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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1959

Who's Afraid Of The Big, Bad Public?

THE nearest thing to hoodlump ministry that ever occurs in North Carolina's General Assembly is the biennial debate over legislative secrecy.

Generally, the same rhetorical buck and wing has been performed since 1953 with nary a change. Certainly the outcome is never in doubt. It is the customary "thunderous voice" to permit legislative committees to hide the public's business from the public's eyes.

The ritual was repeated Tuesday in the House of Representatives. As usual, secrecy advocates draped their dread of democratic kibitzers with illogical eloquence. As usual, the debate had its moments of bathos. As usual, the people were denied their full enjoyment of the right to know.

This insistence on a committee secrecy rule is difficult to understand. It is seldom if ever invoked except in meetings of the subcommittee of the Joint Appropriations Committee and then only to enforce anonymity. But it seems to be an occupational disease of most legislators to think that, since they are privileged to stare the great issues of the day in the face, they somehow acquire a property right over what they see and do.

This is, of course, nonsense. Furthermore, it is a betrayal of the public interest.

When a man goes to the legislature he walks on a stage. He cannot hide. He is in the public's eye. He has to make up his mind to take a few rotten eggs from time to time. And he certainly should not expect to be sheltered from public opinion. The people want to see what he is doing and how he is doing it.

This is the way people learn about their government and develop the ability to vote intelligently.

The public clearly has a right—without reservation—to know what goes on in the committees of the legislature, for this is where the hard work is done and many big decisions are made.

It is also where a great many interesting pressures are applied. These pressures ought to be brought out into the open where they can be seen, identified, discussed and evaluated.

It is regrettable that Mecklenburg Representative Frank Snapp found it necessary to reassert snatches of the most vaporous argument of all in favor of secrecy in government. He pointed out to his colleagues that the United States Constitution was drafted in "executive session."

He is absolutely correct. The document was written in a session so bound by secrecy that no minutes were kept and members were enjoined by their own honor not even to reveal the way they themselves voted.

But Rep. Snapp did not tell the whole story. When it was learned that the constitutional convention met in secrecy a bitter wave of criticism swept the 13 original colonies. And on Aug. 30, 1787, Thomas Jefferson wrote John Adams: "I am sorry they began their deliberations so abominably a precedent as that of the Congress of the young members. Nothing can justify this example but the innocence of their intentions and the ignorance of the value of public discussion."

Several states—North Carolina included—refused to ratify the first draft of the Constitution because, behind locked doors, its framers had chopped away all of the great principles of freedom for which the colonists had so valiantly fought. During this storm of angry controversy, the Bill of Rights was drawn up and adopted, and the document disappeared in time, for it is utterly contrary to the interests of a free people.

During a long and eventful life, he gave generously of his time and efforts. Mr. Moore also attained the heights in the business world. He was a leader in North Carolina's textile industry and was rewarded with some of the highest honors this great and important industry can offer. He served as president of both the North Carolina Cotton Manufacturers Association and the Carded Yarn Manufacturers Association, as chairman of the board. In 1948 he was a member of the textile mission from the United States to England.

His death robs the community, the state and the nation of a good and useful citizen.

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Dulles' Power Sinadows 'New' Foreign Policy Thinking

By WALTER LIPPMANN

WASHINGTON THE demands for the immediate appointment of a new secretary of state arise, so it seems to me, from an incomplete analysis of the situation.

The least of the matter is that Mr. Dulles has administered the office under President Eisenhower so ably that no one can replace him during his lifetime.

Whatever his nominal role, he is as influential a secretary of state or as senior advisor to the president, the first authority in foreign policy will be his and no other man can expect to exercise it.

UNIQUE SITUATION The situation in which we find ourselves is unique in modern American history. For no president has ever before delegated to his secretary of state so much power over the issues of war and peace. This power, though it has been delegated by the President, has in fact become deeply conjoined with the personality of John Foster Dulles.

Humphrey, Talmadge Closet To Plan Carving On Benson

By JOSEPH ALSOP

WASHINGTON LET'S NOT be coming up with our scheme, Herman, until we've had a chance to operate on the farm.

The maker of this cheerfully bloodthirsty remark was Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, in company with his new ally, Sen. Herman Talmadge of Georgia. The latter was of course the nation's leading farm, Secretary of Agriculture Benson.

The operation is likely to be performed without any sloppy concessions to sentimental humanitarianism, such as the use of anesthetics. Hatchets will be the instruments employed.

WILD PROGRAM Secretary Benson is ripe for the operating table because his farm program has finally got absolutely out of hand. A few congressmen tell the fairly horrendous story.

When all conservative persons were aroused by the extravagant farm subsidies paid by the Truman spenders, the total cost of the subsidies never passed \$1,250,000,000. Again, the Brannan Plan.

Controls Out. Outlining the technicalities, the four-senator scheme is simple enough. Existing special schemes for tobacco, wool, and other special crops will be retained, but all other crop controls will be jettisoned, and all the main crops will be put under a single program.

Special arrangements are provided to liquidate the Utah fertilizer enterprise's staggering surplus of \$200 million. In all, it is provided that no individual farmer may receive a subsidy in excess of \$12,500. Mainly because the big farmers are left to shift for themselves, the whole scheme is estimated to cost only \$2 billion at present prices, or half the cost of subsidies requested by Benson.

