

Prairie Land Talk

Filthy Indifference

By ROMAIN SAUNDERS, 4110 South 51st St., Lincoln 6, Nebr.

A boy and a girl still in the first few years of childhood and calling a small dwelling their home. As I approach along the way where I go, these two little mites of human beings come running, hands held out for a bit of candy. Does your Daddy not get you candy, I asked one day. Have no Daddy—he gone away, came the childish response. A few more words and the conclusion is reached that a father has left his life's companion and his offspring of tender years. What may be back of it I do not know; I only know that in such a case a father's concern and devotion to the childhood of his making is lacking, a father's love replaced by the filthy rags of indifference.

A friend at Atkinson sent me the poster on which appeared the program of Atkinson's great yearly event, the Hay Days. The program has a most interesting appeal. Somehow those Atkinson guys have always had what it takes to put on a show. Prairie Land Talker would like to have taken in the show this year, but some how the scorching heat of late August days impelled me to stay home and loll in the shade. I hope to get up that way when autumn days have come. The season of fairs, hay days, rodeos and outdoor shows draws to a close. I do not plan this hot day of August to spend a day at our great Nebraska State Fair. But as autumn and the lane of time, social gatherings, educational, cultural and spiritually inspiring events are for us again.



Romaine Saunders

He sat this morning where loafers may be seen. Raving, craving, stark staving and roaring it out about the high cost of groceries and a slice of beef. Yes, today that's it. Is there now makings of a political movement to cut the cost of grub, as there was in the late 1880's and early 90's with a populist party started to increase earnings and raise prices generally. Then it was the cry to raise prices, 11-cent a bushel potatoes, 10-cent corn, ten dollar fat two-year-olds. Now the cry is lower prices. It can't be done unless production costs first come down. But how can that be with labor union workers demanding more pay and fewer working hours?

Wipe the sweat from off thy furrowed brow. A few more steps until the north wind with snow comes moaning across the land.

The death of Homer Mullen takes one more of the native sons of O'Neill and lays away another of the important families of this community. I knew Homer's father and his mother's people well. Pat, as we all knew Homer's father, was in the livery business in O'Neill up until the automobile took over. He, with his brother, had the old Ward livery

and feed barn on east Douglas street until it was burned down, and then to a location two blocks west on that street. Where the barns had stood now other structures rear their lofty spires. The last livery team I drove was a Mullen team. Homer did not take to horses as his father had, but took rather to the banking business. Business is over for Homer, his friends see him no more, and his wife goes her way alone with treasured memories of life along the way with Homer.

So another Frontier typographical artist becomes an editor and publisher. I count ten others who have walked away from their type cases at that south window of the old shop to become publishers of newspapers of their own, three of those Frontier printers going into business right in the old town, one taking over the Tribune, another assuming the job of editor of the Item and the other starting the O'Neill Sun. A Frontier printer started the first paper in Chambers, known as the Eagle. The Dustin Dispatch, the Stuart Advocate, a paper out at Mullen and the Leigh Wood—Leigh being a little town in Colfax county. They were each headed by one-time Frontier printers. And The Frontier continues to roll off the press each week, now in its 80th year.

Along life's highway are hidden woes, but the sunlight shines on the prairie rose. The pleasant things outnumber the bad—so let us laugh and be glad.

In this land of the free and home of the brave we step up to our chief executive, reach out a hand and say, hello Ike. In ancient times they approached the ruler on the throne of Babylon in fear and trembling, bowed before the monarch and said, "O King, live forever! Live forever!" None did. In one night the last of the Babylonian monarchs was slain. And as the poet expressed it, "crownless and scepterless Belshazzar lay, a robe of purple 'round a form of clay'". I heard him tell the story yesterday, one of those missionary-minded clergymen who has traveled the world over. An African native with already a half-dozen wives traded two oxen for a 10-year-old girl to add another "lawful mate" to his jungle household. The child did not want to leave home but was taken anyway. The first night she sneaked out and returned home. But her jungle-bred mother and dad made her go back to "her man". Some how she had heard of a mission station and school 60 miles off through the South African jungle. After two days and a night she appeared at the mission station torn and bloody from jungle thorns encountered along the way. Taken in and cared for by kindly hands she remained at that school and mission, became a teacher and finally the wife of a son of that American missionary who, if he did nothing more, saved a ten-year-old girl from the fate of the heathen women in Africa's jungleland.

