

EDITOR—William M. Tugman MANAGING EDITOR—Alton F. Baker Jr.
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A Liberal Editor Questions FEPC Sincerity

From James S. Pope, the dynamic executive editor of The Courier-Journal, we have received a copy of that great liberal newspaper's editorial discussion of the FEPC issue, as it comes before the people of the United States in the platforms of the two great parties. Mr. Pope contends that the real problem of "civil rights" and fair play between the races is being distorted by demagogues in both parties.

That is pathetically true. Racial justice is essentially a moral problem, and it is a question how far the force of law and government can promote morals. The statement of the Louisville paper is particularly interesting because of the position of Louisville at the gateway between South and North and the position of the Courier-Journal as one of the foremost liberal papers of our day. Therefore we offer this reprint:

Issue of civil rights has been so distorted by partisans of both extremes that it has lost its meaning

EXCEPT for national prohibition, with its grimacing generation of statesmen who "voted dry and drank wet," no other political issue of our times has brought out more false faces, weasel words, demagoguery and intolerance than that of so-called civil rights.

Nothing else has so tempted both parties, their platform writers and their spokesmen to neglect principles for the practical point of vote-catching. The result is an abuse of hopes and fears. It is a codding of prejudice on both sides.

Sometimes the prejudice is suspiciously phony, as when a Harlem politician who lives by votes and rabble-rousing, beats the drum-toms against the Democratic vice-presidential candidate because, though a notable progressive, he is from Alabama. Sometimes the prejudice is ingrained, as when the South Carolina Democratic convention, though agreeing to put Stevenson and Sparkman on the ticket, explodes in protesting oratory of white-supremacy strain.

Wherever it lies, this prejudice is aggravated by an extreme interpretation of the issue on both sides. Properly, the term "civil rights" or "civil liberties" means the right to equality under the law—the right to equal justice, equal security of person, equal access to the voting booth, to education and all public services. Whether civil rights accurately mean a right in our economic system to have equal and enforceable claim on jobs and classifications is a fine question, though we are not inclined to dispute it or to labor it here.

However, not many may know that President Truman's order of December 5, 1946, setting up the Committee on Civil Rights, mentioned only one violation of rights. "The action of individuals who take the law into their own hands," the President said in Paragraph Two, "and inflict summary punishment and wreak vengeance is subversive of our democratic system of law enforcement and public criminal justice, and gravely threatens our form of government."

This original directive and all other goals have been lost sight of. Through fear, through demagogic intent to stir passion for or against, through calculated pressure to seize advantage—whatever the reason, the whole issue of civil rights has been reduced for political purposes to the single question of a law on fair employment practices; in short, a compulsory F.E.P.C.

Many Cities Nick The Poor Car Owner

If you lived in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City or Washington, D. C., you would have to pay a city stamp tax in addition to the usual state registration fees and state and federal gas taxes for the privilege of owning and operating your car. A report from Public Administration Clearing House gives this picture of the situation:

In New York City cars under 3,500 pounds pay \$5 a year city fee and those over 3,500 pay \$10. In the first three weeks sales of these stamps netted the city \$8 million.

In Chicago the tax is based on horsepower—\$15 under 35 hp, \$30 over 35 hp. In the first six months the tax netted \$14,800,000. All told more than 120 cities are levying a special tax on cars and trucks either by weight or horsepower.

In Oregon such a local tax is forbidden by statute except where a city or county can justify a special fee for some special use. This law was tested recently in Clackamas County. In this state, very wisely, the state collects all the motor vehicle fees and re-distributes 19 per cent of its net motor vehicle revenue to counties and 11 per cent to cities. The cities will get more than \$4 million this year and the counties approximately \$8 million.

Good, common cents—eighteen hundred and seventy-five of them—will buy a bond from your Uncle Sam.

If it makes you feel any cooler—winter is dashing toward us at the rate of 24 hours a day.

For rabble-rousers of both sides it is a very valuable issue. It is good for an inflammatory and intimidating utterance any day. It gives Adam Clayton Powell or Vito Marcantonio or even Senator Lehman the chance to throw his weight around in New York; and at the other extreme, Governor Byrnes to do the same thing in South Carolina.

As an issue it is kept passionately alive, bringing shudders to platform writers at national conventions and cautiously unctuous words to the lips of presidential candidates, depriving all—including the inciting orators themselves—of dignity. The most destructive force in politics today is kept alive though reasonable men are aware that the passage of a compulsory F.E.P.C. law is most improbable in the first place, and that even if passed it would be practically impossible of administration and enforcement.

THE F.E.P.C. set up in 1942 by President Roosevelt was something else—a part of the mobilization of the nation's labor force for war production, and a move for the best use of manpower. A compulsory F.E.P.C. in peacetime, aimed at settling questions which are all but impossible of answering—questions like the presence or absence of prejudice in an employer's actions—would impose a staggering task upon the federal government. It would mean ventures into a kind of thought-control, or thought-determination, that many a well-meaning champion of an F.E.P.C. seems not to have considered. On the surface the idea has a swift and facile appeal to social consciousness and democracy. When it comes to practical application, the problems become uncountable. When it comes to the moral point of inquisitions set up, of force imposed on private action, they multiply.

