

Younger friends, from HW 2/25/92

There is a half-page ad in the current The Nation for "Fighting Liberal: the autobiography of George W. Norris."

During his last days as a Senator, which, along with the fact that he was a Republican the ad does not say, Lil and I worked for the Senate. Which in those days was rather much of an informal place, housed in a single building with relatively few employees.

One day when Lil and I returned to the Senate Office Building, probably about 1937, entering through the southeast doorway on Constitution Avenue, my office directly under that entrance, and we were just inside that doorway, Norris was on his way out.

That was the time of Japanese atrocities in China.

I suppose we had just greeted him, saying something like "Good evening, Senator," when out of the blue he looked at Lil and said, "Young woman, you should not wear silk stockings." *He said why.*

I do not recall how she or we responded -because she was and for some had been wearing only lisle stockings, never silk in those pre-nylon days, as her protest over Japanese atrocities. Along with other young women we knew, if far from all.

Norris' vision toward the end of his career as a Senator was that poor.

And compared to silk, lisle stockings were that obvious.

Among the other young women we then knew who wore lisle stockings was Carol (actually Carolyn) Agger, later Mrs. Abe Fortas, and Frances Wheeler, daughter of Senator Bert Wheeler, also a Republican.

Norris was also the "father" of public power, sponsoring The Tennessee Valley authority.

I wonder why it took more than half a century for his autobiography to be published.