

Senate Combatants Discuss Issues

Editor's Note: Redistricting of the Texas Legislature has created one of the hottest state political battles of the year in this area. Battling for reelection in the newly-formed Fifth Senatorial District are veteran Sens. Bill Moore of Bryan and Neveille H. Colson of Navasota. Both legislators have been campaigning heavily and have stepped up the pace as Saturday's elections approach. To help decide on the choice for senator, The Battalion asked both senators for views on pertinent topics. Their replies appear below.

Did you favor the abolishment of the poll tax? Do you think the FBI was justified in investigating voting procedures in Texas?

COLSON — I voted to submit both amendments to let the people decide. I am a states righter, but we cannot have the tax on voting because of the court's decision that you can't tax a basic freedom. I think officers elected by the people should have the right to ask for an investigation if they deem it necessary.

MOORE — It is now an accomplished fact, a moot question. There has never been, to my knowledge, any voting irregularity in my area... not in my Senatorial district since World War II when I was elected.

Are you in favor of coeducation at A&M? Where do you think A&M is headed under its new programs and current trends?

COLSON — I understand the Board of Directors has already adopted a policy that any girl who meets the admission requirements may now attend Texas A&M.

MOORE — That's another moot question, they're here. I leave that question to the board, and board questions have no place in the Legislature.

Do you agree with the new redistricting plans? What do you think will be their effect on the state? Will the Legislature become more liberal, perhaps instituting liquor by the drink and/or legalized gambling? Will the Legislature become divided along city vs. city lines?

COLSON — I think it would be better to have the Legislature like the Congress in Washington, with one house elected by population and the other on the basis of geography. This gives a better checks and balances system. The Legislature will most surely be more liberal. There could develop the city versus city issue, but it's too early to say. I don't think it's likely for some time.

MOORE — This is the third time in four years I've had to run for a four-year term, so I'd be less than honest to say I'm for it.

Do you think the state constitution should be rewritten, or is it adequate for our needs?

COLSON — It should be left alone for the present. Our forefathers were wise, I believe, and knew what they were doing. It's tedious to change by amendment, but I think that is the best way.

MOORE — There is, of course, a lot that could be rewritten, but as a practical matter it serves our needs well. It contains a lot of safeguards I'm afraid we couldn't be sure would be written into it if we rewrote it today.

Are you optimistic about the work of the Coordinating Board, and about progress in Texas higher education in general? What are the most needed developments in higher education in this state?

COLSON — It's too early to say about the Coordinating Board, but we're all hopeful of getting some good out of it. I voted for it. The greatest need in today's higher education is academic excellence. We should keep up with other states and keep striving to excel.

MOORE — I sponsored the bill creating the board and I continue to endorse it. The number

one higher education problem is finance. There is a great competition for quality, and its costs money.

Is teacher's pay high enough in the public schools? Do you expect teachers to demand a pay raise in the next Legislature?

COLSON — I don't like Texas to lag in any worthwhile field, and our Texas teacher's pay is below the national average. We must pay teachers salaries commensurate with their responsibilities.

MOORE — There is not as great a competition for public school teachers, so salaries will naturally be lower, and of course they will never be high enough. Yes, the teachers will be at the Legislature — they have been now for the last 20 years.

Where do you stand on liquor by the drink and legalized gambling?

COLSON — I am against both.
MOORE — The Legislature will be more liberal, and I expect both issues to be reintroduced. Whether or not they pass depends on the makeup of the Senate. There will be a lot of new faces.

Do you favor longer terms for representatives and senators? For governor? Will you favor a pay raise for legislators?

COLSON — I vote to let the people decide these issues. There are two sides to every question, but pay is a drawing card for additional qualified people to run for office.

MOORE — I voted for these issues last time. I think higher pay for senators and representatives would be desirable. It would enable young men to enter state politics and stay.

Do you believe the state sales tax is adequate for our needs, or does it need to be raised or lowered? How do you feel about a state income tax?

COLSON — The sales tax is a growth tax, so with the growing population there is more buying and more revenue. We'll have to see about any increase at the beginning of the session. I'm not for a state income tax.

MOORE — The need for a sales tax depends on new appropriations. Right now we've got a \$50 million surplus, but what's going to happen in January, I couldn't say. I'm opposed to a state income tax.