It is reasonable to suppose that the difficulties, both technical and moral, are quite clear to responsible members of both parties. Neither platform is more than a thing of vague words on this point. The Democrats "favor federal legislation effectively to secure . . . the right to equal opportunity for employment." The Republicans promise to pass "federal legislation to further just and equitable treatment in the area of discriminatory employment practices (which) should not duplicate state efforts to end such practices (or) set up another huge bureaucracy."

What do these words mean? In their obscurity and their possibility of justifying almost anything that is done or not done, they mean that pressures have made our political parties compromise truth and reality. They mean that license is given to demagogues to make hay in their own particular pastures, and to do so with the amplifying and abetting opportunity of a hot presidential campaign in which everything makes news. The words mean that in the practical demands of politics, there must be ingratiation all around.

This is why a group of Negro leaders, headed by a venerable bishop, visited General Eisenhower in Denver last week, and a little later an inquiring party of Mississippi Dixie crats dropped in on him; and both apparently liked what they heard. At the same time, an other Mississippi delegation talked with Governor Stevenson at Springfield, naturally mentioned the subject of the civil-rights plank, and went away as if satisfied. The stature of no person or no party is enhanced by this kind of timorous skirting of "yes" and "no" to arrive at "maybe."

All this is not to say that the issue of civil rights and its extension to a compulsory F.E.P.C. has no place in political discussion. It has. Whatever the subject, people may talk about it and make it the basis of a petition for "redress of grievances." It does not matter whether the grievances are real or fancied, whether they can or cannot be redressed. It is the abuse of the issue, the exploitation of racial aspiration on one hand and racial prejudice on the other that becomes the dangerous thing.

In the extremely phoney "Gold Brick Amendment" which the long-haul trucks have initiated there is a trick phrase which specifies that no county or city shall levy motor vehicle taxes. This is pure window dressing along with the ballot title which describes the amendment as "a fair and equitable tax." What the long-haulers are trying to do is to outlaw our weight-mile tax on big trucks and to escape their share of road-user taxes by passing their burden over to the farmer, the logger, the short-haul trucker and the car user in added registration fees and fuel taxes. They are trying to escape some \$7 million a year which they now pay in mileage fees.

Oregon, through its weight-mile tax, is the first state in the union to solve the problem of making the long-hauler pay his share. Many of the long-haulers register only a small percentage of their trucks in Oregon. Many of them buy little or no fuel in Oregon because they carry huge reserve tanks and evade fuel tax.

The Oregon motor vehicle tax system is the best in the nation and it ought to be preserved.

A mid-west janitor who robbed a bank has his own quaint idea about how to clean up.

Most every woman is human enough to enjoy the voice that is singing her praises.

Marquis Childs

Second Image Of Ike Blurred

NEW YORK — Shortly before he left his Denver headquarters to start on the long campaign trek, Gen. Eisenhower had a conference with one of the most astute and understanding of his backers. This friend and long-time admirer gave the candidate some advice which went more or less as follows:

"Ike, the public has two images of you. One is the warm-hearted friendly human being whom everyone likes. The second image is of the leader, confident and resolute, ready to assume the great task of leadership ahead in the next four years."

"That second image is being blurred in the public mind. It is being blurred in part because of the deliberate propaganda put out by the opposition which seeks to make you a good-natured fellow out of his depth in politics. But partly the blame rests on the failure thus far to focus the campaign on the second image."

To the objective observer this will seem a sound analysis. The program has been — and it still is — to translate the dynamic quality of Eisenhower's personality into terms that will carry with the larger audience which must be reached in the next two months. That is to say, Eisenhower must do for millions, in person and on television and radio, what he does for a group of people seated around him at close range.

Here, of course, one comes up against the trade of politics and Ike's inexperience. It is a trade and there are tricks of the trade both in content and the technique of a campaign.

Up to the present, John Foster Dulles, Republican foreign policy adviser in the State Department for the past two years, has had probably more to do than any single individual except the candidate with shaping content. In his long conference at Denver with Eisenhower, Dulles urged that he use foreign policy as a frame of reference for his whole attack on the Truman administration. In that way, Dulles argued, he could stick by his determination to avoid personalities.

Thus he could attack corruption in government by pointing out how the administration scandals lowered our prestige everywhere, thereby making it more difficult to lead the free world against communism. The same logic would apply on waste and inflation. During the conference Dulles dictated lengthy notes to illustrate the kind of approach he advocated.

These notes were incorporated in part in Eisenhower's American Legion speech. That speech sounded the basic Dulles theme — that this nation is in the greatest peril in its history and that everything possible must be done to build America's strength.

