

The Franklin Press

and
The Highlands Maconian

WEIMAR JONES
Editorial Page Editor

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2 VITAL QUESTIONS

Nantahala-Duke Deal

Last week's announcement of the proposed sale of Nantahala Power and Light Company's distribution facilities to Duke Power Company must have been received with a sense of regret by many persons in this six-county region.

Regret, because it is always sad to learn that any good citizen, whether individual or corporate, may die; and the Nantahala company, as a public service corporation, has been a good citizen. Its attitude usually has been public-spirited, and it has served the public well. Not only has its service to its town customers been prompt, efficient, and courteous; it did a superb job of rural service when it made electricity available to more than 90 per cent of the rural people in its area.

Along with that, many must have had a feeling of personal sympathy with the thrill of pride it surely gave Duke's president, Franklin native W. B. McGuire, to make the announcement. To him, that undoubtedly was a little like coming back home.

Those factors, however, have no bearing on the only two really vital questions the proposal raises:

1. Would the sale be in the public interest?
2. Can the proposal be morally justified as an honest discharge of an obligation?

Unfortunately, the announcement from Charlotte left unanswered almost as many questions as it answered. Result: Public confusion.

One important thing it did say seems to have been overlooked by some readers: The sale is not an accomplished fact. It cannot go into effect until and unless it is approved by the N. C. Utilities Commission and the Federal Power Commission.

But the statement left many things unsaid:

— It did not say what is to happen to Nantahala employees. They are our neighbors and friends, and we'd all like to know; loyalties run deep here.

— It did not say whether the deal would mean the loss to Franklin of an industry — and a very high-type industry, at that — which now employs approximately 150 persons.

— It did not say, in specific terms, just what are the differences in Nantahala and Duke rates.

— It referred to a possible general revision of Duke rates, but it did not say, or even hint, whether such a revision is anticipated, or is a mere far-off possibility.

— One curious omission was the failure to even mention the fine Power Company building here. (We understand it would be included in the sale.)

— Nor did the statement explain how it is economically justifiable to send most of the power that's already here out of the state, to Maryville, Tenn., and then go to the expense of bringing Duke power in from elsewhere.

This whole matter is one in which the public has a stake; and we respectfully suggest that the public is entitled to have all the facts, to have the answers to all the questions, not just some of them.

Would the sale be in the public interest?

That will be determined by public utility regulatory bodies. And while it would seem such bodies should take the initiative in making sure the public's interests are safeguarded, in practice such bodies seem inclined to assume that everything is just fine, unless there is a public outcry. In short, until and unless the public is convinced that this sale would be in its interest, it will be up to the public to make itself heard.

Can the proposal be morally justified as an honest discharge of an obligation?

Let's go back a bit.

What is most surprising about the announcement is not that a sale is proposed, but that it wasn't proposed a long time ago. Because the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa), which owns Nantahala, is not in the power-selling business; Nantahala, in fact, is its only subsidiary now engaged in retailing power. Alcoa's business is the production of aluminum, and its interest in the generation of power arises from the fact it takes

vast quantities of electricity to produce aluminum.

How, then, did Alcoa (through its Nantahala subsidiary) get into the power-selling business? This way: A good many years ago, it wanted certain sites for hydro-electric development. The quickest and most economical way—and the only sure way—to get them was through condemnation proceedings. But it could condemn only as a public service corporation; that is, it could go into court and force an owner to sell only if the power to be produced was for the public.

How does the proposed sale fit in with that?

Well, Alcoa would hold on to its big plants in this area, sites obtained via condemnation; but the power from those plants no longer would be available to the public, but to Alcoa alone.

That is, what it was permitted to take, in order to serve the public, it now proposes to appropriate to its own, exclusive use.

Time For Cheers

The new labor law enacted last week by Congress is a compromise between the rather mild Senate bill and the rather strong House bill.

Like most compromises, it undoubtedly is not ideal; but also like most compromises, it may prove more workable than a so-called ideal bill. How effective it will be in doing what it should do — that is, curbing the abuses and excesses of labor without seriously hampering labor's legitimate efforts and aims — only time will tell.

