

Battalion EDITORIALS

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1957

Two Years After the Mast...

College Station presents a rather unique case when it comes to the showing of moving pictures. Although it has a population figure, including both regular residents and students, that would justify the presentation of first-run movies, everyone must be satisfied with seeing old movies—sometimes 2 and 3 years old—or travel to Bryan in order to see a first-class picture. That such a condition exists in a supposedly up-to-date community is deplorable.

This condition exists not because of any law or college regulation, but because of the insistence of large theater chains on continuing certain monopolistic practices throughout Texas.

These chains have decreed through pressure and control over booking agents that any first-run movie must have appeared in Bryan before it can be shown on the A. & M. campus. In fact the length of time elapsing between the showing of the same movies has been fixed at 80 days.

This is hard to understand when one realizes that College Station is an incorpor-

ated city and a community within its own rights. Yet a certain group continues to think of College Station as being tied to the economic "apron strings" of Bryan.

Since the large theater chains are unable to extend control of theaters to the campus of A. & M., they have done the next most selfish thing—denied the showing of certain classification of movies on the campus except at their discretion.

Anyone familiar with practices of the large theater chains in other parts of the state can attest to their ruthlessness in dealing with their competitors. It is no coincidence that they own practically every theater in any important city in Texas.

Although the theater chains are not the only agencies in the state of Texas taking unfair advantage of the public, by suppressing competition and price fixing, they have certainly been responsible for an undesirable situation at College Station. How to deal with such groups is up to the courts. But it would seem that something should be done!

Scanning the Political Horizon...

With the approaching national elections, the country is witnessing the rising political activity which always precedes such events. There is the usual talk of platforms, candidates, views, parties, and a myriad of other topics.

One of the more important points in the election conversations today is the possibility of a third major party with new outlooks and objectives. Another party would no doubt have a great effect on the political situations in many states, but there seems little chance of it creating any disturbance in Texas.

Let us look at this state whose politics would be unaffected by the entrance of another political viewpoint on the national scene.

Texas ranks sixth in the forty-eight states in population and therefore sixth in voting power. Dealing with the various races and immigrants which populate the state tends to make Texans race conscious and race tolerant. Living in a state as large as Texas, the inhabitants have less of a conception of distance than most Americans. This makes them more receptive to thoughts of uniting the countries of the world in ideas and contacts.

This state has large agricultural areas, many leading the nation in production in their fields. There are large industries and manufacturing plants within its borders. Its shipping ranks high in tonnage on a world basis; its mineral activities are diverse as well as important.

It has only been in the last few years that Texas has begun to take advantage of its resources and possibilities of advanced development. For a long time it has been a pioneering state with plenty of room, full of new interests. It has been a land of opportunity in which all America could expand. The influx of big business, organized labor, and planned development has rendered many of the old statutes, activities, and methods inadequate. The slow process of change is just beginning to catch up with the racing advancement of the past decade.

Now that the number and methods of Texas businesses are approaching those of some of the older states, the realization is dawning that one major change that must occur is the altering of its political set-up. To meet this progress of the state, its representatives to the national Congress must be progressive. They must be able to comprehend the new problems and potentialities arising with the fortunes of their state. They must be capable of guiding the actions of the people toward a goal of betterment of life, but still reflect the views of the individuals to whom they are responsible. The people's rights and interests must be maintained in the changing attitudes and requirements of progress. And above all they must be allowed to profit by the development of the new techniques, opportunities, and ideas which are now beginning to surround them.

We in Texas are hampered in this respect by the limitations which we passively encourage in our politics. By disinterested, "laissez faire" attitudes, Texans have been letting reactionary forces in the local, state, and national government lead them into quiet negligence, ignorant by-passes, and backward ideas.

Few activities have benefited the people of this state through the actions of their representatives that were not enacted because they were also beneficial to other enterprises

which prey on the temperaments and push into the consciousness of our legislators. We Texans are not inclined to broach subjects to our Congressmen which would help us. We do not rise up in righteous indignation over acts which curtail our rights and privileges. Consequently, those who are interested in legislation which aids them, to the detriment of the mass of the population, can induce legislators to work for the passage of such measures.

