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Affairs of State; Mississippi Notebook

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Clarion-Ledger (Jackson, Miss.)

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AFFAIRS OF STATE

By CHARLES M. HILLS



OPTIMISTS BEWARE

The Unpledged Electors have been true to their cause. They will not vote for a major party candidate. They still are fighting. They have given the South a cause and a candidate.

But, do not hasten into optimism.

Southern governors show little intent to lead their people away from John F. Kennedy, even though the opportunity is offered and in their hands.

They will yell to high heaven when integration hits them. They will shout and preach, but, we have little hope at this juncture that they will act.

On every hand, the president-intended names enemies of the South to high position, but none will stand up and object. . . . save in Alabama and Mississippi.

ABSENCE NOTED

Only one man appeared here Monday from beleaguered Louisiana. There was no word, apparently, from Gov. Jimmy Davis, though his head is bloody from the beatings of the federal courts.

Despite his televised preachments, Gov. John Patterson is still sucking eggs with Kennedy. His electors and our's aren't betraying confidence.

It is the hope of the Unpledged Electors that the great prestige of good name of the conservative Harry Byrd will give heart to some of the Southern leaders, but, there is no immediate upsurge of aid from any quarter.

Even Byrd's native Virginia is this morning strangely quiet.

ILL HARBINGERS

And, the harbingers from Illinois are not encouraging. The courts are at it again up that way, and, we have to admit it's not the federals this time. The state courts are deciding against the GOP. So, if anything is done, it will have to be in the South, and, the outlook is not good.

For what solace there is, we in Mississippi and parts of Alabama can at least hold up heads and express ourselves as opposed when injustices are attempted upon us, and, we can fight with conviction that we did not invite integration by our majority votes.

We may now lose a round, but, four years with Kennedy may open some southern eyes.

MISSISSIPPI NOTEBOOK

By TOM ETHRIDGE



THEY KEPT THE FAITH

Mississippi's eight presidential electors, meeting in Jackson this week, have done exactly what they were honor-bound to do. They have kept faith with their people.

They made a solemn pledge that if elected, they would withhold their support from any candidate running on a platform intolerable and unacceptable in Mississippi.

The Kennedy - Johnson platform largely dictated by Chester Bowles, Walter Reuther and other leftists, was clearly unacceptable. Our people repudiated it by a decisive margin Nov. 8.

Also repudiated was the Nixon-Lodge platform, dictated by the whims of Rockefeller radicalism. Our voters issued a plain mandate to the Independent electors. That mandate has been heeded.

HONOR IS SERVED

Our presidential electors showed excellent judgement in honoring Senator Harry F. Byrd with this state's votes. The action was proper and Mississippi's honor has been served by it.

Had our electors violated their solemn covenant with the

people, they would have dishonored themselves and undermined public confidence in the integrity of elected officials generally, at a time when more integrity is needed in high office.

"LAUGHING STOCK"

Governor Barnett, the electors and Mississippi itself have been ridiculed and abused for placing principle about party loyalty and the dubious distinction of riding the victor's bandwagon.

Actually, other Southern states (except Alabama) should be the "laughing stock" of the nation for kissing the feet sworn to kick them hard and often in the next four years.

If Mississippi finds herself standing alone in carrying on this fight, at least she will stand proud and tall, with a clear conscience and self-respect intact.

SAME OLD WEAKNESS

If the South undergoes a Second Reconstruction it will come partially as a result of a weakness that helped to lose the Civil War. Inept leadership at state levels was a factor in the Southern Confederacy's downfall.

Too many Southern politicians could not see beyond their own narrow self-interests, refusing to pull together as a team in a period of grave crisis.

This same weakness is evident today. At time when the South needs big guns in high places, we have a surplus of .22 caliber politicians, more loyal to their own selfish ambitions than to the interests of the people. Defeatists and appeasers have bungled responsibilities of Southern leadership in a desperate hour.

NO SURRENDER

Thus, it is not Mississippi but our sister states now deserving to be called a "laughing stock." At least we tried to protect ourselves;

As a matter of fact, it could be that our nation is a "laughing stock" of the world, since its elected leadership apparently owes its narrow "victory" to fraud glaringly evident in closely contested areas such as Illinois. Can honest "world opinion" respect leadership elected by vote - stealing and ballot-buying tactics?

SAW THEIR DUTY

Nobody has a right to laugh at Mississippi. If standing firmly for principle and honor has become a laughing matter, then this country is in a very bad way — hardly fit to advertise itself as a model for mankind.

All praise is due Mississippi's courageous electors. Their names deserve a place in our state archives. As men of integrity, they saw their duty and did it.

They have kept faith with those who trusted them. Honorable men can do no more.