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THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 1972

## Opinion and commentary

by Paul Dickson

It was 25 years ago tomorrow, Mar. 10, 1947, when the National Guard unit here was inspected and officially recognized after the second World War, and I guess it makes me something of an old timer to remark that time sure does fly. This unit, Battery A of the 677th Anti - Aircraft Automatic Weapons Battalion, was among the first line units in the state to be organized after the war, if not the first, and it had three officers and forty - one enlisted men on the day of its inspection for Federal recognition. I will not go into who they were, except for Clarence M. Willis, who was the first to enlist and who is the only original member still in the National Guard. All the others have faded away, as General MacArthur would say, but Clarence goes right on. So for him, here is a happy anniversary wish, and a wish that he could have 25 more.

Another thought in connection with that National Guard unit comes to my mind and that's the fact that of all those 44 people, of whom many had served in the war, all were volunteers and there was no draft blowing on their necks.

And from wishing a happy anniversary to Sergeant Major Willis and the National Guard unit, it is but a step to the very serious subject of the more than 70,000 young Americans who have chosen to flee their country rather than serve in its armed forces during the undeclared war in Southeast Asia. These men are mostly in Canada and Sweden, but many are elsewhere, as fugitives and as men without a country.

The solution would at first thought appear to be simple and obvious: "These fellows made their bed. Let them lie in it."

From the point of view of all those who were drafted or volunteered and served in World Wars One and Two, and in Korea, it is certainly the obvious reaction. To many who have been drafted and sent to Vietnam, and to many of the families of those who have been sent there never to return, exile may seem too good for those who refused to go.

Of course, there was a national unity during the world wars. We knew then and we still know that the Kaiser had to be stopped, as did Hitler and Hirohito and Mussolini.

This national unity of purpose has not existed during the war in Southeast Asia, and in fact a national policy on the Vietnam war has never been declared. Dissent has been loud and public and at times highly placed, and the only ones who have become criminals for dissenting have been those who would not serve when called up for the armed forces.

In previous wars a national policy was stated, loudly and clearly, and when the nation was at war dissent at any level was not tolerated. We were in a fight for national survival, right or wrong, and we knew it.

Now as I remember, most of the American people felt our leaders were right at the time we gradually got involved more and more in Vietnam, but never enough of us, apparently, for Congress to declare war or for Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy or Johnson to ask for it. As time went on those who felt we should not be there got louder and louder, until for the last several years "out" has become the word, and we have actually lost some respect for our Armed Forces for doing the duty that we sent them to do.

Well, soldiering has been tough these past few years, what with a soldier (or sailor, marine or airman) not knowing what his country was trying to do and never being allowed the singleness of purpose: killing the enemy, which every American soldier in every previous war had to justify his actions.

There are many who argue today that it took as much courage for a young American to defy tradition, disgrace his family and friends and give up all hope for a normal future by refusing to serve as it did to submit and take part in a war he thought was wrong.

These are strong arguments, and I am no oracle. I don't hear any of our public leaders offering much in the way of a sensible, simple solution, either. It is my opinion, though, that if we are to retain our national posture and the ability to back up any statement or policy, we must protect and defend our right to demand military service from our young men when our leaders decide we need it, and if these leaders turn out to have been wrong, then these young men, called in error, must be casualties and part of the cost. Errors by our national leadership cost us in many ways which are less obvious, anyway.

Sadly, but certainly, we will need our young men again, and we will not then allow them to decide individually whether or not the cause is just. So my leaning is like Stephen Decatur's "Our country, right or wrong." While the cost is high, it would not be in our national interest to forgive anyone who refused to serve or deserted.

## Browsing in the files of The News-Journal

25 years ago

Thursday, March 13, 1947

The Posthumous Bronze Star Medal for "meritorious achievement and dauntless courage in action against the enemy in Iwo Jima" was awarded in Raleigh Saturday to Marine Pfc. Albert F. Smoak, son of Mr. and Mrs. R.A. Smoak of Ashley Heights.

Delegations called on the county commissioners of both Hoke and Moore Counties at their meetings last week in the interest of getting the road from Van

in Moore County to Lobelia in Hoke County rebuilt and surface treated.

Pvt. Angus J. Currie is spending a furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Rex Currie.

The Good Health X-ray clinic was finished last Friday when Mr. Satterwhite set up his machine at the community church at White - Tex Mill and X-rayed 131 additional folks, making a grand total of 3254 for the whole clinic.

'According to Mao this worked wonders in China'



by LAURIE TELFAIR

## It's Near Enough To Make Her Smoke



Cheryl Walker, who works here setting copy prepared in various states of legibility into neat inches of news, feels like she is losing out on all the benefits of giving up smoking since she doesn't smoke anyway.

She was reading in The Reader's Digest of all sorts of incentives companies are giving to get employees to stop smoking, she complained, and even if she worked for a place that had such a program, she wouldn't be eligible. It's enough to make her go out and buy a pack, she said.

