

LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

We're Sorry About That, Lester - Honestly

Verrazano, history tells us, touched the coast of North Carolina in 1524; Desota was here in 1540 and Sir Walter Raleigh sent an expedition to Roanoke Island in 1584. North Carolina was the 12th of the original 13 colonies. In 1861, North Carolina seceded from the Union as a Southern State.

During the Civil War, North Carolina lost its share of gallant sons. We have to believe that these men died for principles greater than are today being advanced. We have to believe that North Carolina is still a Southern state, although believing this gets more difficult with each passing day.

For nearly a hundred years North Carolina honored the memories of men who died defending the South. Monuments were erected and a proud

people remembered. Here in Franklin County great pride was taken in the fact that the Stars and Bars first flew from its courthouse square.

But times and things change. It is no longer fashionable to display the Stars and Bars—even here where first it flew. Honor of this symbol of heroic men has deteriorated to automobile stickers and souvenir hats. "Dixie" is not sung in some quarters and is frowned upon in many others. Being a Southerner is something akin to having leprosy. One can feel it, but is often ashamed of it.

North Carolina, once the proudest of the proud Southern states, has become sophisticated. Its leaders now prefer to be called "progressive" or "moderate" rather than to be called "Southern." The word "liberal" is in

and the words "conservative" and "Southern" are out.

By and large this denunciation of our birthright has been caused ironically enough by the civil rights movement. Taking pride in our state's history has been equated with opposition to equal rights. Honoring the memory of men who died for that which they believed right has grown to mean dishonoring some present day citizens. And so, North Carolina leaders have consistently moved away from such embarrassing labels as "Southern."

As the federal government gradually but quite thoroughly took over the operation of North Carolina's public school system, state leaders have hardly raised a voice in protest. Governor after Governor and state School Superintendent after State School Superintendent have looked the other way.

And when others—who were not embarrassed to be called Southerners—offered protest, however meager it was, North Carolina leaders pretended not to hear. Some leaders even joined in the more sophisticated nose-thumbing at the "red-necks."

So, here in this once Southern state the likes of George Wallace and Lester Maddox were snickered at by leaders as being crude, uncouth and unqualified to speak for the new South. Being anti-Wallace and anti-Maddox somehow seemed to raise one's level, much like looking down our noses at a poor relative. It made us feel good to believe, egotistically that somehow, we are better.

We do not have to approve the Wallaces and the Maddoxes and surely history has produced more eloquent Southern spokesmen. Certainly the South has had leaders with more polish; more political savvy; more charisma. And surely there are many things each of these men and others advocate with which we cannot agree. But for all their grammatical errors; their lack of sophistication and their appeal at times to unreasonableness, one thing stands out: They are Southerners and proud of it.

We cannot believe that Southern men died in the Civil War to maintain segregated schools. The principles for which they gave their lives were far more significant than this. They believed in the right of the states to determine things for themselves. They did not believe in an overpowering central government. To this degree,

these Southerners and the Wallaces and Maddoxes of today have much in common. And with this North Carolina should agree.

Instead North Carolina and some other so-called Southern states have given at best only lip service to the principles for which so many men died.

This week, the federal government brought suit against the entire State of Georgia to force that sovereign state to buckle under to federal dictates. Washington will tell the people in Georgia how they are to run their schools.

Governor Maddox, who rose to fame as a segregationist and who has a reputation of being anti-Negro, has spoken out against this latest move by Washington. We do not have to agree with his stand as a segregationist, in order to agree with his cry for help in the battle against federal control. While the immediate issue in Georgia is integration, the much larger issue looms in the background. Today the schools; tomorrow all.

There is not a question in the minds of many—as shown by the U. S. House of Representatives vote last week to downgrade HEW's powers—that forced integration—that is, federal control—in our schools is bringing public education, as we know it, to its knees.

Governor Maddox has invited top level leaders from North Carolina and other Southern states to Atlanta for a seminar to discuss this growing usurpation of state rights by federal bureaucrats. The problem is not exclusively Georgia's. North Carolina has suffered from the same federal takeover and when it grows even larger, North Carolina will continue to suffer as will Georgia and the other Southern states.

But North Carolina leaders—more susceptible to being called "moderates" and "progressives" than "southerners"—can't make the Maddox meeting. Several other Southern states find themselves in the same "regrettable" situation. In North Carolina, there is a big political meeting on the coast that will prevent a number of leaders from going to Georgia. The other states have equally compelling excuses.

And while we can't agree with Governor Maddox in toto, North Carolina's move away from the South saddens us terribly and we can only say: We're sorry about that, Lester... honestly sorry.

Very Interesting

To say that strange things are happening in this nation's activities in Vietnam is a gross understatement at best. Secrecy has shrouded the so-called Paris peace talks and we've been told that these aren't the real talks anyway. There are other secret talks going on some place.

With absolutely no assurances or even promises as far as the public knows, President Nixon ordered 25,000 troops withdrawn from the fighting. This is wonderful if they aren't needed but one has to question the welfare of those troops left to take up this slack.

It now appears the answer has come. A reporter for Richmond television station WWBT says that he has it from "an impeccable Pentagon source that orders have been issued to 45,000 men for Vietnam duty while 25,000 are being pulled out."