What is perhaps even more significant, though, than the question of how good the legislation is, is the fact that any labor legislation was enacted. It was only the other day that at least one labor leader publicly threatened the lawmakers. And it has been only a few weeks since informed Washington correspondents flatly predicted there would be no labor legislation at this session of Congress — Congress would not dare offend labor.

But Congress did dare! And North Carolina can take pride in the fact that its Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr., co-author with Senator Kennedy of the Senate bill, and its Rep. Graham A. Barden were leaders in the fight for labor legislation.

It has become the fashion to sneer at Congress and all its works. Well, this is a time for cheers.

LETTERS

'Gross Breach Of Faith'

Dear Weimar:

I would appreciate it if you would publish this letter in the Press. As you can see, it is a copy of a letter to the State Utilities Commission on the proposed sale of the Nantahala Power and Light Company.

JOSEPH W. KAHN, M.D.

Franklin

Chairman,
North Carolina Utilities Commission,
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Sir:

I was surprised and shocked to read in yesterday's Franklin Press and Asheville Citizen that the Aluminum Company of America was planning to sell the Nantahala Power and Light Company to the Duke Power Company, with the exception of the major hydro-electric plants.

In 1940, when Alcoa started to build their system of hydro-electric plants, they acquired much land in these western counties of North Carolina. Some of this land was bought without difficulty and some by threats of condemnation proceedings. But it was all acquired with the implied understanding that, primarily, the people of the area would benefit by what was being done and, secondarily, Alcoa would benefit by using the surplus power produced at their aluminum plants in Tennessee.

Now Alcoa is planning to sell out and we will be supplied with power from these hydro-electric plants only until such time as Duke Power Company can build transmission lines into the area and supply us with power from their own plants. The consumers who were supposedly receiving the primary power are being deserted. Power produced in this

GROWING PAINS



Secret Romance

Is there a mother anywhere who can't remember a scene like this? Remember the heartaches, the almost unbearable yearnings, the tormenting fear that you wouldn't be popular? And remember the dread of intrusion at those moments?

Respect Susie's privacy. Her emotions can be thrown into a turmoil very easily. She needs understanding. She craves the assurance of her mother's unwavering affection.

area is all to be used elsewhere. This is a gross breach of faith and renunciation of obligations.

The newspaper releases stated that where Nantahala Power and Light Company rates are lower than Duke rates, these will be kept in effect and that where Duke Power Company rates are lower, these will be put in effect. This sounds fine until one reads further and finds that this arrangement holds only until such time as there is a general revision of rates either at the instance of the Utilities Commission or upon application by Duke Power Company. On the whole the latter company's rates are now higher than those of the Nantahala Power and Light Company. For example, on residential rates, although Duke Power Company charges only 8 cents per kwh for the first 10 kwh and Nantahala Power and Light Company charges 8½ cents per kwh for the first 15 kwh, the minimum Duke Power Company rate is 1½ cents per kwh whereas the Nantahala Power and Light Company's minimum rate is only 7 mills. There are many people heating their homes with electricity in this area and this would work a great hardship on them. Instead of an electric power bill being perhaps \$35 to \$40 per month in the winter, it would be \$60 to \$65 per month.

When Duke Power Company builds its own transmission lines into this area and brings power from its steam plants here, they will have to raise the rates because of the increased cost of production and transmission.

Another objection to the sale of the Nantahala Power and Light Company, which cannot be ignored, is that without doubt some of the present employees of this company will be left without jobs.

The Nantahala Power and Light Company has served the consumers of this area for a number of years. The service has been excellent. Their rates have been lower than is a good portion of the United States. When lands were acquired from the people here to build the hydro-electric plants, they assumed an obligation to the people. I feel that they should not be allowed to produce cheap power here to use elsewhere and force upon their old customers a system which, of necessity, will increase the power rates and perhaps put some people out of work.

Yours truly,

Joseph W. Kahn, M.D.

Just What People Want

(Windsor, Colo., Beacon)

Today's Democratic party policy is almost exactly opposite that it followed in the beginning and for almost 100 years. The Democratic party came into existence in the year 1829, as one faction in a split in the so-called "Democratic-Republican" party. The other faction did not become the Republican party of today; it died out almost at once.