First off, there are the bonuses she is losing since she can't give up smoking. Some companies are paying a cash bonus, she said she read, to employees who can quit the weed.

Well, that doesn't hurt her so much since it's not likely that many companies in tobacco country are interested in promoting non - smoking. What really upsets her is all the money she can't save by not giving up smoking. According to the magazine, you can save \$150 or so a

year by not smoking. Just put the money you would spend on tobacco products away in a piggy bank or something and at the end of the year, you'll have a nice little nest egg for a vacation or something. Of course Cheryl doesn't spend that \$150 now, but that's different from getting \$150 in a lump sum. As any woman will tell you, not spending money in the first place is vastly different from saving it.

And last of all, Cheryl, who demonstrated a mean heel - clicking leap - will never be able to star in a television anti - smoking commercial as the heroine who kicks the habit.

It just doesn't seem fair somehow.

As a non - smoker raised in cotton country, the whole ethics of a tobacco economy has seemed unusual to me. Since coming to North Carolina, I have learned that there are some very nice people growing tobacco. I never really gave much thought before as to just who produced the vegetable leaves what eventually ended up rolled between thin, white sheets of paper, but since for some years I've agreed wholeheartedly that smoking was a bad thing, I suppose that I would have generalized that to the presumption that those who grew tobacco were bad people. That ought to demonstrate the dangers of generalizing from one conclusion to another.

I must say, however, that I still do find the 4-H award for tobacco production to be incongruous, particularly in the light of the long standing efforts to educate young people on the evils of smoking and the general support among the young that the now - discontinued anti - smoking commercials generated.

It was largely through the efforts of our children that my husband finally quit smoking after about fifteen years of puffing. They heckled him and harassed him about smoking, announcing solemnly that he would surely die a premature death and leave them orphans if he continued to smoke, and finally he quit.

He did announce that, since he had dearly loved to smoke, if he ever caught either of the kids with a cigarette in their hands he would break all their fingers.

After nearly two and a half years of non - smoking, he says he still dreams of the pleasure of a cigarette. If he ever faces the situation in which the doctor announces grimly that he has only a number of months to live, he says the first thing he'll do is borrow a cigarette.

According to some experts - both self - proclaimed and otherwise - there are no adverse effects of smoking pot so maybe someday folks around here will be growing marijuana instead of tobacco.

I would say off - hand that that was impossible, but then, a year ago, I would have said the same thing if someone had told me that President Richard Nixon would go to Red China.

## STORIES BEHIND WORDS

by William S. Penfield

### HAM

We call an amateur or bungling performer, especially one who overdoes his performance, a "ham." The expression comes from the theater.

During the latter part of the 19th century, comedians in minstrel shows used ham fat to remove the burnt cork from their faces. They used ham fat because it was cheaper than cold cream.

Other actors contemptuously called any blackface minstrel man a "hamfatter," a name that was shortened to "ham." The name was borrowed from theater parlance and put to general usage.

Yours faithfully,  
J.A.

## People & Issues

CLIFF BLUE...

J.J. DINNER - A huge crowd turned out for the JJ festivities in Raleigh last Saturday. With numerous contests up for a decision in the May 6 primary, there were plenty of hospitality rooms as well as candidates and their supporters to greet the JJ people.

From reports over the state it appears that nine weeks before the primary Pat Taylor has the edge in the governor's race with Skipper Bowles in No. 2 place. In the U.S. Senate race it appeared from reports that Senator B. Everett Jordan still holds an edge with Rep. Nick Galifianakis working hard to narrow the gap.

However, it must be remembered that the JJ dinner is largely attended by the "pros" in politics and that the average voter seldom attends the festivities. Another thing to remember: great changes can take place in political races in nine weeks.

There was some talk about the presidential primary but until the entry deadline is passed and you know just who will be in the running it's pretty hard to get opinions on who will be the leaders.

SECOND PRIMARIES - It now appears that there may well be several run - offs in the second primary to be held on Saturday, June 3.

It is not expected that any of the candidates will get majorities in the Democratic races for governor, lieutenant governor or possibly in the contests for insurance commissioner or commissioner of labor.

The law is out - dated which sets the second primary four weeks after the first primary instead of two weeks.

The four weeks was started in the horse and buggy days. Now in these modern days of transportation and communication, two weeks would be ample time, much less expensive and tiring on the candidates and the general public.

NIXON & MAO - While we feel that President Nixon had a very worthwhile trip to China, we doubt very much that his 1972 publicity kit in his campaign for reelection will include a picture with Nixon and Mao Tse - tung clasping hands.

THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE - Writing on the right to vote, Prof.

Emeritus Coates of the UNC - Chapel Hill said recently: "The poor man white man, the black man, the woman - black and white, the 18, 19, and 20 - year old citizens can claim their basic human and political rights in North Carolina today because there were men throughout the centuries who have stood up to be counted for them. The payoff for these long historic struggles for the right to vote and hold office comes at the registration desk and on election day."

