

PASSING FANCY

No one in his right mind, unless under considerable pressure, writes about political theory. Such pressure can come from a number of sources, including a deep, biased conviction, money and profit. In this case it must be the heat.

But lately the socialistic theory of government has reared up in my path to confound me — even on my own front porch. On that occasion a prominent out-of-town surgeon was explaining carefully how to locate Arturus, the North Star, by lining up one side of the Big Dipper and two stars in the Big Bear constellation.

He was speaking learnedly

from many nights on the oceans as a ship's surgeon. Suddenly he said, "If medicine is socialized I'm going back on the boats." Then he went on to relate the wearing social life of a ship's officer in port at Lisbon, Portugal. By that time I was so completely off balance that I nearly fell out into the yard.

Local Protest

Most insistent refrain of socialized government to be heard hereabouts, however, has come from Lenoir County government circles. A "socialistic trend and bureaucratic control" charge was tossed on the table at the last meeting of the school board by a representative of private insurance companies now collecting the school insurance premiums. The spur in that case was the proposal of the state government

to carry counties' school building insurance—at a cost 30 per cent less than at the private enterprise rates.

Most impressive pondering heard, though, was from a county official wondering when the intrusion of the state into county affairs would stop. The reference was the major participation of the state in the county's public welfare program to the extent of about 85 per cent of the money load, increasing relentlessly the county's 15 per cent and its role as keeper of the poor.

Then someone, it may have been me, sounded off as to the theory behind the trend. I heard it said that a growing population mass brings complex situations and problems too great for settlement between individuals or small groups. Because of the size of the involved problems a centralized responsibility was dictated, which could not help but lessen individual or small group freedom of action, the fellow said.

Self-Imposed Socialism

Only this past week every county in the Flue-Cured Tobacco Belt participated in a referendum which some called the essence of democracy. It was more simply an overwhelming vote of tobacco growers to control their economy by limiting production through acreage quotas imposed by a centralized government authority. That, in the face of a saturated market, could also be called socialism.

Most social of all the theory of socialism to bend these ears, came from a hard-headed friend on the question of whiskey. He was screaming that 73 and one-half per cent of the \$1,612,586 sale of whiskey in Lenoir County last year went to distillers out of the state. He wanted to keep the money in the state, preferably in the county.

The county should have its own distillery, he said, for the benefit of the people living here, a theory which no doubt caused the mash in a thousand fermenting vats to sour. The private distillers who now produce the liquor for the cup that cheers would be as unhappy as a power company or a private physician at a general acceptance of that socialistic theory.

As for me, I think the top in social theory has been reached here. Just imagine—socialized whiskey.

FRED WHITAKER

New Look at Ag Building

Lenoir County farmers have been too busy lately to call at the county Agriculture Building with their problems or for information. But with the completion of most of the tobacco harvesting in about a week they will be coming in to find the place entirely different. The building has been painted

Tall Corn Exhibited

There is a brag nailed to a post on the front of Lenoir County's Agricultural Building, alongside a 14 and one-half foot stalk of corn. It states that "All the tall corn is not grown in Iowa." The stalk is of the Dixie 17 hybrid variety and comes from the field

throughout in a cool pastel green, and even the furniture looks fresher.

of Ruskin Hunt, Jr., out in Contentnea Township. The ears on the stalk are well-formed, and Assistant Farm Agent Bob Thompson thinks 4-H Clubber Hunt's acreage yield will be about 125 bushels in his 98 per cent stand. Other club members giving Hunt keen competition in corn growing, and who are almost sure bets for the 100 bushel class are Cedric Dawson, Reginald Stroud, Walter Heath and Joel White.

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