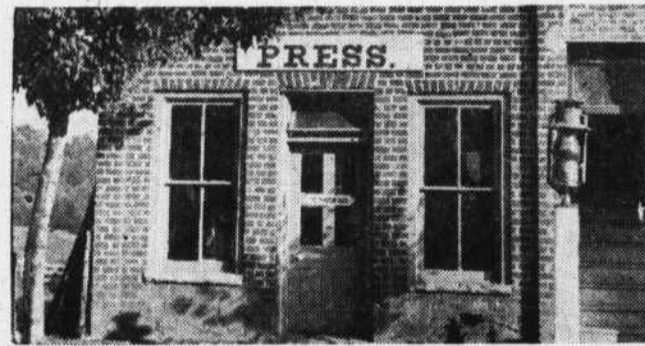
Democrats down through the years stood for Jeffersonian democracy—a minimum of executive action by the federal government; a let-alone policy in economic and political activity. My, what has happened?

Well, some of the change came about in Wilson's era, but by far most of the complete switcheroo in policy came during FDR's administration, and those following.

It would seem that if the Democrats were to switch back to their time-worn philosophy then they'd have exactly the platform the American people are waiting for.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press



65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK (1894)

R. H. Jarrett & Sons are hauling up the brick from the yard and putting them down to commence building the new Franklin hotel.

Misses Birdell Robertson and Kate Robinson leave today for Asheville to enter the Female college.

Three threshers threshed out about 24,500 bushels of small grain in Macon County this season.

Mr. Will McKee surprised four men in his melon patch Friday night, and says he made it interesting for one, and may interest others later.

35 YEARS AGO (1924)

It is now practically assured that work will begin in the next few days on the paving of the Georgia Road from Franklin to the State line, with a 16-foot concrete roadway.

Uncle Joab Crisp celebrated his 84th birthday August 13. He is the father of 12 children, 52 grandchildren, and 21 great-grandchildren.

15 YEARS AGO (1944)

The town board, at a meeting Monday night, made appropriations for rest benches, to be placed along Phillips Street, near the Square and the jail.

Mr. and Mrs. George W. McGee, of Franklin, have announced the marriage of their daughter, Virginia Elizabeth, to Glenn William Hastings, of Franklin, Route 2.

5 YEARS AGO (1954)

The Nantahala community will celebrate the blacktopping of the road from U. S. 19 at Beechertown to the Nantahala School, at a meeting Wednesday night at the school.

'A KIND OF MADNESS'

Yet Earth Still Takes Year To Circle Sun!

MARTHA'S VINEYARD (Island) GAZETTE

We hear of the arrest of motorists who have been clocked, at a speed of fifty miles or more, on the streets of Island towns. We are not sure but that it may be a mistake to take these motorists into the district court at Edgartown. It would be more appropriate to have them appear before Congress, or even before some international tribunal to explain why under the sun they should have been driving at the rate of fifty miles an hour in a town on



STRICTLY PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

It's remarkable how often we say the wrong thing.

Or is it?

Is it, in view of the number of chances there are for us to say the wrong thing; because we speak thousands, maybe millions, of words in the course of a year — some of us, in the course of a month!

And, in saying all those words, there are at least four different ways we can slip up.

First of all, there's the slip of the tongue. It's so easy to transpose words, or syllables in a single word. All my life I've wondered, for instance, why the little word "hello" doesn't sometime come out with its two syllables transposed.

Then there are the slips of the brain; the times your mind, for some inexplicable reason, tells your tongue to say the exact opposite of what is intended. As long as I live, I'll never forget my sensation when I realized I'd said to a man who recently had lost his wife: "I was so glad to hear of your wife's death."

And there are the times, the innumerable times, when what you say sounds like something quite different from what you mean, when it comes out. It was with the best intentions in the world, for instance, that I said to a woman I hadn't seen in years: "My! you look like a million!"

I meant it, of course, as a compliment. Imagine my open-mouthed astonishment when she replied, icily: "Well! I assure you I don't feel that old."

It's ignorance, though, that gets you in wrong oftentimes, and deepest.

If you doubt that, try asking a physician about one of his patients, only to have him reply, sourly: "He died". The question is inspired by a genuine interest in the condition of the patient, and in the doctor's success in treating him. Yet, for all your good intentions, the cordial conversation, along with the patient, suddenly is dead — and you wish you were.

My most embarrassing experience of that sort had to do with a one-time neighbor of ours who had moved away, years ago.