Professor Coates, one of our truly great North Carolinians, is quite right in what he has to say about the rights gained by men and women through centuries of struggle. Now, almost as important as the right to vote is to be informed about the issues and the candidates. We like to see big turn - outs on primary and election days. But very important in the suffrage process is intelligent participation. It is an unhealthy situation when people are herded together, hauled to the polls and told how to vote when the people have not familiarized themselves with the candidates and the issues involved.

However, today there is but little reason for any registered voter to go to the polls unfamiliar with his obligation and responsibility with information so easily gained through the newspapers, radio and television.

Today, we feel that we have a far more enlightened citizenship than ever before and it's a dwindling number who can be influenced on how to vote enroute from their homes to the ballot box.

BUSING - School integration is here to stay it appears that a great majority of the people are against busing children unreasonable distances to achieve a certain ratio of whites and blacks.

We would hope that the Federal Courts would wake up to the folly of the unreasonable decisions which have been handed down before it becomes necessary to amend the U.S. Constitution to protect the children from their harsh and unreasonable decisions.

With a couple of new judges on the U.S. Supreme Court, we hope for more realistic decisions which will make a constitutional amendment on the matter unnecessary.

## Letters To The Editor

Response to School Board Policy

There is in me a strong feeling of admiration, love, and pride for the people in Hoke County. Having been born in an adjoining county and living in Hoke County for a number of years - my roots are deeply embedded there. I don't think a day passed that I did not feel extremely grateful that Hoke County had not made the scene of some type of disturbance and I deeply feel that one of the main reasons this has been prevented resulted from the fact that there are a large number of sincere, honest, and dedicated people who are involved in many, many

areas throughout the county. Though I feel that the Public School System is the best system we have, I also feel that the School Board made a grave error in its decision of "unwritten policy" to her qualified people from teaching in Hoke County schools should they be educating some of their children in other educational systems. Qualified child loving, experienced teachers are hard to come by. The children are missing out. All three races!

Anne Smith

SUPPORTS BOARD

Dear Editor:

Below is a copy of a letter from our Jaycee chapter. This letter was sent to the Chairman of the Hoke County Board of Education on February 26, 1972.

Dear Mr. Huff:

We viewed with great concern the recent action of the Hoke County School Board regarding employment of teachers whose children are enrolled in private schools. We agree wholeheartedly with the decision. We feel that if a teacher does not have faith in our public school system, he or she should not be employed by that system. We sincerely urge you to stand firm on this decision, the only fair and just one.

Sincerely,  
Winford Rogers, President  
Hoke County Jaycees

Sincerely,  
Robert Taylor, Internal Vice President  
Hoke County Jaycees

## Just One Thing After Another

By Carl Goerch

Some time ago I wrote something about the experience I had down in Wilson when I was running a newspaper down there. I had written a rather bitter editorial about Jack Dempsey, and the next morning a man came into the office and introduced himself as Mr. Dempsey. It gave me quite a shock until he explained that his name was Jim Dempsey and that he lived in Wilson.

Referring to that episode, here comes a letter from Charles W. Allison, in Charlotte:

"I know exactly how you felt, because when I was a child I whipped a little mongrel puppy, whereupon my brothers informed me that I was subject to arrest. All throughout the day they kept telling me that, and it worried me considerably. The next day, upon hearing the door bell ring, I ran to answer it and found standing there a policeman, who seemed to me to be about ten feet tall. Needless to say, a thousand goose pimples quivered up and down my spine. You can imagine how relieved I was to learn that he was merely looking for a young girl who he thought might be working at the house."

Remember the little trick about counting the "e's" in the sentence on the back of the Camel cigarette pack?

The sentence went: "Don't look for premiums or coupons, as the cost of the tobaccos blended in CAMEL Cigarettes prohibits the use of them."

Very few people come up with the correct count the first time. There are eleven "e's" in the statement.

One of Tom Henderson's "Plain Tales from the Country":

Sitting across the aisle of the train from the minister of the gospel was a nice - looking middle - aged woman, dressed in becoming black. The minister felt constrained to go over to a vacant seat alongside, to offer his condolences:

"Madame," he said, "I notice you are wearing black."

"Yes," she answered, without show of annoyance.

"I am a minister of the gospel," he continued, "and I felt it my duty to come over and extend words of sympathy."

"Sympathy!" she sniffed, "don't talk to me about sympathy. I had just paid a lawyer fifty dollars to get a divorce, when the skunk up and died."

Most people have no real conception as to how much a billion is. I came across the following recently: A clock, ticking 60 seconds to a minute, 60 minutes to an hour, 24 hours to a day, and 365 days a year will tick a billion in approximately 36 1/2 years. That's 86,400 ticks a day and 31,536,000 a year.

Fishy? I know it will sound that way when I tell it, but it is the truth. There See JUST ONE THING, Page 11