Fourth in a Series

State Road Repair In Holt County; What Is Coming?

By JERRY PETSCHÉ—Editor

It appears from reports of the Department of Roads in Lincoln that Holt county has just about received all the state road improvement it's going to get for some time.

R. L. Cochran, chairman of the department, explains that we can expect to see just a little over 8 more miles of construction and repair during the 1959-61 biennium.

But before you get the idea that we are in a "sad" position, consider this: There are 22 counties in the state that are not now scheduled for state maintained road repair—short that is, of emergency measures.

We can be sure of only one improvement, the 8-mile stretch of gravelled Highway 11 beginning 6 miles south of Atkinson and then continuing south, and this is only a leftover from the 1957-59 biennium plans.

In other words, we get a big fat zero for the coming biennium. We get this big fat zero despite the fact that there are at least 50 miles of unimproved state maintained roads and that over half of those are less than 80 percent sufficient according to their own system of measuring.

And we get that big fat zero despite the fact that we have a 14 mile stretch of Highway 281 south of O'Neill that is less than 58 percent sufficient and that we have 18 miles of Highway 20 with less than 69 percent sufficiency.

But before we complain too loudly, it would only be fair to mention the roads that have received repair work during the past 3 bienniums. That list is not exactly unimpressive either:

Table with columns: Location, Year, Distance, Cost. Rows include Chambers east to U.S. 281, Atkinson east 5.6 miles U.S. 20, O'Neill west U.S. 20, Bartlett U.S. 281, Jct. N-95 south, Atkinson south N-11, U.S. 281 near O'Neill, Page Spur south.

Now with a little arithmetic we find that during the past 7 years only a little over \$5 millions have been spent here.

Compare that figure with this. During 1957 alone, approximately \$50 millions were made available to the state for all counties from all sources including vehicle registration and the 7-cent gas tax.

If you really want to be discouraged, estimate the percentage per year we received remembering that we are 17th in population and about the same in the number of vehicles registered and the amount of gas tax paid.

There are some good reasons why we get as little as we get. To begin, the state of Nebraska retains only 60.6 percent of state funds. The remainder is turned over to cities and counties. Our board of supervisors are required to spread out the state dollar further than most counties because we are such a big county with so many roads. By necessity the county gets as much as it gets and even that seems hardly enough.

Another reason is the sufficiency itself. Based upon road conditions rather than ease in another sense, Holt county gets hurt. Take a very small county with a very small population for example:

Let's say the roads happen to be very bad. Despite the possibility that the use of the roads is nothing in comparison with Holt county, despite the possibility that the 7-cent gas tax paid is nothing compared with Holt, despite the fact that there are very few motor vehicle registrations in comparison with Holt county, that little county would realize more state road maintenance and quicker than we do.

It would seem at first, and you can bet your last dollar that the originators of the sufficiency system believe it, that their system is workable on the basis of use.

But the idea of this "highway use" system can be a double-headed monster and the question of "use" can be viewed in different ways.

In addition to the example of the very small county, consider this question. By "use" and basing the system upon it, did the originators of the sufficiency system take into consideration the possibility that an engineer might reach different sufficiency estimates than another, say one working in the eastern part of the state in comparison with one deciding upon the sufficiency of Holt county.

Did the men who sat down in the statehouse in 1932 realize that in a highly populated county where the area is also large, the need for better roads is proportionally much higher than the smaller county even though the condition of the roads is the same? This comes about when we consider that where there are

masses of people, problems of commercial, industrial and private transportation mushroom even though the use of the roads is proportionately the same.

Take a simple mail delivery, for example. Let's say that in both the large and the small county the mail is late because of equally bad road conditions. While there might be hundreds depending on hundreds of letters in the small area, thousands depending on thousands of letters in the large county. The seriousness is obvious when you realize that taking the entire state as a whole, many more businesses in the state outside of the counties will be effected where the large county got its mail late.

