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THE BIG THICKET GETS A HEARING

(By Pete Gunter)

BEAUMONT.—For six years Sen. Ralph Yarborough's bill to establish a Big Thicket National Park lay immobile in committee, while lumber companies hewed virgin wilderness and conservationists grimaced and wept. It is not easy to get a bill out of committee. The first step is a Senate hearing. A Senate hearing on the Big Thicket National Park was finally arranged for June 12 in Beaumont.

Chaired by Yarborough and Sen. Alan Bible (D-Nevada), the hearings began with a speech by Senator Yarborough, who scolded the lumber companies for their unwillingness to let go of enough acreage for a park. Yarborough's sentiments were seconded by Cong. Bob Eckhart, who accused the lumber interests of a concerted and covert effort to destroy the Big Thicket before it could be protected.

In the face of pointed criticism the lumbermen's statements proved disconcertingly mild. Park enthusiasts held their breath while Ollie Crawford, president of the Texas Forestry Association, went to the speaker's platform, but the substance of Crawford's speech was simply a reiteration of the lumber interests' claim that any plan larger than a 35,000-acre Big Thicket National Monument was wholly unrealistic and uncalled-for. Crawford's claim that the lumber companies had protected and "regrown" the Thicket was parried by Yarborough's sharp questioning. Was it true, Yarborough asked, that lumber interests had had two men going around the State of Texas getting garden clubs to pass resolutions favoring a 35,000-acre park on the false pretext that this was to back Yarborough's stand? Crawford finally answered that this was simply an attempt to tell the industry's side of the case. Was it true that lumber interests had taken newspaper reporters from all over Texas on a free plane ride and informed them of the futility of a national park? Well, Crawford hedged, not exactly. Not exactly? Well, it was the industry's attempt to tell its side . . . etc.

The strongest statement on behalf of the lumber interests was made by Arthur Temple of Temple Industries, Diboll, who is widely known as the most enlightened of Texas' lumbermen. Temple complained that lumber companies were being painted as the villains. He pointed out that he had stopped a cutting project (and closed down a sawmill) in order to protect Neches bottom land selected for park inclusion; that he and other lumber interests had personally helped the Department of the Interior find unique areas to be included in the 35,000-acre national monument; that lumber interests through selective cutting had helped to regrow the Thicket; and that it makes more sense to develop the 600,000 acres of government-owned land in East Texas for recreation than to retire an additional 100,000 acres.

Conservationists countered with a formidable array of arguments. At least 100,000 acres was necessary to preserve the ecology of the Thicket; anything less would wreck present drainage patterns and destroy the areas set aside for preservation. The park would help the nearby Indian reservation to get on its feet by attracting tourists. Besides the areas set aside for conservation there should be scenic corridors along Big Thicket roads; streambanks should remain uncut, unchanneled, and undammed. The timber industry ought to create an educational center in the Big Thicket to explain the necessities of timber harvesting. Each Thicket wilderness area ought to be associated with a small museum explaining its ecology, history, interesting plants and animals. From Maryland to central Texas there exists no national park dedicated to the Southern hardwood; yet at present cutting rates, in 20 years no

typical Southern pine-and-hardwood forests will exist. The Thicket is the very last chance.

Testimony continued from early morning through midafternoon, when the senators embarked on a helicopter tour of the region. The hearing, Senator Bible agreed, was the best he had seen on a proposed national park. Unfortunately, the helicopters that afternoon lost their way en route to the Indian reservation at the northwest corner of the Thicket and strayed over farm and industrial areas. "I began to wonder," said Dempsey Henley, a leading conservationist, "if the Texas Forestry Association hadn't arranged for the helicopters." Apparently, however, Senator Bible, the leaders of the National Park Service, and a multitude of reporters saw enough to be convinced. The general opinion that evening was that it had been the best day the Big Thicket had ever seen.

The next day Senator Yarborough was supposed to be out in West Texas dedicating Lyndon Johnson's birthplace. But he had picked up a rumor in Beaumont to the effect that Ralph Yarborough wasn't going on up to Saratoga because the Big Thicket hearings were just a show, and there wasn't going to be any national park. The senator arrived at the annual Big Thicket trail ride and get-together full of enthusiasm. "They say the Thicket hearings don't mean anything. That," Yarborough said, "is just hogwash. It might not be tomorrow, and it might not be a year, but there is going to be a Big Thicket National Park. I am not dead yet," Yarborough boomed. "I've just begun to fight. The lumber interests have hired the biggest lie-spreader in the state, the Rives Dyke public relations firm [which had masterminded Bentsen's low-blow campaign against Yarborough] to fight the Big Thicket National Park. But they will not win this one. There will be more rumors that if there is a park they will close your schools and there will be no jobs. That's hogwash, too. The schools will stay open. And you'll hear rumors that the government will come in and throw people off their land if there's a national park. That's hogwash. And the people starting those rumors know it's hogwash. National parks create jobs. Pulp timber gives you a crop every 10 years; tourists give you a crop 12 months of the year."