The scheme's real interest lies in its simplicity. It is a well designed to preserve and assist a sorely endangered American asset, our independent farming population. Socially, biologically, historically, this is a name well known national investment. All previous farm programs, having no limitation on the subsidy check, have instead mainly assisted big, semi-industrial farmers. This one is aimed at the small, diversified farmer. Whether or not the scheme's machinery is well-oiled, its principle is surely correct.

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White House, Walter Reed Hospital, and the Department of State—the arrangement to last as long as Mr. Dulles believes he can play his part and does not decide on a total retirement from public life.

It is quite true of course, that at first it is hard to imagine how this hybrid arrangement could work out if we come to the foreign ministers' meeting which the Allies have proposed to Moscow. But it is not impossible to imagine it if we take a matter of fact view of the foreign ministers' conference. Had Mr. Dulles not been stricken, have we any reason to suppose that much could come of a meeting between him, who has political power, and a civil servant like Mr. Gromyko, who is not in the highest ranks of the Soviet rulers?

UNLIKE GENEVA A true negotiation over the ultimate issues of war and peace need not be a spectacular public encounter as in Geneva in 1955. But negotiation about the ultimate issues of war and peace must be the "summit," that is to say among those who have the final power of decision. This means that the negotiation must be a working arrangement between the

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'Rest Easy, Sire—There Are No Signs Of A Mass Uprising'



Johnson Takes Spotlight Governors Tune In Proxmire

By DORIS FLEESON

WASHINGTON His attack on the monopoly character of Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson's management of the Senate majority, Sen. William Proxmire of Wisconsin is far more closely attuned to the wave length of the 35 Democratic governors than to that of the 64 Democratic senators.

The governors are the ones who sent danger in the Johnson compromises which anchor the party in the center of a well-trodden highway. Governors are much closer to the political ground than senators. The customers couldn't care less how the governors set their political course, but they do care about the fact that they are being misled.

OTHER SIDE It is equally true that if a Democratic president occupied the White House he and not Johnson would be the focus of attention. What such a president said and did would be the party line. If he followed the Democratic tradition, he would be a strong and commanding leader, and the likes of Johnson would have to fall in line.

Proxmire's point is that Johnson is in a rut. He argues that which is almost entirely responsible for the praise and press he has had.

Johnson has rarely allowed a Democratic conflict to develop on the Senate floor; his skill in averting it is obvious. He is the slow, the fascinating performance so often glowingly described.

Even so he could not get so much attention if the performance at the White House were not so lackluster. To put it bluntly, it is a bore to press and public.

METHODS KEY Washington has always tended to become absorbed in the technical maneuvering of the House and Senate, in how it does things as much as in what it does. It has been dangled in Johnson's technical proficiency.

U. S. Lags Behind Yet the fact remains that the United States has lagged behind both Russia and England.

In October, 1956, the admiral made a speech claiming that the shipyard, Pa. atomic reactor built by Westinghouse with a subsidy of \$100,000,000 from the U. S. government, will be the world's first large nuclear power plant exclusively for civilian use.

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Harvey W. Moore: The Loss Is Great

HARVEY W. Moore never really retired from the public scene. At 74, he was still deeply interested in community betterment and actively involved in the day-to-day struggles for civic progress.

Yet his final term as mayor ended 34 years ago in 1925. This quality of earnest and continuing concern for the practical problems of a city's political and economic well-being is all too rare today. It is one reason why the loss is so great.

Such men do not spring suddenly into leadership roles. They must patiently climb to eminences of trust through accomplished performance in many related fields. Mr. Moore learned early in life that good citizens are not merely spectators but informed participants in government and in civic affairs generally.

An Escape Valve For Future Striking

WHETHER or not the Henderson strike is settled speedily, there is something left to consider for arbiters and state government.

On any given scene, when negotiations stall or collapse, the local tenor of feelings is well known. Everyone concerned knows when tension is in the air; when there is the threat of violence.

The time to move is before untidiness erupts, before harsh words turn into harsher action. The situations which evolve in fighting usually are born of events from negotiations, from feelings which are inevitable when primary issues such as wages are deadlocked.

One escape valve would be to move the site of bargaining from the local scene, divorce it as much as possible from the press of emotions. It is elementary that negotiators can do more constructive work in calm surroundings. Tension is bound to be present as a potent, silent partner in a situation such as has existed at Henderson.

Gov. Hodges was right in moving in the State Highway Patrol to help combat Henderson violence. Upon reflection, it might have proved a saving grace for the governor also to have recommended a shift of union and management negotiations to Raleigh.

Removed from the emotion-charged atmosphere of Henderson, the orderly business of bargaining could have been speeded. Any lesson taught at Henderson has been learned the hard way. Further ideas to prevent violence on the industrial scene should be advanced before it happens again. Peace already cracked by bricks makes poor listeners.

From The Raleigh News and Observer

GONE WITH THE CAN OPENER

WITH most folks, Sunday dinner today reminds you of the way some thimblehead men play piano, arctically by ear. It is something you eat merely because eating is a habit. It is arctically the hit and miss way a womanless wedding is thrown together for a small town charity. This was not always so.

Picture In Paper Woe Unto Justice Helps Red Cross

Edwards, The News THE VERY fine picture in your paper of our new volunteer, Mrs. E. W. Hancock, did and can do more for the Red Cross than any other picture in your paper.

Your continual support is providing for our community a steady growing corps of trained volunteer workers. We thank you for your interest in our efforts for a better Mecklenburg County.

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