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Tobacco: The Only Virgin Tax Source

A THOROUGHLY harassed taxpayer of our acquaintance once remarked that government is mainly an expensive organization to regulate evildoers and tax those who behave. Consequently, it does little for fairly respectable people except annoy them.

It is already apparent that a bundle of new and fairly excruciating annoyance is in store for Tar Heel taxpayers in 1959.

The governor has made no particular secret of the fact that new sources of revenue must be found. The State Tax Study Commission, while making no recommendations on what new taxes might be needed, has nevertheless provided an enormous amount of data on sources North Carolina has not yet tapped.

One such source sticks out like a beached whale. It is tobacco.

Already we can hear bleats and cries from the leafy east. These are the same bleats and cries that have put the fear of Jehovah in the hearts of legislators since roughly 1868.

The fact remains that North Carolina, like some 44 other states, is going to have to come to its senses some day on the subject of tobacco stamp and use taxation and the sooner the better.

North Carolina and Virginia alone among the 11 southeastern states are purposely closing their eyes to this tender target. Collectors for the nine other states brought \$115,610,529 in tobacco tax revenue during the 1956-57 fiscal year. The collections ranged all the way from \$22,323,233 in Louisiana to \$5,914,484 in neighboring South Carolina.

The per capita yields from tobacco stamp and use taxation for the nine southeastern states averaged \$3.83 during fiscal 1956-57. Again, they ranged

from Louisiana's \$7.43 to South Carolina's \$2.51.

The psychological barriers to a tobacco use tax in North Carolina are obvious. It has been Tarheel's big money crop since 1660. Until the late 1920s, when textiles took over, it was the leader in total value of manufactured products in North Carolina. The value of tobacco manufactures, consisting mainly of cigarettes and pipe tobacco, reached \$1,023,000,000 by 1950 and \$1,580,000,000 in 1954. We grow about two-fifths of the nation's tobacco crop and manufacture more than one half of the nation's tobacco products. Furthermore, one Tar Heel firm manufactures from flax the paper for most of America's cigarettes and much of the cellophane for the packages. All of these industries are already taxed rather heavily here and elsewhere.

But North Carolina has been holding the line against a tobacco use tax in the nation until there is no line left to hold. One state is not going to convince the other states in the union of their error.

The plain fact is that North Carolina needs new revenue and there are no more virgin sources of consequence. Some other southeastern states have gathered a few dollars from taxes on pari mutuels, document files, lubricating oils, soft drinks and a few other items but they are usually piddling amounts.

North Carolina could—and should—re-examine its sales tax schedule and dispense with several exemptions. We have discussed this possibility often in the past and we still believe it would help balance the books. But the use of tobacco, a luxury, offers the only fresh source ripe for the plucking.

Is it too much to ask that the matter be given serious consideration when the General Assembly meets in February?

People's Charlotte's Bus Drivers Received No Windfall

Editors, The News: Charlotte. HOW many readers are shocked at the bus strike settlement? The drivers averaged \$1.37 an hour before the strike. The increase of four cents now makes it \$1.41 and another 4 cents on New Year's Day will bring it to \$1.65.

Are these the kind of wages that bring prosperity and good standards of living to Charlotte? After weekly denunciations of federal income tax and social security by these drivers support themselves and their families in a comfortable standard of living? I wonder how many of them are going to purchase the 1959 models of the automobiles which are being so widely advertised? And how can they afford washing machines or television sets unless their wives

go out and work for more family income? Mr. Steve Davis objected to our being at the League of Women Voters candidates' meeting because we were children. If we had kept any adults from getting seats then they would have had reason to object. However, there were no adult seats. The candidates' meeting had been discussed within our club for weeks and was a red letter date. It was very important to us. Yes, we were enthusiastic. We wanted to support the Democratic candidates in every way we could. If they had rejected the proposals they would have seen that the invitations were to the public. Not just Democratic Republicans, but the young or old, but the public...

to pay our Charlotte bus drivers and servicemen. Do they consider that the 20-cent increase demanded before the strike would make our people overpaid? What have they got to say for themselves—besides an announcement that they will be looking for permission to increase the bus fares of Charlotte riders? —H. D. LISKE

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the Democratic Party exist commensurate with the territorial extent of the nation. If that were not true we would be little better than Russia. Somebody should tell him that there have been many Republican congressmen from North Carolina: Settle, Morehead, Ewart, Lanes, Cowles, etc. There has been a time when there have not been Republican members of the legislature since the Whig Party turned into the Republican Party. I imagine that when he says that before him, they intended there was no Republican Party in Mecklenburg, the ghosts of Byrd and Newell and Morehead turned over in their graves and the thousands of voting Mecklenburg Republicans were startled by the strange noise they heard.

