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THE CURRIE BILL

Senator Wilbur Currie proposes to introduce for passage by the Legislature a bill entitled "An Act to Make the Streets and Highways of North Carolina Safe for Pedestrians and the Motoring Public."

This is a bill which should have the backing of every citizen. To read through some of the "whereases" with which it opens, is to be overcome with a conviction of the need for its adoption.

"Whereas: The total casualties in United States World War II were 1,070,524, as compared with 3,394,000 traffic casualties in the U. S. for the same period; and Whereas: during the month following the end of gasoline rationing almost three times as many Americans were killed in traffic accidents as died in the bloody battle of Tarawa; and

Whereas: only two states in the Nation had a higher traffic fatality index in 1945 than did North Carolina; and Whereas: the adoption by one state of remedies similar to those herein proposed reduced in one year the motor vehicular fatalities from approximately 7% above the national average to 33% below the national average.

Several more equally striking "whereases" make up the list with which Senator Currie prefaces his bill and drives home the point.

It is a point which does not need to be emphasized to most drivers on North Carolina highways. One can not drive ten miles without seeing somebody taking a chance on passing another car on a hill, rounding a curve, or at some other dangerous spot on the road. One can not take an all-day's trip without seeing at least one wrecked car by the roadside or standing battered in front of a garage, or being hauled by a wrecker, while no driver is so careful that he can himself escape having a few close shaves. In fact, the careful driver is too often the victim of a speed demon, rather than the offender himself.

Senator Currie proposes some good remedies in his bill. He would have cars inspected twice yearly; he would have operators subject to re-examination every four years, and chauffeurs annually. He would increase the fines for unlawful driving, especially driving under the influence of liquor. He would increase the penalties for speeding and reckless driving.

Section #17 of his bill deals with these proposed speed restrictions and Senator Currie has expressed himself as feeling that this is the most important point, but also that it will create the most controversy. He asks that a limit of 20 miles an hour be enforced in business districts; 25 in any residential district; and 50 on the highways.

The Senator's recommendations for changes in the licensing regulations and for stiffer penalties should be adopted. They are thoroughly sensible and have proved their worth elsewhere. As to the speed limit changes, which contain the heart of the matter, there is not a doubt that if the lower limits were enforced they would help reduce the number of fatalities in the state. If they were enforced. . .

Splendid as this attempt is to reduce the toll of accidents in our State, it will get nowhere unless our law enforcement agency is correspondingly strengthened. Though, as we said above, one can not take a short trip without seeing the evidence of some bad crash by the roadside, one may drive all day long in North Carolina and never see

a highway patrolman; in fact, one may drive for days and days and not see one.

This is the true handicap Senator Currie will have to face in making his bill effective. It is to be hoped that when he introduces it he will also introduce a measure to increase the number of traffic policemen on our highways.

TILL LATER

John McLeod, chairman of the group who are pressing for a county-wide referendum on the liquor question, is to be congratulated on his tactics. Exercising fine control over the delegation which he headed at the recent meeting with Senator Currie and Representative Blue, McLeod kept the discussion firmly on the point at issue: the people's right to a referendum, and cut to a minimum all discussion of the liquor question itself.

That is smart politics, and this is one case where smart politics and correct procedure go hand in hand. At an earlier meeting Senator Currie replied to this questioners that he could think of no reason why there should not be a referendum, under the law. The case is still the same: there is no reason. This must be the opinion of anyone who has studied the law. In sticking to the referendum, Chairman McLeod is sticking to a sure thing.

As John McLeod said: there will be time for discussion of the actual question at issue: wet or dry, afterwards. Agreeing with at least that part of the chairman's sentiments, the Pilot believes that after the referendum, if there is to be one, rather than before, will be the time for comment and letters on this subject. Therefore, from now on we will hold for publication, until that time, any letters which may arrive, as well as our own gunfire.

THE CAUSE BEHIND THE ILLNESS

In China, they say, it is the rule that a doctor is paid only when his patient is well. As soon as the patient gets sick, the doctor's pay stops.

While hardly going as far as that, it would appear that western medical men are beginning to think somewhat along those lines. A strong feeling has been growing, during the past few years, that too much emphasis in medicine has been placed on the actual disease and too little on the causes behind it; too little, also, on the need for broadening the basis of medical education.

At a recent meeting, opening the New York Academy of Medicine centennial, Dr. George Baehr, president of the academy, commented on the group's concern with the continuing education of doctors and announced that, in line with this thought, a new "Committee on Medicine and the Changing Order" had been formed. He explained that this committee would "pursue studies of the social and environmental factors responsible for illness and mortality and of changes in medical practice and education required to make curative and preventive medicine available to all the people."

