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## Real Farm Relief.

When more than four thousand farmers, representing thirty-four states, assemble in Washington to urge the continuance of the A.A.A., the farm relief program must have brought genuine relief for the first time in the history of national politics.

Administration after administration has promised to relieve the farmer. They did. In 1930 and 1931 he was relieved of most everything he possessed except his mortgage and that was fenced-in. Under the Roosevelt program, many millions have been added to the farm income. The A.A.A. has filled the pockets of foodstuff from a state of bankruptcy into one of hope.

How senseless then seem the cowardice of certain powerful business groups seeking to destroy the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. For years those seldom interests have been highly organized, have gotten special favors from the Government, have deployed in measure as the words the plight of the farmer yet fattened up on the purchase of his product for a mere pittance. It is a return to the dog-eat-dog days that these selfish interests favor. They hold up their hands in horror—these folk who fattened upon high tariff concessions for so many years—at a processing tax; they would abolish the only plan yet evolved that has brought the farmer relief in dollars and cents.

When four thousand farmers visit Washington to express their appreciation of farm relief and to urge the retention of the A.A.A. plan, it may be sure that the tiller of the soil is at last awake to his own interests, and though he may not have experienced lobbyists, he should have a powerful lobbyist in every business man whose living depends upon the prosperity of an agricultural community.

Here in Carlisle, for instance, everyone knows that each business man stands or falls in his business as agriculture prospers or fails to prosper. Every one of us should join the farmer in his fight to retain the benefits that are his under the farm relief program—a program now being vitally attacked by powerful groups through short-sighted and selfish interest.

## Our Overcrowded Prisons.

Approximately 200 inmates of the two state prisons will be released on conditional pardons shortly when Governor Ruby Laffoon acts on the recommendation of the prison advisory commission which made a survey of the prison inmates and recommended those deemed worthy of clemency.

Most of those who are to be released will serve youthful first offenses committed for minor offenses. Humanitarian considerations necessitate the action in order to relieve the overtaxed crowded condition of the two state prisons.

In the state reformatory at Frankfort, constructed many years ago to built to confine 1,700 inmates, 2,979 are now quartered. At the state penitentiary at Eddyville the same condition exists with 1,276 confined in an institution whose capacity is 940.

There are daily arrivals of new prisoners sent by the circuit courts of the state for commitment. Meanwhile by the prison population has mounted until congestion within the institutions creates a grave problem. All available quarters are taxed to capacity with accommodations for inmates and sometimes of the situation has been already harassed from heat to nostish.

Necessity for immediate action to relieve a situation which imperiled the health of inmates and overtaxed facilities of the prisons, inspired Governor Laffoon to ask a pardon advisory commission composed of outstanding Kentuckians, men familiar with prison problems, to examine the records of inmates and ascertain those that might be released with reasonable certainty that they would seek to re-establish themselves in law-abiding citizens.

Those who are to be conditionally pardoned understand that they are released on probation, that in event they commit further lawless acts they will be returned to prison to serve their sentences. Action of the Governor under the circumstances seems justified by every dictate of humane consideration.

The commission supplies striking evidence of the fact that we cannot punish lawless delay rehabilitation of our penal and charitable institutions. The problems have been recognized as one of major importance. The state legislature of 1930 thought it had provided revenue with which to correct the conditions existing in the institutions.

There was enacted a measure known more generally as the chairs law tax, which was believed would produce revenue ample to gradually correct unhappy conditions in our penal and charitable institutions. The revenue from that measure was to be expended in improving the institutions and the other half to be applied on the state debt.

Constitutionality of the measure was assailed. After prolonged litigation the supreme court of the United States recently declared the act unconstitutional. That action removed all hope of revenues from this source, which had been anticipated of becoming available to finance improvement of the institutions.

The Governor is powerless to correct the condition without necessary money provided by the legislature. When the legislature will meet next January it seems unwise to call a special session to consider the problem.

Governor Laffoon is endeavoring to secure an appropriation of more than a million dollars of federal work relief money with which to improve and enlarge the charitable and penal institutions. In the meantime, there was no course open to immediately relieve the intolerable congestion within prison walls, other than that taken by the Governor.

## "Forty-One Years Ago."

Forty-one years ago this Monday morning the twentieth of May, amid blustering of the earth, weighted the branches of trees in full leaf, struck a severe blow high in the fields, left the powder on the satin cheeks of wild roses, spread a white counterpane over beds of plump red strawberries.

Foolish perhaps, unfashionable surely, in these piping times of agricultural peace even for us, are the memories of the great snow of the eighties. Yet, in 1894, But the temptation to reminisce grows stronger with the inexorable march of the years. Why was it when the gallant Omaha recently streaked through in a mere hour and ten minutes Churchill Downs to victory and eternal equine fame—Omaha by name. Ben Brush—came to mind and the nose and nose finish between Ben Brush and Atherton at the Courier-Journal at Derby time in those days when that meritorious sheet—not so metropolitan perhaps—was "Marse Henry's paper" and the family Bible in which were recorded family homes? Old age. Oh, very well.