Youthful Campaigners Only Want To Learn

Editors, The News: Charlotte. WE HAVE heard that Mr. Charles "Bud" Coira and Mr. Steve Davis objected to our being at the League of Women Voters candidates' meeting because we were children. If we had kept any adults from getting seats then they would have had reason to object. However, there were no adult seats. The candidates' meeting had been discussed within our club for weeks and was a red letter date. It was very important to us. Yes, we were enthusiastic. We wanted to support the Democratic candidates in every way we could. If they had rejected the proposals they would have seen that the invitations were to the public. Not just Democratic Republicans, but the young or old, but the public...

Our club, "Clark For Congress, Unimpaired," was mainly formed for two purposes: 1 - To campaign for Mr. David Clark and the other Democratic candidates. We believe this to be our right as Americans. 2 - To learn all that we can about our government. Our government is one of the most important subjects taught in the public schools of North Carolina. Mr. Coira, not being a native of North Carolina, might not know this.

The majority of the members of our club are junior high school students. Since our club was organized we have worked by addressing mail, distributing literature and putting bumper stickers (with permission) on cars. As future voters of America we want to learn all that we can about our government and politics.

—BILLY MULLIN, President, Clark for Congress Unimpaired

Why doesn't Mr. Coira advocate Republican doctrine instead of trying to reflect upon that fault finding the Republican Party in the South cries to high heaven? Several southern states voted for Eisenhower and not a southerner was appointed to the national Cabinet. President Eisenhower was appointed and after the election he left the Cabinet. That affirms the attitude of the neophyte Republicans. The Republican Party toward the South. North said, Southern sign of ennoblement have ceased to be active in the Republican Party in the South. There is no political future for them... But, we are hearing a strange noise from the Republican Party before Mr. Coira was born. —HOYT EAVES

Will Jonas Accept Cherry's Support?

Editors, The News: Matthews. RECENTLY in People's Platform Mr. Blankenship noted with regard to Mr. J. R. Cherry's switching over to the Republicans. Let him go. Mr. Cherry claims that the late Joe McCarthy was one of our greatest Americans. What he and many others overlook is that McCarthy was a professional patriot. Almost all of us in this country but we don't get paid for it. McCarthy said President Eisenhower was soft on communism. How will can a man get? Eisenhower is the worst President since Grant and will hold that distinction until such time as another general becomes President. But he is not soft on communism.

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When Will Candidate Check His Records?

Editors, The News: Charlotte. SOMETIMES you can hardly believe your own ears. Like last Tuesday night, for instance, when the WBTV quoted candidate Dave Clark as saying he doesn't remember whether or not he voted against communist colleges. Now, that is a fine thing. A man who cannot remember how he voted on a bill as important as Communist College has a vote of a nerve seeking for my vote.

And again last Thursday night at the Court House, Mr. Clark was asked why he failed to vote for David Clark in Mecklenburg. His answer was he'd have to check. Twice now, he said he would have to check. Just when is Mr. Clark going to check his records? It seems like we are entitled to know a few of these answers.

He Has Served All The People

Editors, The News: Iron Station. I HAVE never been so thoroughly disgusted as I was with Hal March on this year's United Appeal March. I found him anything but entertaining. He was obviously nervous. With all his local talent in Charlotte, I think it is absurd that someone has to be brought in from out of town at great expense and who does a job as sloppy as was done this year. —S. A. EZER

Hal March's Appeal 'Nauseating'

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'It's All Yours, Pal—See You Tomorrow'



Big Gains Predicted Here Come The Democrats

By CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY

WASHINGTON. ELECTION victories that could bring the Democrats close to a two-thirds majority in both the House and Senate are indicated in the final pre-election survey by Congressional Quarterly.

