

Fifth District Sales Tax Approval Necessary For Area Progress

A vast majority of the people of Northeast Louisiana, we believe, are keenly aware that we cannot afford to have inadequate teachers, school workers, police and fire department forces and personnel in other phases of parish and city employment.

For these and many other important reasons, it seems imperative that funds be found quickly for pay increases for workers if the personnel in those fields are to continue to be adequate to meet the high standards required for our vibrant and progressive area.

Need Is Obvious

Because of the obvious need and because a sales tax seems the fairest and best method of obtaining the necessary funds for these "must" raises, the Monroe Morning World unequivocally endorses the proposed sales tax issue to be voted on by the people of the Fifth Congressional District on June 10.

The one-cent tax proposal is a good way for all of us to share in helping our teachers and other school, parish and municipal employees. It will be collected in the Fifth District and it will be spent in the Fifth District with all the benefits going to the people in the Fifth District.

One of our consistent beliefs is that, in nearly all things, local governments, as designed by our forefathers, is superior to all other forms of government. Local people need to make local decisions. To be able to function adequately in this respect, local officials must have sufficient funds to enable them to pay capable workers.

The only sensible way is to pay for it collectively. And the best system is one in which everyone shares — such as a sales tax. In addition, the sales tax, besides being the broadest based of all taxes, has the added advantage of providing funds on a basis responsive to the growth of the area and therefore geared to match the growth of the need of additional services in future years.

A comparison of figures with other sections of the state — and particularly South Louisiana areas — shows generally that our teachers, parish and municipal workers are among the lowest paid in the state.

Ouachita Ranks Low

Ouachita, for example, ranks the lowest in starting teacher pay among a number of parishes checked. Figures furnished by the State Department of Education show that the starting pay in Ouachita is \$4,100 annually as compared to \$5,600 in Orleans and Jefferson parishes; \$4,900 in Caddo; \$5,400 in East Baton Rouge, and \$4,750 in Lafayette.

Furthermore, in Orleans parish, teachers with master degrees get \$2,600 more than those in Ouachita, while in Jefferson Parish teachers receive \$2,200 more annually than here.

The spread is even more pronounced in some of the rural area parishes in Northeast Louisiana. And it will become even more acute in a very short period of time unless measures are taken to improve the situation quickly.

The Monroe police department can be cited as an example of what is needed in the field of law enforcement for all of our area towns and cities.

Based on national standards of two police officers per 1,000 population, Police Chief James C. Kelly said Monroe should have 130 officers. The present authorized strength is 74, but the city presently has 60 officers in service and recently dropped to a low of 57. At one time in 1966, one-third of the police officers had less than one year of experience. During that critical period, felonious crimes in the city rose seven per cent.

The same situation exists in West Monroe. Under the approved standard Police Chief Johnny Mitchell should have 40 officers, but has only 23. His present authorized strength is 24.

There is no hope of improving this grim picture without additional funds. Monroe and West Monroe city officials have indicated that without the approval of the sale tax, funds will not be available for improvement in the two police departments.

The proposed tax, based on 1965-1966 figures, the latest available, would produce approximately \$5.2-million in the 14 parishes of the Fifth Congressional District. Of that amount \$3.1-million is marked for distribution among the district's 15 school systems for raises for teachers and other school personnel. The remaining \$2,077,758 will be divided among school boards, municipalities, and police juries to be used for raises among those employees and for improvements such as drainage, equipment purchases and road and street work.

Under the estimated revenue from the tax, if approved, teachers in the district would receive a minimum raise of \$500 per year, with more allowed where finances permit. In Ouachita parish, for example, the average raise to teachers would be approximately \$600 since both the Monroe and Ouachita Parish boards have pledged teachers 90 per cent of their share of the \$3.1-million. Non-professional school employees in Ouachita and throughout the district would receive a five per cent raise.

Funds To Be Shared

Municipalities and police juries would use a major share of their part of the revenue for raises also. In Monroe, for example, officials have pledged to raise base pay of fireman and policemen from \$340 to \$400 per month. Laborers' pay would be increased approximately \$10 per month, while supervisory pay would go up \$25 to \$40 per month.

In West Monroe, at least one-third of that city's share would go toward raises, including a \$400-a-month base pay for policemen. Many capital improvements also are needed.

The Ouachita police jury also plans to raise the base pay of its firemen, besides giving raises throughout the parish force of 115 other employees. Road and drainage work is needed, plus the repair or replacement of bridges.

Seemingly it should be apparent to anyone that help is needed desperately — and quickly. The means to aid in this worthwhile venture are available.