While this theme coincides with Eisenhower's fundamental conviction, it was not an entirely happy choice for an audience made up of comrades in arms. It did nothing to put the candidate in friendly and close relationship who would have liked to have been told that their sacrifices in two wars were not entirely in vain. Part of the trade of politics is the knack of striking a relationship with an audience, and this knack Eisenhower has yet to acquire.

As has been reported, one of those minor accidents occurred that can exert a disproportionate influence. A new and hitherto untried type of teleprompter — the gadget that moves the speech in enlarged type on a scroll across a small screen on the lectern — got out of gear. Ike had great difficulty in following the text and this threw him off his stride.

When he returned to headquarters in the Commodore Hotel, he was really angry. He turned on the operator of the teleprompter with some pretty strong language. But then he saw that this luckless individual, one of the members of his staff, was about to break down and he turned with the kind of warm and impulsive gesture typical of the man and said:

"Oh well, forget about it. I don't think I'll remember it three weeks from now and I hope you won't, either."

As his past has proved, Eisenhower is a free-swinging individual with a great capacity to learn and to adapt himself to new situations. But among some of his closest advisers the word is always caution. They are so afraid of doing something wrong that more often than not they prefer to do nothing. In this atmosphere of caution, not to say timidity, speeches are pared down and statements suppressed.

It is a strange atmosphere for one who has in the stirring history of the past 10 years risked so much on the boldness of day to day decision. And seeing Eisenhower in this atmosphere, one must believe that he will break out from it in his own style.

So They Say—

Sex is what we French have most on our minds. Here (in America) everybody is trying to make money.—Movie actress Corinne Calvet.

If the United Nations goes the way of the League of Nations, the last hope of man to organize the way of peace will disappear.—Vice President Alben Barkley.

Actually there is no wide-spread corruption in government.—Solicitor General Philip Perlman.

The Shepherd

THOUGHTFULNESS
"How precious are thy thoughts to me." Ps. 139:17
Joe has a plan I think is grand . . . He keeps some postcards close at hand . . . And if his friend should win a prize . . . Gain honor or should realize . . . Some goal he seeks, Joe drops a line . . . To say he thinks it is "just fine" . . . Or maybe Joe's not chanced to see . . . Some friend of his right recently . . . So his card reads, "Say how are things?" . . . You'd be surprised what joy it brings.
JULIEN C. HYER.



Fiery John Rankin Can Now Cool Off

By JAMES MARLOW
Associated Press Staff Writer

WASHINGTON (AP)—John Rankin will have time to cool off now. For most of his life he's been as active and blazing as a man with a box of matches on fire in his hip pocket.

Rankin, the tireless champion of white supremacy who had his hand called on the floor of the House of Representatives for throwing around words like "Kike" and "Negro" won't be back next year.

Rankin says he always used the word "Negro," but his pronunciation sometimes makes it sound more like "Nigger," a circumstance which once led former Rep. Vito Marcantonio (ALP-NY) to raise a point of order that Rankin had called Singer Paul Robeson a "Nigger Communist." Speaker Rayburn ruled that Rankin said "Negro Communist."

32 YEARS IN HOUSE

Rankin has been a member of the House from Mississippi for 32 years. This week the voters of his state turned him down for re-nomination in favor of a fellow-congressman, Thomas Abernethy, who is 49.

Rankin, still as lively as a boy at 70, is one of those old men who never seem bruised by the shoving around time gives them. Even his white hair seems to stand up in constant indignation.

There was almost a birdlike quality, an angry bird, in the way he cocked his head as he sat in the House, listening and watching, never wanting to miss anything. He may have set a record for attendance. He seemed forever there.

Unlike some of his ponderous fellow - members, far younger, Rankin could be on his feet in an eye-blink for a fight with his mouth or his fists. Size didn't faze him. His fellow-members, presidents or even the Supreme Court, were all targets for his tongue and his temper.

SWINGS AT DEMO

In 1945 he swung on Frank Hook, a fellow Democrat from Michigan. Hook, one-time iron ore miner, was a lot bigger man. Rankin had accused Hook of consorting with Communists. When Hook called him a liar, Rankin swung.

Communism was on his mind. He was one of the most active Communist-hunters of his time, a pursuit he developed as a leading member of the House Un-American Activities Committee.

He was equally attentive to, and equally against, any anti-racial discrimination moves by the Democratic administration. He was strictly for segregation of Negroes.

At the same time, he championed the Tennessee Valley Authority, rural electrification, and war veterans. Veterans were his special province. He was chairman of the House Veterans Committee.

But for attentiveness to his job, he set an example. Up at 6 in the morning, he got down to his of-



Pilot Killed In Explosion

STANWOOD, Wash. (AP)—pilot of an Air Force F-30 fighter was killed Thursday when the plane exploded in flight over Camano Island.

The second crewman parachuted to safety.

The pilot's body was found after the crash. His name withheld.

Lt. Ike Barber of Louisville, Ky., the radar operator, parachuted and landed in a tree, was treated for a head injury. The plane was based at Ft. Field, near Everett, Wash.

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