A state-by-state and district-by-district roundup points unmistakably to the likelihood of a major reduction in Republican strength on both sides of the Capitol in the 1958 balloting. Smaller Democratic gains are likely in the gubernatorial races, with an outside chance for the GOP to hold its own in the state-house contests.

BRIGHT PICTURE. Reports from Alaska, which votes Nov. 25, and the 48 states that ballot next Tuesday indicate the brightest picture for the Democrats is in the Senate. They have 36 holdover senators. All 13 of their incumbents who face reelection are favored. They have already taken one seat from the Republicans in Maine's September election and they seem certain to capture one of the two new Alaska seats.

Democrats are also favored to take two Republican-held seats in West Virginia and single GOP seats in California, Connecticut, Michigan and Pennsylvania. That would give the Democrats 57 Senate seats, compared to the 49 they held in the 85th Congress. But seven other Republican-held seats are also in doubt: Arizona, Indiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey and New York. If Democrats win four of the seven shaky GOP seats, which would not be surprising, their Senate margin will be 63-37. If they sweep the doubtful seats and upset one slightly-favored Republican in, say, Wyoming, they will be only one seat short of a two-thirds majority.

HOUSE OUTLOOK. Democrats are practically guaranteed against any net loss from the 235 seats they held in the last House of Representatives. They can count 211 safe seats—most of them in the South—and their candidates are favored in 24 other seats. How many seats they gain depends on how well they do in 33 doubtful districts, all but seven of which were won last time by Republicans. The doubtful districts are spread over 28 states and include slightly more city areas than rural sections. California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Pennsylvania and Washington are the centers of the House battle.

Democrats are favored to capture Republican holdovers in California and Maryland. To offset those expected losses, the GOP must win six of the eight toss-up states: Nevada, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin, which they now hold; and Kansas, New York, Oregon and Rhode Island, now in Democratic hands. It is possible the Republicans will do just that if the odds are slightly against them.

Incumbents are seeking reelection in each of these states but South Dakota. Both parties have come up with strong sets of challengers, and some switches in both directions are likely. If the Democrats can manage an even split in these eight states, they will have a 31-17 edge in governors.

The Democrat is favored in Alaska's Nov. 25 gubernatorial contest.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON. WITH the Republicans running against Walter Reuther and the Democrats running against the recession, it's easy for voters to lose track of the qualifications of candidates. This, however, is an election not for Reuther, but for president or vice president, but for individual congressmen and senators. And it's the real record of the individual candidate, not the posters and the platitudes, which counts. Continuing this column's scrutiny of the candidates' real records, here is an interesting opinion put across by Sen. Frank Barrett, Republican of Wyoming.

Land Deal

Robertson, former GOP senator from Wyoming, purchased a big Cody, Wyo., cattle ranch from his brother-in-law for a relatively cheap price and then sold it to the Hunt Oil Co., owned by H. L. Hunt, famous Texas oilman. The sale was made by a complicated lease arrangement. There was also a huge cattle dispersal sale.

Tax-Fixing

Republicans have been vigorous in criticizing tax fixing. This column has too. They even prosecuted Truman's assistant attorney general, Lamar C. Gault, and Truman's White House secretary, Mac Connally, for allegedly going easy on St. Louis shoe manufacturer, Irving Sachs, even though the Sachs case was sent before a U.S. district judge who

Close Governors

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Strong Challengers

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Token Of Appreciation

Remembered that any tax violation, even by a private citizen, is a public matter, the ex-senator still refused to comment. Robertson showed his appreciation of Sen. Barrett however. He contributed \$500 to his campaign fund.

Here's Another Case

Congressman Joel T. Brothill, elected by the densely populated Virginia suburbs just across the Potomac River from

Washington is a big real estate pro. He also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Capital. This commission held long discussions, consulted many experts and finally a site near the Lincoln Memorial on the banks of the Potomac was picked. It then became necessary to get a bill through Congress to confirm this decision. Strangely, Congressman Brothill led the fight in Congress against the site. He was determined, bitter, orienting.