The senator's speech was punctuated with bursts of applause. The crowd dispersed gradually to the sounds of country fiddlers and amiable conversation. It was midafternoon, and hot. Off in the distance a hawk wheeled above the pinetops. The trail drivers pastured their horses in the shades of the pines. In the old Saratoga school auditorium the Miss Big Thicket beauty pageant began. Conservationists headed for the highways that lead back to Houston and Dallas wondering if the senator is right.

There is a chance. Not a bad chance. If the conservationists don't let their guard down. And if the lumber interests don't sew up the news media. And if no one gives up hope. The woods along the road brooded in the afternoon heat. A deer darted back into black shade and disappeared; in a roadside ditch a turtle submerged suddenly, swirling the brown water. Yes, one could concede the senator that much: there is a chance. A newspaperman remarked casually in a Beaumont cafe: "Well, I don't know about ecology. But this thing has turned into such a bandwagon that it's easier to get on than to try to stop it. The politicians are for it now." Off in the distance a hawk wheeled above deep forest, the road shimmered in the sun. Yes, there is no stopping a bandwagon. If you can start one.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. MONDALE, Mr. President, yesterday the President of the United States delivered a message on Indian affairs

with recommendations which, if implemented, could have far-reaching effects upon Indian citizens of our Nation.

To the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), who served so ably as chairman of the Special Subcommittee on Indian Education, to me, and to the other members of the subcommittee, the President's message was especially gratifying because the President restated many of the same recommendations we made in our final report last November. It is encouraging to know that the report has not fallen upon deaf ears at the White House, and that the President has decided to join us in seeking long overdue reforms in Indian affairs.

There are several points in the President's "new policy" which I would like to call attention to because I believe their implementation offers American Indians the opportunity for significant progress.

First of all, I want to record my agreement with the President's statement that "forced termination is wrong." Self-determination is possible without termination of those services the Federal Government is obligated to provide.

In regard to education the Indian Education Subcommittee specifically recommended:

The Federal Government shall not terminate Federal responsibility and services in educational fields to any Indian tribe, band, group, or community, unless such termination is consented to by those Indians affected by such termination.

The President has asked the Congress to repeal House Concurrent Resolution 108 of the 83d Congress which established congressional approval of the termination policy. I point out that the Senate has, in effect, already stated its opposition to termination of House Concurrent Resolution 108 in Senate Concurrent Resolution 11, which was agreed to by the Senate in 1968. The distinguished Senator from South Dakota (Mr. MCGOVERN), submitted that resolution, and we are grateful for his insistence at that time in putting the Senate on record as opposed to termination. I am pleased that the House, which did not agree to the McGovern resolution in 1968, has reintroduced an antitermination bill this session. Representative DONALD FRASER, of Minnesota's Fifth District and a devoted advocate of Indian rights, has been one of the driving forces in introducing that legislation.

The President also asked that Indians be given the opportunity to control and operate Federal programs. If Indians are ever to control their own destinies, it is essential they be permitted to do so without the meddling hand of the insensitive non-Indian—the type of person who seems to predominate in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Indian Education Subcommittee recommended that tribes and Indian communities should be able to contract directly with the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the programs provided, for example, by the Johnson-O'Malley funds. The President has expressed his concurrence with that recommendation.

To expedite the transfer of schools from Federal control to control by locally elected school boards—another sub-

committee recommendation—the President has asked the Vice President to establish a Special Education Subcommittee within the National Council on Indian Opportunity, which the Vice President chairs. The Council has met only once since this administration took office. I certainly hope there will be considerable improvement on that record by the Special Education Subcommittee.

I am sorry to hear the President has asked this subcommittee to conduct yet another review of Indian education. The Senate subcommittee report is probably the most comprehensive document on this matter ever published. This report, together with the soon-to-be-released national Indian Education study contracted by the Office of Education, should certainly provide all the data and information the special subcommittee would need to accomplish its mission. We do not need another study to tell us what a tragedy Indian education is. I think the Vice President's Subcommittee's time could better be spent seeing that Indians who want control of their children's education are given that control.

I am pleased by the President's decision to expand urban Indian centers in seven major cities, including Minneapolis. But this still barely touches at the needs of urban Indians. The Indian in the city is often more destitute and more impoverished than his brethren on the reservation. Because of their mobile status, many do not qualify for services available to other urban poor, and because of outdated BIA regulations they are not eligible for benefits received by reservation Indians. Much, much more needs to be done in this area.

I am appreciative of the fact the President has listened to those of us in Congress who have been advocating increased funds for Indian health.

This winter the administration refused to permit the Indian Health Service to spend \$3 million of appropriated funds. With Indian infant mortality nearly 50 percent higher than for the general population, with tuberculosis rates eight times higher, with the suicide rate twice that of the general population, and with alcoholism, otitis media, and other diseases taking an astounding toll yearly, it was inconceivable to me that funds to be used in this area could be withheld. After more than 90 Representatives and Senators sent letters of protest to the President, he relented and released the funds. Now the President wants an additional \$10 million this fiscal year for Indian health. This is a most encouraging change of priorities, and I hope we see more of the same.