Three years ago, the Legislature passed a bill allowing local option sales taxes. Since that time, more than half the parishes in Louisiana have taken advantage of it to raise the salaries of their teachers and municipal workers.

In a sense, the Fifth District sales tax effort is a unique experiment. In that, when the Legislature last December created the Northeast Louisiana Sales Tax District, it gave the green light to the first attempt of an entire district to "take care of its own."

We do not believe the people of Northeast Louisiana want second rate school teachers, workers, police and fire protection, and parish and municipal employees. So far we have been able to maintain a high standard. But the time is here when action must be taken — and taken immediately or we will deteriorate to a low level in these important fields of endeavor.

The need is obvious, and it is vital that we do something about it. That is why the Monroe Morning World believes the voters in the parishes involved will go the polls June 10 and cast their ballots in support of progress.

Midway Island was discovered by Capt. N. C. Brooks of the Hawaiian bark Gambia on July 5, 1859.

Trouble Is, The Safe Has A Back Door!



Views Of Our Readers

C. B'ers And Hams

West Monroe, La. To the Editor:

In a recent article in your newspaper concerning Legislation introduced by Rep. Lawrence Gibbs and co-sponsored by Rep. George Wood dealing with special license plates for C.B. radio operators...

We agree the Ham is required to have more technical knowledge than a C.B'er, but let us compare the two thousand watts power that a ham is allowed to use to the three and one half watts of a C.B'er...

Also was the statement that the only technical knowledge required for a C.B'er to get a license is pushing a microphone button. This may be true to a certain extent...

three and one half watts of talk power, this man must have a very good technical knowledge of antennas, their installation, radiation characteristic, and adjustments...

Our contention is that the C.B. radio operators major contribution during an emergency or disaster would be the local level whereas a Ham would be on a regional level.

In addition to your aforementioned statements was the one by Police Chief Kelly, as having said in effect that all C.B'ers are involved in Klu Klux Klan activities...

We think that Chief Kelly is applying the above sort of thinking to the C.B'ers. We also contend that if maybe Chief Kelly would attend his Church Sunday and ask all members of the Klu Klux Klan to stand that he may find that he has as many if not more in his Church...

J. D. Price Jr. President, Northeast Louisiana C. B'ers Club

Social Security Law

West Monroe, La. To the Editor:

Even though I cannot type I would like to try to get a letter in "Views of Our Readers" section.

BARRY GOLDWATER

Percy's Attack Upon Republicans Rapped

SEN. CHARLES Percy has taken an unfortunate first step toward the sort of intraparty warfare that tore the GOP apart prior to the 1964 election.

In such in-fighting, the target always is a fellow Republican rather than the opposing political party and philosophy. To a large extent it has become a characteristic of the left wing of the Republican Party.

During the 1964 Republican primaries, for instance, the candidates of that wing centered all of their fire on me, rather than on Democrats. Most observers now agree that their attacks set the pace for the subsequent Democrat campaign.

Since then we have had encouraging evidence that the party had learned its lesson and that cutting up fellow Republicans would be avoided. Big and large it has been — until now.

S. E. N. PERCY'S assault against party unity came on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. He took a series of broad swipes against California's Republican Gov. Ronald Reagan and his firm stand against campus anarchy or worse, a campus take-over by militant and purely political student groups.

Sen. Percy slapped Gov. Reagan as one who "forever would talk of the mess at Berkeley" rather than take constructive action. He also reassured the students that, unlike the governor, "Some of us do hear you, and we do not dismiss the questions you ask."

Some of those questions, of course, include supporting the Viet Cong, suppressing conservative or libertarian views on the campus and a grab for raw power to take over the affairs of the university.

IT IS NOT the issue of Berkeley, however, that is most significant in this incident. Sen. Per-

cy, apparently in order to score popularity points with his student audience, took out after a fellow Republican rather than concentrate his fire on the administration which is even less popular with the students than is Gov. Reagan.

Ironically, Sen. Percy's ungracious remarks about the governor came in the state that has led the nation in patching Republican wounds, ending Republican feuds and getting on with the business of electing Republican candidates. With the exception of the noisy handful at Berkeley, California is giving growing popular support to Gov. Reagan.

COMMENTATORS across the nation were moved to point out that Sen. Percy appears to be monkeying for a position in which should the front runners fall by the wayside, he could run for the Republican Presidential nomination. It is obvious, too, that in such a circumstance Gov. Reagan would also be in the running.

Thus, this attack against Gov. Reagan so early in the game shows up as purely political, tragically divisive, absolutely not needed and unwise in every sense — even in terms of Sen. Percy's political ambitions.

