

# Editorials • Letters To The Editor • Comment • Discussion

## The Dallas Post

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 TRUMAN STEWART ..... Mechanical Superintendent

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### A THOUGHT FOR THIS WEEK

There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
 Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
 Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
 Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

Julius Caesar—SHAKESPEARE

### The Love Of A Mother

There could be no more tangible example of mother love than the sacrifice Mrs. Anthony Burnett of Harvey's Lake made last week in blindly offering her life to save that of her eight-year-old son.

Nothing—even the twenty-foot drop into the pool where her boy was struggling—could have stopped Mrs. Burnett after she had heard the lad's screams. A blind, driving love sent her plunging into the water, ignoring completely the possibility that she, too, was endangering her life.

No words can encompass the beauty of her sacrifice nor bring her back to the child who clung so desperately to her lifeless body when help came, but these words can, in very modest measure, serve as a reminder of the priceless heritage of bravery and devotion she gave her survivors.

### The Cost To You—Sixty One Cents

In a front page editorial last week anticipating Judge John S. Fine's decision on the Dallas School Board budget case The Post asked "Who Will Be The Victor?" and concluded that there was no victory for anyone.

In the light of a story appearing on Page 1 this week, estimating the total costs of the cases at \$1,000, it appears that the entire affair was little more than a highly expensive fizzle for the taxpayers of Dallas Borough.

True, those taxpayers will be billed for about \$500 less than they would have under the 30-mill levy, a saving of just about sixty-one cents to each of the borough's taxables. But on the other hand each taxpayer will have to contribute approximately the same amount to pay unexpected legal expenses which would not have been incurred had the suits never been started.

The real burden will fall upon the minority group of taxpayers which is responsible for the suits. Each of them must pay part of the district's burden and care besides for the expenses incurred by the plaintiffs. For them, it was an especially expensive defeat.

The accomplishments are scarcely worth the expense, the unfavorable publicity, and the unquestionable damage to the school structure here. In two of the cases there was absolutely no change from the board's judgment. In the third the petitioners failed to secure the three-mill reduction they asked but did succeed in having the budget reduced \$525, about the same amount their suits cost the school board.

This is not a thing to forget. If there is any trace of credit due anyone in the entire affair it must go to the majority directors of the board and, in the end, to Attorney B. B. Lewis, whose legal judgment was upheld by the courts.

The responsibility for the mess lies with that embittered group of taxpayers which believed it could continue to dictate the policies of the school board.

One thing may have been accomplished, more important than any other. At last, by decision of this county's court, the taxpayers know which group of directors was right, which was wrong. Let the taxpayers be guided by the three court decisions in the future.

When several groups of Luzerne County taxpayers wanted to ask some questions about the "Golden Highway" audit the court squashed the case on technical grounds. But when a group of Dallas taxpayers protested against the local school budget the court not only handed down an injunction and took testimony but cut the budget one mill.

The G. O. P. is taking no chances in this section. Dallas people were named as chairman and vice-chairman of the Sixth District. The first rally was held at Lehman, and last Saturday 10,000 Republicans came to Fernbrook Park to whoop it up for Landon.

Every Italian soldier who fought in Africa will get a sixteen-dollar bonus, Mussolini announces. Seems a little small beside the \$250,000 soldiers in this neck of the woods got as their bonus.

It's lucky for Americans that the ten Negro members of the Olympic squad have no scruples against associating with the inferior Caucasian racers.

## WASHINGTON LETTER

It is possible that the decisive factor in the General Election of 1936 will be a man who was unknown to millions of Americans up to a month or two ago, and who was known to millions of others only because his name appeared on a Congressional bill which was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States.

That man is Congressman William Lemke of North Dakota, Presidential nominee of the newly-formed Union Party. Principal plank in his platform is currency inflation, and he has the support of Father Coughlin of Share-the-Wealth fame. Furthermore, he has entered into an agreement with Dr. Townsend, and will have the official support of the old-age-pension movement.

No one—aside from a few zealots—believes that Lemke can be elected. Few believe that he can attain a majority in even one state. But he can be of tremendous importance in determining the Roosevelt-Landon race. Before going farther into that, it is well to present a brief history of the third party movement in American politics.