Dr. John R. Ryle, professor of social medicine at Oxford University, guest speaker on the program, elaborated the same theme. He explained how social medicine extends the search for the causes of disease from the clinics and the laboratories to man himself and what keeps him healthy or makes him ill.

For thirty years, Dr. Ryle said, "I have watched disease in the ward being studied more and more thoroughly—if not always more thoughtfully—through the high power of the microscope; man in disease being investigated by more and more elaborate techniques and, on the whole, more and more mechanically. Man, as a person and a member of a family and of much larger social groups, with his health and his sickness bound up with conditions of his life and work—in the home, the mine, the factory, the shop, the office and the land—has been inadequately considered in this period by the clinical teacher and hospital research worker."

Relating the search for basic causes of illness in man's habits, anxieties and environment, to medical education, Dr. Ryle noted the sort of facts every student should know—that rheumatic heart disease has close correlation with poverty, that mortality from gastric and skin cancers is twice as high among working as among professional class-

es, that coronary disease is twelve times as high among doctors as among agricultural workers. He would point the interest of his colleagues to the discovery and analysis of such facts. He looks to the time when the student's chief interest will "no longer be in the rare or difficult and too often incurable disease, but in the common and more understandable and preventable disease," when the question on his lips will be not just "What is the treatment?" but "What are the causes?" and "If preventable, why not prevented?"

IMPRACTICAL IS PRACTICAL

The World Government Boys are considered to be impractical dreamers, but it is extraordinary how events play into their hands, bringing conviction that instead of being impractical, theirs is, in fact, the only practical solution for the world's troubles.

If we consider the various dilemmas which face us at the present time we find that in almost every case what is needed is some overall body to which they could be referred. This body could be, obviously, the United Nations, and the World Government people hope that this will be the way the United Nations will grow, but at present it is far, far from being the World Government which they desire.

Take the Atom Bomb. Russia refuses to adopt the Baruch-Lilienthal plan for disarmament and inspection until we have jettisoned our bombs. We refuse to give up our advantage until we are convinced that an international control system is in working order. Impasse. But suppose there were a true World Government in existence. . . clearly we would turn over to it our stockpile of bombs: it would have charge of the regular inspection, to see that the countries were obeying the rules. This solution would be satisfactory to both ourselves and Russia.

Take the various dilemmas in which we are being involved by the crumbling of the British Empire. We are being thrust into an impossible situation because there is nobody else to take over. Here, again, the U. N., with true international power such as it would have were it a World Government, would be the obvious answer. Features of the British Empire. . . in fact, the whole over-all picture, has always had a fantastic side. Why should one tiny country, or even a big country, control the strategic gateways of the world? For all the talk of freedom of the seas indulged in by Britain and ourselves, we have condoned a system which made such freedom a joke. The only way to have freedom of the seas is for the gateways of the world-wide highways to belong to everybody. Impractical? Difficult to achieve? Certainly, but the only practical way in sight.

Take another aspect of the present situation as regards Britain and ourselves. We are being asked to take over problems which we had no hand in starting, which we don't like, and which we don't want. The thought of using American manpower or cash to bolster up crumbling royalties or to impose unwanted rulers here and there in the world, is fundamentally offensive to most Americans. Greece, of course, comes most quickly to mind right now.

It is, of course, necessary to do many disagreeable things in situations such as this one, but there is nothing much more disagreeable to Americans than the feeling of their being called upon to do something of which they thoroughly disapprove, like backing an unworthy ruler.

As there is no World Government, and as the United Nations is apparently not considered strong enough to take any part in the present difficulties involving the British Empire, we shall probably have to be the goats and step in; but the situation highlights again the confusion in which the whole international picture stands at present, and the need for some sort of clear-cut attempt to go ahead with these seemingly impractical plans for World Government. Until we do get something along these lines, the confusion in which we stand now will certainly continue. More dilemmas, such as this one, will crop up: in fact, we shall flounder from this one to the next in a succession of distressing crises.

We should not listen to those who caution against meddling with the United Nations. To

Education in Rural America

By Prof. John K. Norton (Extracts from an address by the Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, at the fifteenth annual meeting of Save the Children Federation, Inc.)

In a very real sense, the rural regions of the United States are the seed bed of our population. Although only 43 per cent of our people live in rural areas, more than half the nation's children are born in these areas.

What do we do with this most valuable of our resources—the children born on the farms and in the open country of the nation? Let us look at some of the facts.

We pay the teachers of rural children \$1,200 a year, while those of urban children are paid \$2,400 a year. As a result, country schools generally get teachers with the least preparation for their jobs and with the least experience in teaching children.

The best financed school systems of the United States expend \$6,000 or more a year for each classroom unit of 30 children. The poorest financed schools literally expend less than \$100 a year per classroom unit of 30 children.