Equally effective arguments can be given to the transportation of food or transportation of cattle to market.

Next week's article will include a summary of our problems in capsule form, and ways in which each one of us can better our state and county maintained road system.

Frontiers Ago

50 YEARS AGO

Arrangements are being made to organize a stock company to bore for oil near Ewing. Mr. and Mrs. J. F. O'Donnell are rejoicing over the arrival of a son and heir at their home. Jim felt so good over the arrival of James Jr. that he passed out perfectos to his friends all day. Dr. Talbot sold his ranch (formerly the Baker ranch) 3 miles southwest of Ewing to parties in Iowa for \$41,000. Station Agent Jordan passed around the cigars on the strength of a boy which arrived at his home. Work was commenced excavating for the new residence of Court Reporter Scott. He is building on lots owned by him on the corner of first and Everett streets. J. A. Naylor of Thompsonville, Conn. arrived in the city and will make O'Neill his future home. Mr. Naylor purchased a half interest in the restaurant of his brother-in-law, George Weingartner. Mrs. A. J. Mohr arrived home from Omaha where she has been the last two months with her daughter and family who have been ill.

20 YEARS AGO

The farmers of Holt County cooperated with the U. S. Forest Service in planting more miles of field shelterbelts than any other of the 42 Nebraska counties in which the Prairie States Forestry Project is operating. On September 5, 1939 Stuart had a celebration dedicating their new \$30,000 auditorium. Judge Dickson was the main speaker. Married: Joseph F. Ryan, O'Neill and Margaret Gallagher, Chicago. 17 Members of Holt county 4-H clubs represented Holt county at the State Fair. Elmer Stolte of Atkinson who was the O'Neill high school coach since 1932 handed in his resignation to the school board and left for Illinois where he accepted another position. Jack Vincent of O'Neill received favorable comment from the sports writers of the Lincoln papers than any other youngster on the freshman squad during training. A at the Blake Benson home in honor of Mrs. Alice Benson on her 83 birthday. County Judge L. W. Reimer moved his family to this city and are now comfortably located in the Mary Kelly home northeast of town.

10 YEARS AGO

"Grandma" Sarah Hull started her 95th year on September 6, 1949. One hundred of the 129 immediate descendants were on hand to say "Happy Birthday". Dale Wood, 10, of Ewing was pictured with Skippy, a Hereford baby beef which was judged

O'Neill Locals

The H. B. Taylor family of Lincoln were weekend guests at the J. F. Contois home.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Chace, North Platte, were weekend guests of her mother, Mrs. H. J. Hammond. The Chaces were returning from Minneapolis where they attended the National American Legion convention. Their children, Francis and Charlotte, spent the week with their grandmother here.

Carol Johnson was home from Lincoln with her parents, the Marvin Johnsons from Wednesday to Sunday last week.

Mrs. Ivan Bain of Vermillion, S. D., visited with her sister-in-law, Mrs. James Kelly, Monday and Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Reed Herley and daughters and Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Ruzicka were in Omaha Sunday for a hardware convention sponsored by Paxton and Gallagher.

The J. R. McKenzies of Omaha, former O'Neill residents, visited Wednesday to Saturday last week at the A. L. Eyzmann home.

Mr. and Mrs. Lem Webb and son left Monday for their home in Phoenix, Ariz., after a six week visit with relatives in O'Neill and Page.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Alm and Sheila of Bloomfield, Ia. were guests last week of his parents, the Arthur Alms. The Donald Alms, Arthur Alms and Don Maws were dinner guests Sunday at the Bill Alm home in Lynch.

Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Manson and Mrs. Sidney Anderson of Elgin were in Ord Sunday to see Mrs. Manson's sister, Mrs. I. W. Briggs, who is a patient at the Ord hospital.

Miss Rita Waller was home for the weekend from Norfolk and brought as her guest, Stan Hoffman, also from Norfolk.

Miss Carolyn Lindberg was in Holyoke, Colo. for the weekend as a member of the wedding party for her college roommate. She returned to Stromsburg, where she will teach second grade this year.