The President made several other recommendations. Some, such as that calling for the establishment of a new Assistant Secretary for Indian and Territorial Affairs who would be solely concerned with Indian and territorial peoples, was recommended by the Indian Education Subcommittee and has already been introduced in a Senate bill. Other recommendations have not yet been formally introduced, but are encompassed in a

comprehensive Indian education bill which Senator KENNEDY and I are presently working on.

Without being too much a pessimist, I would like to note that this is not the first time we have heard a good-sounding plan for Indian affairs. Over the years we have gone through innumerable new approaches, new directions, and new policies, only to find that after the breeze of practicality has cleared the air of the rhetoric, the Indian is still the most deprived and most isolated minority group in our Nation.

You will recall that in 1968 we heard a Presidential message on Indian affairs. It was an announcement of a "new national policy" in Indian affairs, a policy which sought maximum Indian participation and control, and the pursuit of excellence in a model school system for the Federal Indian schools. I quote from a portion of President Johnson's address that day:

I am asking the Secretary of the Interior, in cooperation with the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, to establish a "model community school system" for Indians. These schools will have the finest teachers, familiar with Indian history, culture and language, and will feature an enriched curriculum, special guidance and counseling programs, modern instructional material, a sound program to teach English as a second language, and will serve the local Indian population as a community center for activities ranging from adult education classes to social gatherings.

To help make the Indian School a vital part of the Indian community I am directing the Secretary of the Interior to establish Indian school boards for federal Indian schools.

Two years have passed since that dictum, and how much of a model has the Federal model community school system become?

It has become a model all right—of everything a sound educational system should not be. Textbooks are still outmoded and insensitive to Indian history, culture, and language. Guidance and counseling programs guide and counsel Indian students directly into jail. Only three locally elected school boards have been established since the President's directive. At that rate, it will be 2044 before the Bureau's 223 schools have local control.

Just recently I received a report on the model school at Brigham City, Utah. There, the teachers and administrative personnel are authorized to use handcuffs on students. The guidance and counseling office uses jail referral slips to deal with belligerent students. Students' heads are shaved—in total disregard for the significance of long hair in certain Indian religions. This is the kind of progress that has been made toward a model community school system.

If the recommendations of the Senate Indian Education Subcommittee, as proposed by the President in his message yesterday, are implemented, this Nation will go a long way toward providing Indians with the opportunities they long have been denied. I am hopeful that now, with the President's stated support, we can begin making some serious headway.

AWARD OF NAVY CROSS TO 1ST LT. RICHARD L. JAEHNE, SALT LAKE CITY

Mr. MOSS. Mr. President, today I received word that a constituent of mine, 1st Lt. Richard L. Jaehne, of Salt Lake City, Utah, has been awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism in the Republic of Vietnam.

All Utahans are proud of Lieutenant Jaehne's activities. I ask unanimous consent that the official citation presented by Navy Secretary John H. Chafee, which outlines Lieutenant Jaehne's actions, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the citation was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to Second Lieutenant Richard L. Jaehne, United States Marine Corps Reserve, for services as set forth in the following Citation:

For extraordinary heroism while serving as a Platoon Leader with Company K, Third Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division in connection with combat operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. On 28 August 1969, while moving through an open rice paddy during a company-sized search and clear operation in the Que Son-Hiep Duc Valley in Quang Nam Province, Second Lieutenant Jaehne's platoon came under intense mortar, automatic-weapons, and small-arms fire from a well-entrenched North Vietnamese Army force. Quickly assessing the situation, he deployed his platoon into firing positions and launched an aggressive counterattack. During the ensuing fire fight, he repeatedly disregarded his own safety to gain vantage points from which to direct the fire of his men against one hostile position after another. When one of his squads was temporarily pinned down by fire from a heavy machine gun, he inched his way through the deep rice paddy and, in full view of the enemy gunners, destroyed the machine gun with a hand grenade, using his pistol to dispose of the last of the enemy gunners in the emplacement. Although he had sustained a painful fragmentation wound in the shoulder and a bullet wound in the hand, Second Lieutenant Jaehne rallied his Marines, retrieved the radio from his fallen radio operator, restored communications, and continued the attack until the enemy broke contact and withdrew, leaving behind thirteen casualties, several crew-served weapons, and numerous rifles and items of equipment. By his courage, aggressive leadership, and unflinching devotion to duty in an extremely hazardous situation, Second Lieutenant Jaehne upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service.

JOHN H. CHAFEE,
Secretary of the Navy.
(For the President).

CHARTER STRANDINGS

Mr. PACKWOOD. Mr. President, I have been greatly disturbed to learn of the strandings of thousands of U.S. citizens, both here and in Europe, who were scheduled to be carried on various charter programs.

In the Washington Post for July 7, 1970, there was an article concerning the bankruptcy of a firm which specializes in student charters which reportedly has resulted in almost 3,000 students being