Own Pocketbook Served

What Brothill did not tell his real-life followers was that the Peoples Life Insurance company ran a bid to build the headquarters exactly the same land to be used by the cultural center. It was determined to have the cultural center located somewhere else. And what Brothill further did not tell congressmen was that he had borrowed \$50,000 from Peoples Life Insurance. Serving his own pocketbook interest, he managed to defile the bill.

Here's A Short, Happy Route To Equity

IF unconsciously documented the case for tobacco stamp and use taxation in North Carolina (see above), the State Tax Study Commission conscientiously performed an even greater service to the cause of sanity in local taxation. We have in mind the set of forthright recommendations on the manner in which individual counties handle their property taxes.

It is an unhappy fact that the present system results in unfair treatment to many Tar Heels. As a matter of fact, in regard to tax policies in the state's 100 counties, equity is just a word to be found in the dictionary. Property values vary greatly from county to county and, often, tax rates have little or no relation to existing situations. Some counties have not had a reevaluation since the 1920s.

The commission has recommended that each county be compelled by law to reevaluate its real property by actual appraisal every eight years. It would allow each county to select the percentage of market value at which it could assess property for taxation but would insist

Footnotes

TAXES and tax avoidance were probably born twins, and are likely to continue their joint existence until the millennium of a taxless world. —Henry J. Radick, professor of law, New York University. "Most of us believe only half what we're told but a tax assessor believes double." —G. Norman Collier.

London Times wrote of his chief Lincoln, "a gentleman." He was not born to the statesman's cloth, and his presidency after the Civil War ended in bitter defeat rounded by Republican cries of "treason." Yet, what he was a man strong in his conviction that moderate Lincoln policies, which he strove to continue, would sooner repair the schism in the Union than headstrong Radical reconstruction. He was right, but he did not win.

The North Carolina-born tailor has not claimed his due from history or from his native state, though he had his virtues. He was a fine politician who was not strong enough to surmount overwhelming congressional majorities; he was a constitutionalist who was impeached and fell within one vote of conviction in the Senate; he was a moderate in a steaming arena where moderation was not fashionable.

At last, after almost 100 years, North Carolina is planning to beckon Johnson from the shades of obscurity and own him his rightful place in the Polk dynasty. Andrew Johnson day is this week (Oct. 21). Yet, what is it that we have swallowed our reluctance to honor a Tar Heel tailor.

For too long have we been finkily about Presidents from the clothing trade.

Johnson Is Beckoned From The Shades

NORTH Carolinians know to keep their mouths shut when Virginians begin to talk about the gilded dynasty who marched in numbers from Old Dominion to White House. But of course South Carolinians have to leave the state. North Carolinians have to leave the state. North Carolinians have to leave the state. North Carolinians have to leave the state.

But Andrew Johnson, also by birth and apprenticeship (he had no formal education) a North Carolinian, has never been accorded a place in the Polk dynasty. He has been shoved back in the shades. He is known as "poor Andrew" His name, if mentioned, calls forth apocryphal memories of an unflattering sort. He was taught to read and write by his Tennessee wife. When he descended on Chapel Hill once to give the commencement address, story has it that students soured him with a jug of "Kentucky eye" (sic) and left him prone and tanked in a dormitory room at South Building.

That Andrew was something of a coarse tipping jester in homespun there is little doubt. "He was not," as the stodgy Civil War correspondent of the

HIDE THAT DIMPLED KNEE, BOY

THE august authorities, even in some of the smaller schools, prohibit the wearing of short pants by little boys in the sixth and seventh grades. This is not only to compound a ludicrous fetish in conformity, but in early fall and late spring, it is a confounded nuisance. With all children eating the same lunches, wearing, basically, the same clothing and studying the same books, you can sniff ferretilly that they will not be forced to come to think alike. During parlous times, countless Tar

Heels wore, perfume, what was neat and available. Neither the color nor the length of britches was interwoven with the curriculum. Many of the boys who wore overalls to school were as negligent as the girls who wore less than ten years' worth of blue fatigues at Fort Bragg. Conformity, like an ax, fell right if not driven into the ground. Occasionally, a little variation in action has resulted in the frustration of innumerable blues, as may occur even to television showmen some shining day.