There is no need for any Republican to cut up any other Republican. There is plenty of material for surgery across the political aisle, in the political excesses of the Great Society, in the failures of socialism, in the frightening encroachments upon individuality, in the assaults on law and order, in the on-again, off-again tactics of the war, in the immense mishandling of the Department of Defense.

It is to be hoped that Sen. Percy, in the future, will address himself to those matters rather than escalate his attacks on fellow Republicans.

tion in the hope it may help someone in the future.

It is in regard to our Social Security Law.

We were one of the very first to sign up for Social Security here when it became a law and have paid it ever since. We have never used it. My husband was paralyzed January 8, 1967 and just got out of the hospital a week ago.

Because he worked one hour after midnight January 1st he will have to lose one month of payments and though he is completely disabled he cannot get any payments for seven months even though he has paid it in since 1937.

You have to keep living and paying utilities, house notes and even your life insurance payments for six months. I'm sure plenty of people have had my experience, but I have never known this. If it had not been for real good friends which are too numerous to name, we would have lost everything.

I hope something can be done to help future people in these circumstances even though it will not help me.

And, I'd like to especially thank Mayor Bert Hatten, Mr. Jim Steele, Mr. George, Tony and John Varino, Dr. Foster, Dr. Bennett, Dr. Sartor, Dr. Tennen and the many, many others I cannot name here for their wonderful help.

Thanks for letting me get this off my chest if you will publish this. I have also written Senators Long, Congressman Passman and others.

MRS. W. B. HILBURN

Riots

Monroe, La. To The Editor:

Recently President Johnson asked Congress to appropriate several million dollars to prevent "Riots" in several large cities.

Does the spending of large sums of money in the large cities cause riots to be good?

I read in the Bible that Solomon believed that chastising an unruly son may be the best answer.

Since 1961 large sums of tax money have been spent and we all know that the crime rate has increased proportionately. Apparently Washington has not found the right answer.

Could be if something is not done about the riots in our country the Democrats may lose the next election, including the presidency. What has been done about those that incite riots?

The majority of Americans believe that the guilty ones should be punished, not rewarded.

They want safe streets in our cities. They believe that Washington should be as safe as Saigon.

Jim J. Breland

B'nai Brith

Monroe, La. To the Editor:

I would like to let you know that the editorial that you wrote on B'nai Brith that appeared in the April 14th Monroe Morning World was the finest editorial that could have been written on B'nai Brith. You did a fantastic job on this and on behalf of our local lodge and the Louisiana State Association I want to thank you for a job well done.

All of the officers, members and guest of the Louisiana State Association Convention of B'nai Brith, that was held in Monroe April 15th and 16th, and our principal speakers, Mr. Herbert Levy and Mr. Harry Friedman commented on the wonderful editorial. Copies of this were circulated all over the country.

Again I want to thank you for a job well done.

Morris Blumenthal

House Grapples With Political Principal

FOR THE FIRST time in the 90th Congress week grappled with high political principal. The House won. By a handful of votes, the administration's forces defeated what had become known as the "Quiet Amendment" to the aid to education bill. It was a great day for Lyndon Johnson, but federalism went down for the count.

Not to prolong the metaphor, but this was something less than a fair encounter. The House leadership hit the Quiet proposal with every dirty trick of misrepresentation known to the fight game. In the early rounds, it was made to appear that the amendment would antagonize the Catholics, hurt the innocent Indians, and penalize poor colored children all across the land. There was not a word of truth in these charges, but the amendment's supporters never could rise above them.

By way of background, it may be recalled that the Johnson administration broke new ground in 1965 with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of that year. The act launched this country's first program of general Federal aid to education. Beginning with the 1966-67 school year, hundreds of millions in grants became available, primarily for aid to poverty-stricken children. The act dodged nimbly around the church-state issue; it provided funds for the purchase of textbooks and library materials; it set up grants for planning and research. Now it is proposed to expand and extend the law for another two years, which is to say, to make permanent a continuing program of massive Federal aid to local schools.

MANIFESTLY, the 1965 act has done much good. Not even the most bitter critic of Federal aid can deny it. Yet the fund distribution formula produced some wild inequities, and the machinery devised by the sponsor to an ominous centralization of power in Washington. The act gave lip service to the States; it contained some pious prohibitions against Federal control; but at every critical point, the final decision-making power — the power to approve or disapprove a local school board's application — was vested in U. S. Commissioner of Education Harold Howe.

The sole purpose of the amendment sponsored by Minnesota's able young Albert Quie, a rising figure in the House, was to reduce the inequities and to

restore the principle of State and local administration. Toward that end, he devised a new formula for block grants to the States. Under this plan, no State or territory would have received less than it is receiving this year, but the Federal money would have been provided as a lump sum calculated according to school population and average personal income.

