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CAN WE STAY FREE?

Another Yardstick

Which to vote for, Republican Richard M. Nixon or Democrat John F. Kennedy?

And what yardstick to use in measuring the two?

The first yardstick that occurs to many voters is this simple one: Is he a member of my party? That yardstick has merit. But is it, alone, enough? We all know there have been incompetents and scoundrels in both parties.

A second yardstick is the philosophy and policies found in the party platforms and set forth by the candidates themselves. Which is more right? And which is more likely to be effective — not just tomorrow, but in the long run?

A third is the relative ability of the two candidates. How much of what they propose is it probable they will be able to achieve?

A fourth is character. Which candidate is the more honest? can we believe what he says? And which is the more courageous? assuming he is honest, has he the courage to stick by his convictions, come what may?

The latter question brings us to one often heard today: Which one will better "stand up to Khrushchev"?

Without discounting the value of any of those yardsticks, we suggest still another — one that is of primary importance, but that seems to have been largely lost sight of.

In discussing the international situation, both candidates have had much to say about "freedom". Usually, what they mean by that word is national freedom. That, of course, is basic. If we should lose it, we almost certainly would lose our personal freedoms, too.

But look at it the other way 'round. If, in saving our national independence, we should lose our personal freedoms, what would have been gained? After all, it was to establish personal freedom that the American colonists fought for national independence. And isn't there evidence that, in trying to save the latter, we may sacrifice the former?

Who would deny that the average American today has much less personal freedom than he had prior to 1914? In scores — perhaps hundreds — of ways, big and little, his life has become regulated.

We have lost personal freedom in two ways:

1. In its struggle with dictators, our government has adopted dictator methods — and rarely, at the end of the emergency, have those methods been wholly abandoned.

2. We have sought to solve the complex modern problems that face the individual through government or other corporate action — and have conditioned ourselves to accept the controls that inevitably follow, and to assume that the solutions of all problems require such controls.

A few examples will illustrate:

— The draft. Compulsory military service was one of the things many Europeans fled to America to escape. But the draft, first adopted as an emergency measure, now is generally accepted as fixed national policy.

— The trend toward denying a citizen the right to determine what organizations he will join. In some states today a man is told — with government sanction — that he may work only if he joins a labor union.

— Regulation of agriculture.

— An ever-greater control by government, directly or indirectly, of such things as prices and wages. About the latter, it is worth remembering that if government can set a floor, it also can set a ceiling — as it did in World War 2.

Another, rarely noted, is the curb on the citizen's right to protest.

That right is basic; and the most effective of all protests is the refusal to pay taxes. (In the end, the citizen may be forced to pay, but his mere refusal is the surest way to make himself heard.) That method of protest has been traditional in America, ever since the Boston Tea Party.

But how can a man refuse to pay tax that is deducted from his wages — how can he protest by holding on to tax money, when it's money he never

sees or touches? Yet most Americans today pay a large share of their taxes through pay roll deductions — in North Carolina, their state as well as their federal taxes!

Some of this loss of personal freedom may have been necessary.

But how much?

As we fight the cold war, it may be necessary to sacrifice still more.

But how much?

And how can that sacrifice be kept to the absolute minimum necessary to survival?

That is vital because personal freedom is an end in itself. Of more immediate concern, it is vital because freedom for the individual is our one invincible weapon in fighting the cold war. The Communists may overtake us in armament, in industrial production, in other areas. Under their system, they can never overtake us in freedom. That is the one thing we have to offer the uncommitted peoples of the world that the Communists can never offer.

If we lose that, we shall lose not only the cold war, but the very reason for fighting it.

We suggest, therefore, that the candidates be measured by the yardstick of freedom — freedom for the individual. We suggest a hard look at these two men against the background of the American Bill of Rights. Which better fits into that background? Under which have we a better chance to save those fast-disappearing personal freedoms the Bill of Rights seeks to give us?

As the reader studies those first ten Amendments to the Constitution, to be found at the bottom of this page, he will note a remarkable thing about them, one thing common to all ten: Without exception, they seek to protect the citizen against his own government.

An Area College?

That's an interesting idea that comes from Mr. Fulton Thomasson, of Andrews. He suggests that a junior college be established at some point within this five county state senatorial district.

Mr. Thomasson suggests it, and then proceeds to list 40-odd reasons why it is desirable. While the desirability of such an institution in this area is hardly subject to question, Mr. Thomasson comes up with some arguments in its favor that would not have occurred to most people.

The two things that seem to us to make it most desirable are these.

1. He cites figures to show that wherever a college is within commuting distance, a larger proportion of the young people go to college. If that is true generally, it would be doubly true in this region. The physical nearness of a junior college would bring higher education within the financial reach of a great many students in this area. (That element would have stronger appeal to counties such as Cherokee, Clay, and Graham, which are farther removed from Western Carolina College than are Macon and Swain.)

2. A really good institution of higher learning anywhere in this five-county tip of Western North Carolina would prove of incalculable value to the entire region — financially as well as culturally.

Is it possible to establish a good junior college in this region?

Well, there would be many and great difficulties. But almost anything is possible, if enough people want it, and want it badly enough.

ANOTHER YARDSTICK

The American Citizen's Bill Of Rights

(EDITOR'S NOTE: A careful reading of these first ten Amendments to the U. S. Constitution will reveal that their purpose, without exception, is to protect the individual citizen against his own government.)

Broadly speaking, Article 1 seeks to protect him against his government's Congress; Articles 2 and 3, against his government's military; Article 4, against the police; Articles 5, 6, 7, and 8, against the courts; and Articles 9 and 10, against centralization of power in a big and far-removed federal government.)

CONGRESS shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in

the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb, nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

In suits at common law, where

the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

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