire is expected at Nonah tomorrow, and in Franklin Friday.

Mr. W. R. Johnston is home for a week. He is the hat drummer, you know.

The deadly sneeze-weed got in its work on one of Mr. D. C. Cunningham's horses Sunday. The animal got it in hay, and within four hours was dead.

35 YEARS AGO (1924)

Shortly after midnight last Thursday our town was aroused by the ringing of the fire alarm bell, but the fire had gained such headway the firemen were unable to do anything to check the flames. The two-story frame residence owned by Mr. George Carpenter and occupied by Mr. Vick Haney was destroyed, members of the family barely escaping with their lives.

15 YEARS AGO (1944)

Pvt. Woodrow W. Reeves, now stationed at Fort Benning, Ga., spent the week end here with his wife.

Sgt. John B. Tilson, son of Mrs. June Tilson, of Gneiss, is now stationed somewhere in England.

5 YEARS AGO (1954)

Two strip ruby mines, one owned by Weaver Gibson, the other by Will Holbrook, are now open to the public on a year round basis.

THE PLAY ON SEX

What's Worst Is Denial There ARE Any Standards

From The Milford (N. H.) CABINET

Back in our college days, if you wanted to read Lady Chatterley's Lover it was necessary to go to the librarian and ask for it. If, as the English Department maintained, the book had literary merit, it was at least apparent that it also violated the accepted standards—of good taste. The changed outlook of this generation is evidenced by the number of people we have talked with who are not indignant, but simply puzzled by the current furor over the book.

We oppose on principle the people who would ban certain books and movies, for the idea of censorship in any form is objectionable. Yet it is frightening to browse through magazine racks, to pick up best sellers, to go to popular movies, and to realize the lack of moral standards resulting from this exercise of "freedom."

There was Forever Amber, and The Naked and the Dead, and then that gold mine of sex, Peyton Place. There will be others. One of our teenage children was advised by the clerk in a bookstore the other day to try The Bramble Bush, because "it's better than Peyton Place."

They made a movie out of Peyton Place, and while the book had such a heavy frosting of sex that it overshadowed the story, the movie brought the plot back into perspective and made a beautiful



STRICTLY PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

There's quiet at our house now. But we've just experienced something like an earthquake. Or maybe it was a series of atomic blasts.

The force that struck us — explosive, shattering, devastating — came in the form of a boy of seven . . . goin' on eight.

The visit had been pleasantly anticipated by all concerned. But when it was over, at the end of two weeks, Mrs. Jones and I felt the way a plant looks, after it's been pulled up by the roots and left all day in the hot sun. The night after we put our grandson on the bus for home, we sat idly on the dark porch, gasping with exhaustion and relief. But in oh! such blessed quiet.

Not, mind you, that he is a bad boy. He isn't. (And I don't mean that in the sense that, to his grandparents, no child is ever bad. Ours really isn't!) As a matter of fact, he's a good child; polite and cooperative, usually prompt and cheerful to do what he's told. Yes, and always ready to help; eager to.

Eager! That's the word . . . and a part of the explanation of our weariness. Eager to rush out and meet the tiniest adventure life may hold; afraid of nothing, hesitating at nothing.

An eagerness that has the deed already done before it is possible to get the little word "no" off the tongue. As when we had the gravy calamity. The gravy was hot, and so was the bowl; too hot to be handled with bare hands. But before his grandmother could open her mouth, Billy had it half-way across the room toward the dinner table. It never reached its destination, of course; it was splattered, instead, into every corner of the room, over every piece of furniture, up every wall.

And every day something like this took place:

"Can I go play with George now?"

"Well, maybe . . . but wait a minute!"

Too late; he's already out of sight.

But if youth's eagerness sometimes gets it in trouble, it is its energy that quickly reduces an older adult to a state of collapse.

(How does it happen that, in the few short years since our own children were small, we've so completely lost the art of living calmly in the middle of a tornado?) It's exhausting just to watch him — bouncing when he might run; running when he might walk; standing on his head

"Surely you aren't going to sleep without saying your prayer?"

"I'm so sleepy . . ."

"All right, go on to sleep . . . but tomorrow night, you'd better get to bed earlier."

You say good night and start out the door, only to be called back:

"I'll say my prayers."

After they're said, and there's been another good night, you get to the bedroom door, only to be called back again:

"Now, can I stay up late to-morrow night?"

No longer, at a little boy's bedtime, is there the impulsive reach of two small arms, the soft, moist kiss of a child.

No. Now there's quiet . . . only quiet.

Blessed quiet?

Well, maybe. But, somehow there's too darn much of it!

'UNCLE DAN From Doolie'

Glass Banks And Farmers' Baths

In MOORESVILLE TRIBUNE

Dear Mister Editor:

I see by the papers where they got a bank in New York built all out of glass, doors, walls, everything out of glass. It's gitting so everybody wants to live in a showcase but I never thought them hard-rock bankers would fall for that new-fangled stuff. But they say some big city banks has put in lunch counters and music, so I reckon the country has finally gone to the dogs afore the meek had a chance to inherit it.

It used to be that when a feller wanted to git a bank loan, he could sneak in the bank, set with the cashier behind a partition or some goods boxes and maybe git it without the whole town know-

ing about it. But with glass bank coming in style, I reckon a feller just as well put it in the paper if he gets a loan. And if he don't git it, he just as well put that in the paper, too.

More'n likely, he didn't git it. Next to a hen trying to set on a woman trying to marry off her daughter, there ain't nothing in this world as stubborn as a banker when you're trying to get a loan. I recollect once when Zeke Tinker decided to trade his car off for a station wagon. Zeke figured a station wagon would make him look like a agriculturist instead of a farmer. So he took his banker to let him have a thousand dollars until he got his crop laid by. When the banker asked him what he wanted with that money, Zeke told him he wanted to add a bathroom to his house. The banker let him into his something terrible. Told him a feller raise on fatback and cornbread didn't need a bath but once a month, and a good creek had a bathrope beat two to one for luxury bath.

I heard that Zeke got so mad at the banker he ain't took a bath since.

Yours truly,

Uncle Dan

Yours truly,

HIS COMEUPPANCE

A few weeks ago I opened my big fat mouth and put my foot in it at an educational meeting. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Board of Education, some teachers and a few parents to discuss some school problems. Attending solely as a reporter, I had no intention speaking a single word.

But when the board chairman asked my opinion of present schools and methods of teaching I completely forgot my self-imposed silence and remarked that most students with whom I came into contact had failed completely to learn a simple thing like speaking.

One teacher told me that I'd come in contact with the low mentality group of students which probably put me in my place or on the other side of the railroad tracks at the very least. That very day I had received letter from a college student who spelled "pupils" in a way I'd never seen before. He spelled "pupils." — Carlton Morris Gates County Index.