



point of view

BY BILL NIXON

A recent CBS News report gave the impression that America is becoming a nation of lawless vigilantes determined to rid our nation of criminals with the spot prosecution. The report, filmed in Florida, told of several cases where individuals reacted against criminal acts by either killing or recapturing their assailants with force. The impression given was an America armed and dangerous, taking the law into its own hands.

The report went on to note that juries are finding it hard to convict individuals of a criminal act when action is taken to protect themselves on their property. Self-defense seemed to be the general justification for such activities and the courts are agreeing.

It's hard to find fault with a person protecting what is his. Too often, those who choose to commit a crime are either released on bond or are never brought to trial because of loop-holes in the laws. Who can forget the case of John Hinckley, who committed acts of violence in front of millions?

Enforcement of the law is the responsibility of those appointed to do so. But when the same laws created to protect the rights of individuals are

also used to free those that commit crimes, then other precautions become necessary. This is not to advocate that all citizens should arm themselves and that society should revert back to the practices of days gone by when every man carried a six gun strapped on his hip. As often as not, a man came out shooting and asked questions later.

The Constitution allows every individual the right of self-protection by granting each citizen the right to "bear" arms for his protection. While we must agree that this right carries with a great responsibility, it is a right of every American, and one that must not be violated. With today's laws, there is no assurance that gun control laws will keep guns out of the hands of the criminal element in society.

Laws alone have never stopped some people from violating those laws.

After years of going in the opposite direction, it appears the legal system is beginning to be more concerned with the rights of victims of crime, with less emphasis being placed on the rights of criminals. But there are still many improvements needed before individuals can expect fair treatment when sub-

jected to acts of violence. Until that time comes, each and every American must maintain his or her right to self-protection as allowed by law.

On a lighter note, if you watched the recent mini-series "The Blue and The Gray," you were probably as un-impressed with the quality and historic value as I was. Having read excellent reviews on the series, to include an endorsement by the publishers of Civil War Times, I was expecting a look at the conflict that would be both interesting, factual, and entertaining. All in all, the series offered none of these. Instead, viewers were treated to a series of poorly acted scenes that depicted the Southern cause as one without any justification and acts committed by a few lawless redneck boys. Battle scenes were slow and lacked any real impressions of war as it was during that period. Very little was said of Southern victories in the earlier part of the war or the expertise of Southern officers. One not familiar with the War would have thought that only Northern soldiers did any fighting and that General Lee was only involved in the War's end.

All in all, it proved to be

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Business Crimes Are Increasing

Gov. Jim Hunt has issued a proclamation to enlist support from all citizens to halt crimes committed against business. The proclamation, observing December, 1982, as "Stop Stealing From Business Month," is part of a statewide anti-crime campaign sponsored by the N.C. Merchants Association, the N.C. Federation of Women's Clubs, the N.C. Chapter of Distributive Education Clubs of America, and the N.C. Crime Prevention Division.

Gov. Hunt said, "We are proud to be working with such outstanding organizations in this crime prevention effort. Together we must encourage every citizen to take personal action to prevent stealing from business. Parents and leaders must teach that stealing is dishonest, stealing hurts everyone, young, elderly, fortunate, and unfortunate."

North Carolina's losses last year due to crimes against business amounted to nearly \$530-million. Nationally the figure surpassed the \$50-billion mark. Estimated daily losses due to shoplifting alone exceed \$40-million nationally.

L. D. Hyde, director of the N.C. Crime Prevention Division, says that only about 20 per cent of those people who observe theft of merchandise report it. "We've got to convince people to stop turning their backs on crime," said Hyde. "We're already paying about seven cents out of every

consumer dollar we spend to make up for stealing from business. How expensive does it have to get before people are willing to draw the line? We've got some good programs already underway to prevent business crime, but it's going to take much more citizen involvement before significant reductions are

possible," said Hyde.

Many local law enforcement agencies will participate in crime prevention programs of their own during the Holiday Season. Citizens are encouraged to participate by calling their police department, sheriff's department, or Merchants Association.

"Occupational Clinic" Was Held

An "Occupational Clinic" was held Saturday, December 4, 1982 at the Shepard Pruden Memorial Library for Miss Vogue/Mr. Esquire Contestants.

The purpose of the clinic was to enlighten contestants concerning college finances and career opportunities. The following group discussions were lead by area consultants:

Financial Assistance—Mr. James Taylor; Career Consultation—Mr. Johnny

Bond; Fund Raising—Sorority Members; and General Information—Sorority Members.

The "Occupational Clinic" was the third clinic held for pageant contestants. The pageant, which will be held in the spring, is an annual scholarship event for area high school Juniors and Seniors. It is sponsored by Nu Eta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Sorority Incorporated. The next clinic is scheduled to be held January 8, 1983.

Christmas Play To Be Presented

"Three Hundred and Sixty-Five Days of Christmas," a Christmas play, will be presented Wednesday, December 15 at 7:30 P.M. at Great Hope Baptist Church will delight you with their rendition of what Christmas every day of the year, would be like.

The Youth Singers, a combined choir of youth from both churches will add a little spice to the play with Christmas songs for the whole year.

Great Hope is located four miles east of Tyner just off the Center Hill-Hertford Road. The public is invited to attend.

Moravian Feast To Be Held

The annual Moravian Love Feast will be held on Christmas Eve Friday, December 24th at 7:30 P.M. Mrs. Gahl Stevens is leading the preparations. The Choir will present "The Prince of Peace is Come" a Moravian Christmas Cantata, under the direction of Mr. Gil Burroughs, Mrs. Shelby Strother, Organist, Pianist. The congregation will be singing Christmas Carols. Everyone is invited to come and join this joyous celebration.

The Men of the Church will hold their breakfast meeting this Sunday at 7 A.M.

"Jesus revisited by the Prophets" will be the sermon this Sunday, December 12, at the 11 A.M. Worship at First Presbyterian Church in Edenton by the Pastor, Rev. H.E. Mallinson.

The family of E.C. Toppin will light the third Advent Candle. The grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Troy Toppin, and Kathy Toppin will assist.

Children and adults will again work on Christmas handcrafts at 6:30 P.M. with Fran Ward leading. A "mittens and socks" Christmas tree has been set up for gifts for those in need.

Family Portraits

Family Portraits sold by the Edenton-Chowan Rescue Squad Unit II will be taken as scheduled Saturday, December 11th at the Rescue Building in Gliden.

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