Do you support the Federal War On Poverty program? How can the state best help carry out this program and what local measures can be taken without Federal assistance? Do you think the state should take the responsibility for its own impoverished?

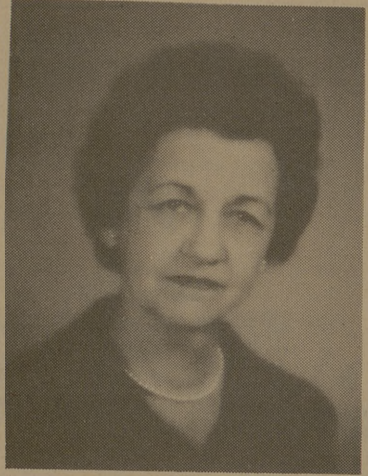
COLSON — We don't vote on it, and we'll be in a better position to know what action the state should take next January. I'm for states rights, and the dollars we send to Washington are deflated when we get them back. Texas was fulfilling its duty, but because some states failed in theirs, all came under the Federal program.

MOORE — There are so many Federal programs I don't know what they all are, so I can't comment on them. I think the state caring for its own is the ideal, but right now we're not doing it.

Are you for the repeal of Section 14-B of the Taft-Hartley Act? Do you think Texas is too strict in its regulation of labor unions? Do you expect a change in this control with the cities exercising more control over the Legislature?

COLSON — I voted for the Texas right-to-work law, and I don't think we are too strict in controlling them. I do feel there will be more labor influence in the new makeup of the Legislature.

MOORE — I am definitely against the repeal of 14-B. I think our present laws are working well. I can't tell now what influences will be present in the new Legislature. No one can.



COLSON



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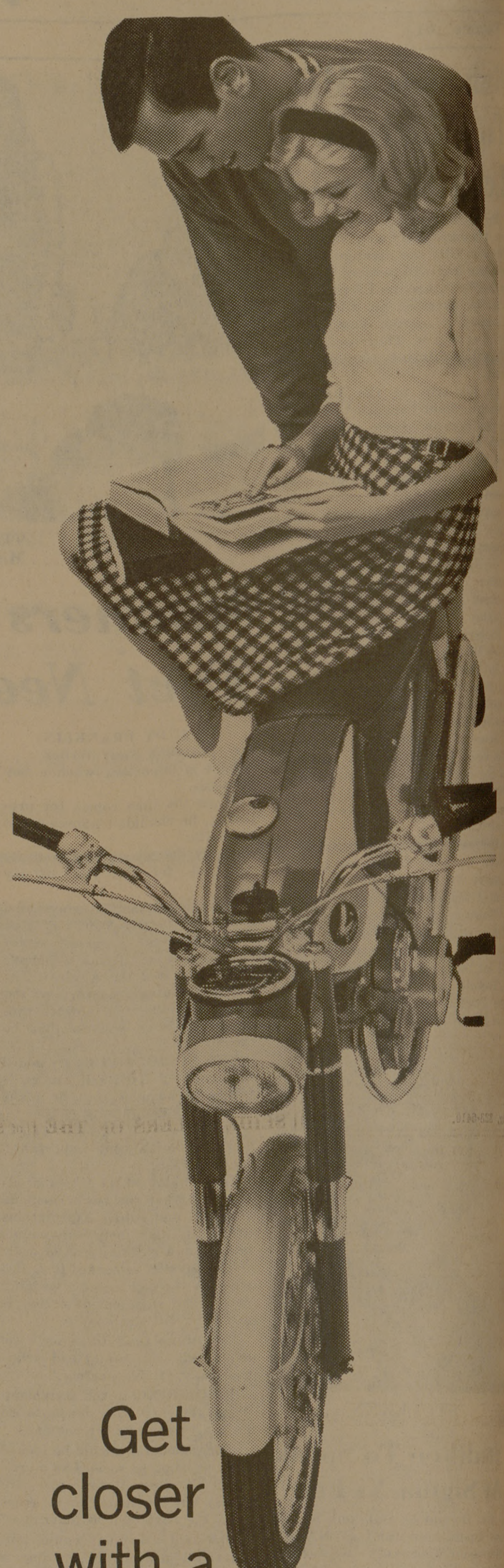
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