There are always third parties, of course, and fourth and fifth parties as well. Best examples are the Socialist and Communist parties, which put a ticket into the field each year. But these parties do not affect either of the major parties—they have a certain established following, and their total vote varies but little from election to election. They do not attract voters in any number from the Democratic or Republican parties.

The important third parties are those which are brought into being by some problem or condition of the moment and which, though they may live only for one election, present an appeal to a certain proportion of the voters of the major parties. It is in this classification that Lemke's new party belongs.

Several times in the history of the Republic, such a third party has determined the election. Most notable example of that was the election of 1860, when Lincoln and Douglas contended for the Presidency. Two other parties were also in the field. Lincoln received only 40 per cent of the vote, yet was elected. Had all of Lincoln's opposition gone to Douglas, the latter would have won easily.

Another notable example occurred in 1884, when Blaine was the Republican nominee, running against Democrat Cleveland. Decisive state was New York. Cleveland carried it by the astonishingly small majority of 1100 votes, and so was elected to the highest office in the land. The Prohibition candidate in New York received the record total of 25,000 votes that year. Had ten per cent of those votes gone to Blaine, he would have won.

Most successful third party was that led by Theodore Roosevelt in 1912, which ran second to the Democratic party headed by Wilson. In that year, the Republican candidate Taft, took the worst lacing ever received by a major candidate.

Most recent example of an important third party was the Progressive Party, which had the elder Senator LaFollette for its candidate. This party carried but one state, Wisconsin, but received a good-sized vote in almost every state. It was not a decisive factor in the election, however, for the reason that Coolidge went into the Presidency by a tremendous electoral majority; his opponent, John W. Davis, carrying only the traditionally Democratic Solid South.

To return to the present, Candidate Lemke has a strong following in a number of what may be extremely important states—states which are more or less in the "doubtful" class, and which might be able to swing the battle in favor of either Roosevelt or Landon. These are the Northwest states—the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming, and, to drop south a bit, Ohio, etc. Under the American elective system, the candidate who attains a majority in a state receives all its electoral vote, even though his majority consists of but one vote. Thus, in a close state, a few thousand votes cast for Lemke could very easily take that state away from one major candidate, swing it to the other.

## Rives Matthews



Wherein Mr. Matthews Continues The Saga Of Grandfather Matthews And Confesses To His Own Fall From Grace.

The largest single influence in my chaotic childhood, boyhood, and youth, was my Grandfather Matthews. My own parents were Bedouins, of the spirit, at least. First they were here, then they were there. I never knew exactly where they were, and I don't, to this day. My Father, in fact, was, and is, a travelling salesman.

But I always knew where Grandfather was. You could count on him. He was like the moon and stars he liked to watch at nights before locking up and going to bed. He was predictable. Relatively, he was as ageless.

When I was born on March 17, 1907, Grandfather Matthews was 79. I was twenty-three when he gave up the habit of 102 years and surprised us all by dying. Now if ever there was anyone who could be described as a "creature of habits," it was Grandfather.

By the time I was old enough to visit him, Grandfather's habits had become long established rites. They were performed, by those of us obliged to assist, with the gentle humming held due an old person who is set in his ways, or with sullen obedience by those of us who regarded Grandfather's habits as inevitable, but ever-recurrent, annoyances.

There was, for instance, the rite of the Nine O'clock Whistle. Nothing was ever allowed to interfere with that. Time, you see, had become very important to Grandfather. In his nineties, it measured off the hours, days, weeks, months and years between him and his goal; to live to be a hundred.

Louis XVI's preoccupation with clocks was nothing to the attention Grandfather lavished on the three clocks he owned. One was in the dining room, another was in the living room, the third was in his bedroom.

It was a matter of great pride with Grandfather that most of the time they struck the hours within split seconds of each other. If they didn't, Grandfather would go into a minor fury, which was terrible enough if you'd never seen him in a major rage, one of those wild frenzies of a thwarted will which evoked the worse curse-word I ever heard him use: "By George!"