Mr. and Mrs. Dean Streeter and Jean McKenzie visited relatives Sunday in Brunswick.

DR. H. D. GILDERSLEEVE

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Editorial

McGinley's Hindsight

It would almost have been a pleasure to read the "hindsight" letter of explanation by Congressman Don McGinley if it were not for the fact that he represents us.

Last week he caused to be published what he considered an explanation for not voting for the Landrum-Griffin bill from the start. Oh, yes, he voted for it when other bills failed and when he realized his political future depended on it, but he didn't support it when the House Labor Committee bill was still alive.

The watery committee bill was not even a close substitute for the stronger Landrum-Griffin bill in the estimation of those who would shake corrupt labor leaders in small and large unions.

There were some rather interesting rationalizations, we think, included in McGinley's letter to newspapers.

He said: "From my experience as a legislator in Nebraska and here in Congress, I have the strong conviction that in order to enact a bill that is truly reflective of the will of the legislative body . . ." etc., etc., and so on in his explanation of why he did not support the bill from the beginning.

It makes a person wonder just how experienced he is in view of the fact that it isn't his job to determine what the legislature wants. All we can say is that for years, this has been the responsibility of the courts. Mr. McGinley's job is to try to determine what his constituents want and if his colleagues in Congress do not support or reflect the will of Mr. McGinley's constituents, then we say he should stand up and disagree with them, not to try to determine what THEY want.

It's what we, his constituents want, for better or worse, that should remain uppermost in his mind. Now here is another statement made by him in his letter: "There were some provisions in this regard in the Landrum-Griffin bill which I consider not to be the best method of achieving the aim of Congress."

And again we say there is some question as to what Congress wanted in the first place, but it makes very little difference since the desires of Congress must depend upon the desires of the people who put these men in their political position.

And another statement: "Some of the secondary boycott provisions of the Landrum-Griffin bill may stop abuses in some instances, but it would very likely be that some of them will find themselves neutralized by court rulings where the law trespasses on rights of union members guaranteed by the Constitution and the Supreme Court decisions."

Yep, Mr. McGinley, that is exactly what the courts and the Constitution is for, so let's let the judges worry about that and do what the people want. We feel that second guessing courts and interpreting the Constitution is not his first responsibility.

According to McGinley the Landrum-Griffin bill and his favored Committee bill were identical for all "practical purposes in 85 percent of their provisions."

Now if that is true, and judging from the initial weight and force of the Landrum-Griffin bill (the first real constructive and effective piece of legisla-

tion for slowing down the hoods in our estimation) then why did McGinley stand on principal when there was even the slightest chance that no legislation at all would be effected this term?

And suppose principal is important. If he thought the Landrum-Griffin bill was not the best one after all, why didn't he vote against it all the way and then send a letter explaining to his constituents why he did as he did?

And the answer is quite simple: He said: "My decision was my own, and not one dictated by party or political consequences to myself." Funny he should mention "political consequences" to himself. Must have been on his mind when he wrote.

What About Steen?

From the Osmond Republican

Is Mel Steen, who came to Nebraska from Missouri, the bigwig of the Nebraska Game Commission, good or bad?

Mr. Steen got off to a bad start almost as soon as he assumed his authority in Nebraska. He ordered charges of illegal bird shooting against a Game Commission member dropped. He's been in and out of the frying pan ever since. His latest tilt (if no other has developed since this writing) follows action of the Commission on August 14 when Nebraska game bird seasons were established. The game boss professes to be a friend of the poor hunter, the man who in theory, and maybe in practice, needs public shooting grounds, yet his actions disagree with his utterances.

The Commission on that fateful Friday allowed a 12 pheasant possession limit in part of Nebraska, a 9 bird possession limit in the Osmond area and a large part of this end of Nebraska. Coupled with this is a magazine advertising program designed to lure "foreign" hunters to our state. It could just possibly be that the Commission cares more for the dollars these foreigners will spend for licenses than for the visiting human personalities as such.



JAMES CHAMPION, Co-Publisher JERRY PETSCHÉ, Editor

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