Candidates for representative offices in our government therefore know which side of their bread is buttered—not the side of the people who they can quell with high talk, double talk, and hillbilly music.

How can Texans speak of the establishment of a "third" party? In essence, there is only one political party in the state! In the 102 years of Texas statehood (excluding the period of reconstruction following the Civil War), the state has supported only one non-Democratic candidate for political office—Herbert Hoover for the Presidency in 1928.

To some, that is a remarkable and proud record of party loyalty. To be sure it is remarkable, but what has the state to show for its devotion? Stuck as it is with the block of Democrats forming what is commonly called the "Solid South", Texas has lost its bargaining power in the Democratic party. The leaders of the party know that they can pacify the delegation with "a pittance or a promise".

How important are Texas' 23 electoral votes in an election? In 1927 when the Democrats were rightfully afraid of losing Texas in the election, they saw fit to hold their national convention in Houston. To get back the Texas delegation in 1932, the Democrats picked John Garner as a running mate to Franklin D. Roosevelt. These instances prove that the party is interested in Texas only when they are not assured of its votes.

This editorial is not a boost for the Republican party nor any other political group which may try to divert Texans' thought in their direction. It is a plea to the citizens of Texas to heed the words of the politicians in the coming months when aspirants take to the platforms.

As voters in a democratic system of government so envied by millions to whom it is denied, it is your right and duty to ponder the statements presented to you before the elections. Question the speakers' promises; analyze their views.

Consider the past work of the incumbents. Take time to look at the record of the stands your legislators took on major issues in the last session of Congress. Listen to the platforms of the aspirants. What good can and will they do you in office?

Look up from your present tasks, Texans, and study those men you choose to administer your needs and guard your liberties in the coming years.

Advertisement by a motor sales company at Menlo Park, California: "Murdercycle, 1944 two-cylinder. Please come and buy it before we get killed trying to ride it."

As if President Truman didn't have enough on his mind these days, Kate Smith has petitioned him to proclaim a national Grandmothers Day to be celebrated each year on the second Sunday in October. —TIDE

The Battalion

The Battalion, official newspaper of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas and the City of College Station, Texas, is published tri-weekly and circulated on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday afternoons, except during the summer when it is published semi-weekly. Subscription rate \$4 per school year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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icklers By George



"As close as I can figure it, a television set will take us 19 years to pay for."

BETWEEN THE BOOKENDS...

28 Years in Russia Gives VanNarvig Plenty of Info

By Wilmore B. Arnold
EAST OF THE IRON CURTAIN
by William Van Narvig. Ziff Davis, New York, 1947.

Twenty-eight years inside Russia—living, associating, working, fighting alongside Russians of all kinds—have given this author an objective understanding of the Russian mind, the Russian viewpoint, and the Russian system unique among writers on the subject. To be entirely objective about Russian is a difficult thing, but Mr. Van Narvig has made an earnest effort in presenting to his readers all aspects of the Russian pattern of procedure in her handling of domestic affairs and in her relations with other countries. At the summing up he also presents some carefully considered and well-founded conclusions.

Mr. Van Narvig gives a lively account of the starkly realistic policies of the Soviet government and of the methods of the all-powerful Politburo. Then, for the human touch, he tells us how the average Russian lives, works, and dreams. He also tells us what the average Russian thinks of the rest of the world. Mr. Van Narvig has some interesting predictions to make. One of them concerns "Who will follow Stalin?"

East of the Iron Curtain is more than an exciting revelation of everyday life in Russia, however. The reader will find that the vast amount of fact and information contained in its fifty-one chapters will serve to remove much of the mystery surrounding the intensive diplomatic maneuvering taking place on the world stage today.

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Discussed at length are such fixed elements in the Indian situation as the demand of the Indians for Political changes; the British commitment to withdrawal and insistence upon orderly processes; and the mutual distrust of the two peoples. He then takes up the social and economic problems as well as the dominant role religion plays in the life of the people. One of the more valuable sections of the book is Mr. Smith's discussion of the obstacles to constitutional growth that lie in the differing political philosophies and social structures of the Hindus and the Moslems.

For those readers who were unable to keep up with all the turbulent events of 1946, Mr. Smith has included a section on the constitutional proposals made during the year and on the problem of forming an interim government.

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