This was the right way to go about it. Assuming that general Federal aid to education is here to stay — and plainly it is — those who concern themselves realistically with political problems have a high obligation. It is to apply what George Mason long ago described as fundamental principles. Among these is the principle of federalism, which holds that powers not delegated to the Constitution to the national government are reserved to the people. The power to create and to maintain a system of public education surely is among the greatest of these powers.

YET THE EFFECT of the aid to education act, over the past year or so, has been almost to nullify that power. Federal officials, to be sure, deny that charge; they insist that local applications are just that — local applications. They do not acknowledge that prudent school superintendents, skilled in the arts of grantsmanship, tailor their applications to what they think their Washington masters will approve. In a hundred subtle ways, the proliferating new programs of federally subsidized education are made to fit into molds created by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The hands may be the hands of some local Esau, but the voice is the voice of Commander Howe.

Quie's amendment was intended to let other voices be heard. A former school board member himself, back in his native denison, the Minnesotan knew that States and localities have widely varying problems of education. These will not yield to a single Federal solution, or even to two or three approve alternatives. Local school problems demand local involvement and local decision-making. Under any other approach, the whole concept of State responsibility tends to wither and die.

Quie fought the good fight and though this battle was lost the war for a viable federalism will have to be carried on.

WILLIAM F. EUCKLEY JR.

U. S. Foreign Policy Shapelessness Bared

THE CRISIS in the Mideast reminds us unpleasantly of the shapelessness of our foreign policy in the area, not only on the specific questions of how to treat the individual nations involved, but on the general question of what it is that we have to look out for. We have been so awfully convincing ourselves that the day is over when the Soviet Union will actually make a trouble for us, that we seem to be caught completely off guard when we see about to explode in the face of the world a crisis generated almost exclusively by the Soviet Union.

Not that General Nasser is unwilling. But General Nasser would be impotent to consummate any serious threat to Israel except for the direct and indirect backing of the Soviet Union. We have ourselves striven, as is theoretically correct, to befriend impartially all the countries in the area. But our anxiety to please Nasser has been a

inordinate one. We have given Nasser over a billion dollars of aid during the past decade of his inglorious career, and by unwarranted Nasser has consistently opposed American policy, even when the alternative was so inhumane as for instance to require backing the North Congo rebel savages. Meanwhile the Soviet Union spent the hugest sum of all on Nasser, three billion dollars during the same period. The stage obviously has been set for a confrontation.

IN THE LIGHT of all of which Mr. U Thant's fimsy abdicance by one disputable construction of the resolution that permitted the UN's expeditionary force to tranquilize the border between Israel and Egypt is strange to say the least, coming from someone who puts so great an emphasis on peace. Why did he not consult the Security Council, or even the General Assembly, and at the very least gain time during which a readjustment in international pressures might have been brought to bear on Nasser? Meanwhile, his precipitate withdrawal has emboldened Nasser to talk about closing Israel's access to the Red Sea, which is the equivalent of laying siege upon her; President Johnson has promised Israel that we shall live up to our commitment to maintain the national borders in the Middle East (against Mr. Johnson there have so far been no protests from the protesters of the analogous position Mr. Johnson has taken in Southeast Asia) — and the situation worsens. What to do?

It is not likely that we can expect very much help from England and France. They hit upon a solution to the Nasser

problem ten years ago, and a though it appeared primitive, might well have changed its course of history, and in its right direction.

IT IS INTENSELY interesting to bear in mind why President Eisenhower and Secretary State Dulles turned so furious against Israel, England, and France when they launch their joint invasion of Egypt, simultaneously with Russia's oppression of the Hungarian revolt. It was the Administration position that world opinion would not tolerate such a thing that it smacked too much of colonialism — and how, if western powers were the selves engaged in using force aggressively in one part of the world, could we successfully preach the Soviet Union for using force in another part of the world?

What happened, as we might state on the matter, is that Soviet Union went ahead and used force, suffered a very temporary diminution in her popularity, and is now the toast of the cosmopolitan dandies of the world. The United States, being repressed Israel, England and France, has had ten years of Nasser, and pan-Arabic pan-African convulsions trace to the convulsive revolutionary spirit of Nasser. Had been chastened in 1956 it might have eased the turmoil it came later — in Iraq, in Syria in Yemen and Aden; Algeria and the Sudan, and that matter in the rest of Africa.

NOW WE HAVE no alternative than to announce resigning that even without England and France, we shall live up to our promises, and make a able our navy to break blockade imposed on Israel.

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