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THE MIDLOTHIAN MIRROR

Since 1882 . . . Successor to THE MIDLOTHIAN NEWS and THE MIDLOTHIAN ARGUS

MIDLOTHIAN, ELLIS COUNTY, TEXAS 76065

THURSDAY, JUNE

Editor Penn Jones Jr. Reads Speech at C. of C. Meeting

As owner of one of the oldest businesses in Midlothian, I asked for this opportunity to welcome the new editor to Midlothian as I was out of the country at the time of the last meeting. Having been the editor here for almost 24 years, I would like to record a little history for all of you.

My first paper on November 28, 1948 had \$47 in advertising and the cost to get copy set in that issue was \$45. From that paper, we have moved the advertising in Midlothian to about \$200 per week and the profit is still as non-existent as in 1945. Midlothian has never been a town for advertising. There are merchants here who have not had \$50 advertising in The Mirror in 24 years.

Expense of producing an offset weekly which we both have will require the two papers to have \$300 per week each in advertising. If we cannot get \$600 a week from the business men of Midlothian, we will both make a major effort to get out of town advertising which results in a big effort to drag business out of Midlothian.

I hear a lot about free competition of late. But there are a number of businessmen here who believe in competition only for OTHERS. About the first thing Gene Rodgers did when he got to Midlothian was to ask me to kill the 2x6 Cedar Hill bank ad in the Mirror and he promised to give me an ad every week. I did not kill the Cedar Hill ad, but lost it a few weeks later. And Mr. Rodgers and the First National Bank continued, until two weeks ago, to advertise in The Mirror only once a month.

Some people have said to me that the new paper is an effort to drive me out of business. Economically there is some basis for the statement. Midlothian is probably the smallest town in the United States with two weeklies. From an economic standpoint, it seems many towns in

Texas and across the land have a better money-making prospect. There are many larger towns in Texas with no weekly in competition with a daily. Hillsboro and Cleburne both have strong weeklies in competition.

I don't believe there is an effort to drive me out of business. And the way for you, Mr. Businessman, to dispell any such idea is to divide your advertising equally between the two papers, if you are interested in dispelling the idea.

Whether the editor likes it or not, the editor is in charge of adult education for his community or for his readers. When The Mirror was fire-bombed in 1962 by Midlothian people, I took the hint that my ideas were not too popular and especially after the assassination of President John Kennedy, I stayed out of your way and worked on the assassination story.

For the first time now, I report to you that we have been recognized in books and magazines around the world for that work. FORGIVE MY GRIEF is published even in Japanese. There have been TV crews to Midlothian from France, England, Belgium, and Spain to film The Mirror. I played a major role in the movie film Rush to Judgement.

But if you want The Mirror present to report your meetings, we will be there. To me there is something magic about the words FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

Just think, the most precious gift a country can bestow was given to Mr. Long and me. We have the right to go into business anywhere and to print anything we feel we are big enough to defend.

And I am proud of that right, that duty, that obligation and I would never do anything to sully or besmut that right.

If this is an effort to run me out of business, I want to report now that although the decision might be in doubt, there will never be any doubt that I am the editor of The Midlothian Mirror. I will never be known as the boy sent here by Gorman or Duncanville to run Midlothian.