Some 38,000 children were in school systems financed at this poverty level according to the latest available figures. Another 1,150,000 were in classrooms costing less than \$500 a year.

Unequal Opportunities Money, of course, is not everything in a school. Some differences in expenditures are doubtless justified as between city and country. But is there any place in the United States where decent schooling can be provided at the rate of \$100, or \$500 or even \$1,000 a year per classroom?

Six thousand dollars a year behind each classroom in some school systems (such classrooms are found in urban areas), and \$100 per classroom in other school systems (such classrooms are found in rural areas)—these are the extremes. Therefore, some children get 60 times as much educational opportunity to others—insofar as cost affects opportunity, and it does to a very considerable degree. Inequality, rather than equality of opportunity characterizes the organization of public education in the United States today.

This 60-to-1 measure of educational inequality, however, takes account only of children who are in school. Are there children who do not go to school in the United States? The 1940 Federal census enumerated nearly 2,000,000 chil-

dren six to 15 years old—ages when it is agreed all children should be in school—who were not in any kind of a school. It has been estimated that there are at least 3,000,000 children in this country who by any reasonable standard should be in school, who are not in school. This means that one child in seven is being seriously short-changed as to educational opportunity.

The educational and social liabilities generated by the denial of decent educational opportunity to millions of children reveal themselves at many points. The great mass of native-born illiterates in the United States—and there are millions of them—grow up in rural areas.

General Hershey—head of Selective Service—had this to say at a critical time in World War Two: "With the great pressure on our manpower resources it is regrettable that we lose so many physically qualified, who must be rejected because of illiteracy."

Of the 5,000,000 rejected under selective service for physical, mental, and educational deficiency, a greatly disproportionate share were from our rural areas, and especially from sections where education is maintained at a low level of support and effectiveness.

It is no accident that it is in the regions of our educational slums where only a minor fraction of citizens vote that the most menacing of our political demagogues arise. We who live in the more favored areas of the nation might be less concerned with our rural, educational slums, if underprivileged citizens would stay at home. Unfortunately, however, we are a very mobile population. Ignorance cannot be quarantined. It spills over from its points of origin to all parts of the land.

Traditionally, we have thought of public education as the great instrument of that most American of ideals—equality of opportunity. Actually, public education as it operates today, and especially in many rural areas, threatens to promote inequality, rather than equality of opportunity.

No. 1 Educational Problem What shall we do about this number one educational problem? Its solution is the great opportunity and the great responsibility of educational leadership today. And it is about two thirds a rural matter. First, to solve this problem we must recognize its existence to the point of being willing to do something about it.

Second, after getting the problem clearly in mind we must provide the funds which will permit some decent minimum of financial support in literally every school system in the United States. This will require better State and some Federal aid if a minimum of financial support is to be provided everywhere, sufficient to purchase the kind of education which our complex culture demands.

Third, leadership must be provided so that the money spent for education in the rural areas of America is focused on the real needs of American life. One of the discouraging things about the country schools in many parts of the United States is that they are too much concerned with meaningless drill and content with little or no relationship to the real life problems of present-day rural communities. The diet of the people, the kind of houses they live in, the clothing they wear, and the farming practices they employ are shockingly and unnecessarily bad in many rural areas.

During the past generation, the world has had dramatic demonstrations of the enormous power of education. It is beside the point that this great power of education has too often been focused upon evil ends. It is up to our great democracy to find equally effective means of using education for the achievement of purposes and aspirations worthy of a free society.

The number of U. S. marriages in 1946 was approximately 35 percent higher than the number in 1942.

strengthen the United Nations, to push it forward into the World Government which it must become, is not "meddling" . . . it is simply striving to keep it alive and to make it function as it must for our survival.

SCHOOL INTEREST

Food for thought is the account of a discussion meeting held before the PTA in Chapel Hill last week by five citizens of that town, educational authorities in their own right, according to Editor Louis Graves. Subject of the discussion was: "What Constitutes a Good School?"

"It was agreed," writes the editor, "that a close relationship between the school and the community was of primary importance." The board of education, (school board) was said to be the most important factor in creating and maintaining that close relationship. "The board should be of the people, by the people and responsible to public opinion and community needs. It should be subject to recall by the people if it fails to produce the kind of school the people want. Generally speaking a school will be no better than its school board."

The speakers also agreed that education must be a cooperative enterprise between the parents and the teachers. One speaker is quoted as saying: "Parents should help the teachers plan the kind of program most useful to the children. The teachers need and want the help of the parents."

With the type of people who live in Chapel Hill, many of whom are professors, almost all experienced in the educational field and wanting their children to have the best, it is no wonder that the Chapel Hill schools should be noted as superior to most in the state. The fact that they are so famous gives the views expressed in this article a double weight.



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