For days, Grandfather would be unhappy and puzzled by his clocks. And then it was the rite of the Nine O'clock Whistle would have even more meaning to him, and to us.

No matter how interesting the conversation, instinctively, at about five minutes to nine, Grandfather would command everyone to listen for the Nine O'clock Whistle.

A terrible stillness would descend upon us. All you could hear would be Grandfather's measured breathing, and the three clocks, tick-tocking, tick-tocking.

After what would seem hours, suddenly, if all was well, you'd hear a faint wail which would increase, in the space of half a minute, to an all-invading howl. Then it would die off again. It sounded like a sick cow but it was the Nine O'clock Whistle which started mothers all over St. Louis to calling their children to bed.

For Grandfather, it served as a daily check on his precious clocks. If we assured him that all three of them had struck precisely at nine, he could go to bed in peace. Otherwise, he was good for another half hour of tinkering and fussing and demanding that I run back and forth between them to see if all three read on the minute.

Time was nothing in my young life. Grandfather's passion was merely a meaningless nuisance which kept me away from my books, or the head phones of my crystal radio set.

But I shall never forget the night, anxious to have him get off to bed, that I lied to him about the clocks. I shall always remember how he bellowed when the clock in his bedroom gave me away by striking nine a good fifteen minutes after the whistle blew, and caught Grandfather in his long wool undies. It was an occasion for several "By Georges."

If it had been the dining room clock, or even the living room clock all would have been well. He couldn't have heard them. But for the clock with which he slept to be fifteen minutes late, and thus falsely keeping him a quarter of an hour away from the century mark—why, it destroyed his faith in human beings and in the cold science of chronometers!

What had happened, I learned later, was that Emma, the housemaid, had jolted the clock while dusting, that, without her noticing, it had stopped while she was cleaning Grandfather's room. Later, when she discovered what she had done, she had become panic stricken lest Grandfather, who was in the next room, should catch her red handed. So she had hastily given the clock another jolt and had started it going again without realizing it had lost a precious quarter of an hour.

Emma always said Grandfather could hear things just when you didn't want him to hear the most, even though at other times you had to shout to make yourself heard. I guess Emma never forgot the time

Grandfather almost killed her. It was in the days when Emma was "keeping company", sneaking in during the scandalous hours which set in after the Nine O'clock Whistle loudly proclaimed respectable people like Grandfather were going to bed. Emma, so the story goes, forgot to tell anyone she would be out late that night.

She also forgot to make a noise when she came in. Grandfather said that people who couldn't get to bed at a decent hour, who had to be out late at night, shouldn't tiptoe around when they came in. They should make all the noise they would make ordinarily, else Grandfather would think they were burglars.

When poor Emma tiptoed in that night and made for the stairs near the door to Grandfather's room, Grandfather was ready for the burglar he thought she was. He held in both hands the Japanese harikari sword Uncle Orville, who had been a rear Admiral, had brought back from the Orient.

Emma told me she would never forget the sound of that murderous blade as it cut through the dark, just missing her, but neatly splitting into halves the polished newel post at the foot of the stairs which led upward to bed and safety from a white bearded old gentleman in an old fashioned nightshirt.

As for me, the delinquency of his bedroom clock made me a suspicious character for weeks afterwards. Although he didn't come right out and say it, I felt that Grandfather secretly harbored the thought I might have criminal tendencies.

You should have heard the lectures I got on the subject of how a man's word should be as good as his bond, a comparison Grandfather particularly favored, since he had spent much of his life as a banker. Banking, he always insisted, was a calling in which character was a man's chief asset, in which honesty was his only real capital.

Grandfather liked to mention the huge sums he had borrowed from time to time, simply on his name. I think he would be terribly shocked by today's loan requirements. To Grandfather the only collateral worth having was a set of good habits with a Nine O'clock Whistle to tell you whether your clocks were on time.

I don't think the suspicion ever crossed his mind that sometimes the Nine O'clock Whistle was wrong, or that someone couldn't pull it down a few minutes early, or a few minutes late.

Integrity, with Grandfather, was like his habits. All of them endured, for 102 years.

### 'LAUGHS' FROM 'THE DAYS' NEWS!