No impression, psychologists tell us, is ever lost by the human brain. Plastic surely in the mind of youth. Forty-one years ago this Monday Dad rented three more strawberries and cream for dessert as our house afterward talked about that day was the anomaly of snow without and strawberries on the table, for too hot house fruit's graced Kentucky tables in those days. The guests came to spend that Sunday dinner—a young man and his bride, fresh from the parsonage, drove a mettlesome little mare, nervous and excited as a child at the first puff-balls that dirtied the down from snow-weighted branches. Dad was a new Columbus buggy over eleven miles of wonderful mud to the county seat minutes. A "fast age," the oldsters said. Now they are lamenting the tooth out the distance in fifteen minutes, one arm full of evening shirt and tether full of girl.

Over the pines which followed that snow-storm of 1894 and perhaps a Sweet Caporal. If some young dude with a cigarette of that day joined the post-prandial devotions of the men folk. There was no mention of a "horseless carriage" would have provoked a skeptical smile or a frog marching across Darius Green, a spectacular quips anent Darius Green, who "soared on eagle wings and lit on the weathercock." Telephones were rare, one to a village usually in the parsonage possessed by the wildest dreamer. Existence was unhurried, and at least in retrospect, in the "good old days."

But were those "good old days" free of appendicitis after being treated for something else; children scarred of bad tonsils and were said to be "going into consumption;" the ground took its tragic toll; diphtheria snuffed out infant lives; flies covered the sticky fly paper and the fly-swat brought tiny headstones in the cemeteries. Heigho! the good old days.

And yet, they seem good as we look back. So those days when the only snow came to Kentucky on the heels of the nor'-easter and the stripped the leaves from corn knives in the Tarvers and coaxed the crimson blush of promise with its frost. But we remember there were strawberries for dinner—ah that's the answer!—Yon.b!

## "Music" Of The Rain.

Ears have become attuned perforce this soggy Spring to the "gentle" rain of heaven. But it doesn't rain today one may be rather sure—it's not tomorrow but with May almost gone there are many who will hear no music in the patter of the rain upon the eaves. The farmer, more than any other business man, senses the elements, sees in the season advance and his spring planting prospects. Of course he complains bitterly, and why should he not? Rain with the fact that it was a few weeks ago he was praying for a few showers to soften up earth in the plowed. We may open our doors and shops and go about our business and selling and buying and manufacturing, rain or shine but the farmer is dependent largely upon the vagaries of the weather in his business.

But he may cherish this consoling thought. Nature compensates always. A scant five years ago a scorching summer dragged out its weary, dusty length, an autumn followed without rain to complete the most severe drouth this section has ever known. Never until this year has Dame Nature been able to make up the deficiency in moisture, but now she is going about it with a vengeance. Ponds are full for the first time since 1926, springs flow copiously again; the balance of Nature is being maintained.

This may not be a very consoling thought to the man whose planting is but one-third done, but it is sure that we can't do anything and weather save him. It is "always raised," within the memory of man and always has stopped raining—usually in time to save the crops. Here's hoping.

## Keen Johnson.

In another column, The Mercury carries the announcement of Keen Johnson, editor of the Richmond Register, for the office of Lieutenant Governor on the Democratic ticket.

Mr Johnson, a Past President of the Kentucky Press Association, is one of the ablest and most brilliant editors in the state. He is an eloquent and forceful speaker and a student of State and National questions. Unfailingly loyal to the party, Mr. Johnson has been active in every campaign for the success of the ticket. Now, for the first time, he seeks office at the hands of the Democratic party.

Years ago this newspaper predicted a brilliant career for Keen Johnson. Time has proven our predictions, and we believe that when he seeks office at the hands of the people they will agree with us.

Mr. Johnson is a graduate of the University of Kentucky, has made a splendid success as editor of the Richmond Register, has been honored with office, not only by the Kentucky Press Association but by the National Editorial Association, which he has served as president. He refuses to stand for office merely because "it's his turn," but his political progress when they do consent to enter the lists!

## "A Bungling Attack."

President Roosevelt's comment on the mischievous condemnation of his administration by the Liberty League Committee of the United States was mild and dignified. The attack was a malicious one by newspapers which have been as considerate of the desires of the business groups as have the New frequently antagonistic to the New Deal.

In its editorial leader entitled "A Bungling Attack." The Wall Street Post said:

"Instead of realizing that passage of social legislation is assured, the Chamber challenges the prosperity as well as the constitutionality of any such effort by the Democratic majority. The result is that the Chamber's general indictment of social security which is based on several occasions, appears to be mere lip service, if not actual hypocrisy.

"Having urged that the NRA be abolished and to replace it the Chamber asks for substitute temporary legislation which would do the same thing in fifteen minutes, one arm tied behind it and the other full of girl.

"But the significant silence of the Chamber on the work-relief program, on the matter of subsidies to farmers, on the question of public works, on the whole question of unemployment and on the whole question of unemployment and on the whole question of unemployment and