When I saw him, one day, quite unexpectedly, I greeted him enthusiastically. I really was glad to see him. Then, out of politeness, and again with the best of intentions, I asked: "And how is your wife?"

His voice dropped to a shocked whisper: "Why, didn't you know? She's dead."

Then, with a bright smile: "I'm here on my honeymoon . . . with my second wife."

In a case like that, what in heck can a man say? Anything he says will be wrong; in this case, everything I said was.

"O, I'm so sorry," I blurted out.

Immediately, I realized that wouldn't do, so I hastily added: "I mean I'm glad."

That made it worse; so I tried again: "You have my deepest sympathy."

I don't remember all the other wrong things I said, as I floundered in that mess; for the whole incident seems like a bad, a very bad dream . . . and you rarely remember all of a dream.

'Please Help Look After Her'

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter was written to the Elmira, N. Y., Advertiser. But it so well describes the feelings of parents everywhere, it might well have been written by some Macon County parent to The Press.

Dear Driver:

A few weeks ago, I saw a little girl struck by a car as she tried to cross the street. I saw a father race toward her and hold her to him as she struggled in the agony of death. I saw all the plans that had been made for her dashed and I saw the look of despair that came over his face. I could only offer a prayer that such a thing might never happen again.

Yesterday my daughter, who is six years old, started off to school. Her cocker spaniel, whose name is Scott, watched her leave and whined his belief in the folly of education.

Tonight we talked about school. She told me about the girl who sits in front of her, a girl with yellow curls; about the teacher who has eyes in the back of her head; about the trees in the school yard and the big girl who

does not believe in Santa Claus.

We talked about a lot of things — tremendously vital and unimportant things.

Now, as this is written, she is sound asleep with doll "Paddy" in her arms.

When her doll gets broken or her finger gets cut or her head gets bumped, I can fix them. But when she starts across the street — then, Mrs. Driver, she is in your hands.

Much as I wish I could, it's not possible for me to be with her all the time. I have to work to pay for her home, her clothes, her education.

So, Mr. Driver, please help me to look out for her. Please drive carefully. Please drive slowly past schools and at intersections. And please remember that sometimes children run from behind parked cars.

Please don't run over my little girl.

With deepest thanks for what ever you can do for her, I am

Very sincerely yours
FATHER

MOLES AND EXPERTS

'Blind' Burrowers

London TIMES WEEKLY REVIEW

When Shakespeare tells you to tread softly, lest the blind mole hear your footfall, he was showing his usual acute perceptiveness in matters of natural history — though, to be sure, the mole is not really blind, for it has minute eyes.

But its hearing is excellent — possibly it "hears" by hyper-sensitive reaction to vibrations — and I was astounded recently to see

moles burrowing in a dump on roadside in Hampshire and quite ignoring my approach until actually touched them. "Oh, they're always there," said the woman at the coffee stand nearby. "I'm always seeing them."

Well, this hardly fits in with what the books say about mole. I can only think these Hampshire animals have grown fat and lazy with easy living. Anyway it was a unique chance to see and watch the mole's technique of burrowing — it does not dig but forces itself forward with scraperlike hands and uses snout as a bulldozer, shoving soil aside as it goes, with vigorous use of the neck muscles. When touched one mole, it stopped rolling, half turned on its side, and made defensive thrusts with nose, but made no effort to under.

BUT WATCH

HOW I PITCH!

The 8-year-old said: "Watch me, Daddy", as he tossed up a ball and swung at it with a bat. He missed it so he tried again. Another try and a third miss. Then he turned to me and said: "See what a good pitcher I am." — Chicago Tribune.

This animal is a voracious eater consuming more than its own weight in food every 24 hours which explains the abundance mole hills in the fields and beautiful tilth which its ceaseless burrowing had created on the Hampshire dump. Mole hills may be a bit of a hindrance on farmland — though the crumbled soil when spread, is as beneficial as worm casts — but it should borne in mind that the good mole does by devouring insects outweighs the harm.

Nevertheless, we have the spectacle of one lot of agricultural experts devising ways of trapping moles, while another team is busy thinking of ways of killing harmful insects!

IF IT WERE ONLY TRUE!

Flattery is something you hear about yourself that you wish were true. — Okawville (Ill.) Times.