The TV reporter says this is being done "by the simple expedient of keeping two sets of records. One is for the public consumption and the other for the confidential information of the Secretary and the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

If this is true, it's a great load off our minds. The troops left in Vietnam are getting more help than they're losing. But now we've got another worry. That old bugaboo from the Johnson years is back. What do you do for a bad case of credibility gaps?



I took the little woman to one of them fancy restaurants... restaurants... cafes the other night. That ain't exactly right. I didn't take her. She took me. I paid for it, you understand but it was her idea.

"Frank", she said, "You ain't took me out to eat in thirty years. Don't you think it's about time you did?"

Well, my obvious answer didn't strike her too well, so I ended up on my way out to eat. 'Course I been eating out for most of my life. Outdoors, that is. For years, we eat on the back porch at home. There won't be room in the kitchen. When it rained we just put off eating until it stopped. The flies was the main trouble. That was before they invented all them sprays. It was almost before they invented flies. Now, it ain't really been that far back. I just said that.



The worse thing about this eating out was that the little woman insisted that I wear my suit. I got to admit, I look mighty sharp in it, but I hadn't wore it since Roosevelt come through here on the train in the thirties. It ain't wore none. Still just as shiny as ever.

It's made of shark skin or so that traveling man told me when I bought it. It's green with white pin stripes and a double breasted coat. He called it a zoot suit. I never did get a chain to go with it. He said I ought to have a chain.

I put the thing on and right off I knowed I was in trouble. The top three buttons wouldn't button. Didn't have zippers when I bought this suit. Cost \$12. I think the cloth shrank. The little woman insisted I'd grown. Anyway, I had to wear the coat buttoned and I had to kinda hold it together at the bottom. Otherwise it fitted fine. I didn't even have to wear the rubber bands around the sleeves. They come up near to my elbow. Using them cloths pins to hold my shirt cuffs together was a bad idea, though. They kept popping off and dropping on the floor. I finally just rolled the sleeves up.

When we walked in the cafe, everybody stopped whatever they was doing and stared at us. I knew they would. I told the little woman, that women won't wearing bonnets anymore.

She said I should help her to her chair but I didn't see none that looked like they was hers. I let her lead the way. She set where she wanted to and I did too. Later I decided it didn't look nice for me to be setting on one side of the building and her on the other. I went over. She didn't welcome me though.

Then this pretty young thing brought over a thing she called a men-you. I asked her if she had any hog hass-lets. She stared at me. I could tell she didn't know what I was talking about. She hadn't been there long. She should a known about hog hass-lets.

I asked about salad and she said she had some. Wanted to know what kind of dressing I wanted on it. I usually take my salad naked, I told her. Just sprinkle a little vinegar on it I said.

I asked if she had any cone-bread and she said she had some hushpuppies. I been hearing about places serving dog food. I won't about to bite at that. I been around. She could tell this, too, when I said no thank you. I'll take biscuits. She didn't have none. She said she'd bring me some light bread. I don't like light bread.

The little woman had by then took off three layers of skin kicking my legs so I let her order. She wanted a slab of streak-o-lean, she said. I felt sorry for her but I was getting hungry so I walked over to the man standing at the counter. Manager, I said, ain't you got somebody who can take an order. I don't want to hurt that youngin's feelings, but if you could send somebody over whose been here a while longer it might help.

He wanted to know what the trouble was. He kept watching a young boy and girl in the booth over to the right. The boy must a been as hungry as I was. He kept trying to eat up that girl. She was a right pretty dish, I told the manager, but I really thought he ought to rush a hamburger to that boy before it was too late. He agreed, but he didn't do it. He just kept watching.

I told him my problem and he said I was in the wrong place. He showed me a door at the back and said if I'd just go through there, I'd be where I belonged.

I got the little woman and went out the door. He was right. That's where I belonged. Outdoors. And since I was already out, I stayed out. I went home and we at fatback and mustard. That's better'n hog hass-lets anyway.

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Will you speak to your son? He claims some funny looking creatures put Uncle Harvey and Aunt Harriet into a box and flew off into outer space!

New Times In A New World

Not Even Dogs Lead 'Dog's Life'

Black Knight, a dog-about-town, led the gay life of aristocratic London.

The popular Pekingese dined on turtle soup and drank the finest sherry. He attended Lord Mayor's banquets and was presented at Buckingham Palace. At the race track he barked tips on the horses as his mistresses read him entries.

When he died in 1955, obituaries recounted his exploits.

Black Knight's adventures, described in the National Geographic Society's book, "Man's Best Friend," were unusual but not necessarily unique. Few dogs lead a "dog's life" any longer.

Billion-dollar Industry

An estimated average of \$115 is spent annually on each of the 26 million canine pets in the United States—a total of about \$3 billion. Far more money goes for dog food than baby food, and many pets eat more nutritious meals than do their owners.

One survey itemized annual canine expenditures this way: \$700 million for buying dogs, \$600 million in veterinary fees, \$550 million for food, \$450 million for clothes and accessories, \$300 million for licensing fees and shots, and \$400 million in miscellaneous costs.

Pets are more interested in food than in fashion, but some owners feel that clothes make the dog.

A well-stocked canine wardrobe may include an imitation leopard-skin coat (about \$25), a striped raincoat with matching hood (\$5), four rainboots (\$2.50), and a variety of rhinestone leashes and collars (\$3 to \$25 or more).

Vacationing dogs show off their clothes at posh, air-conditioned kennels with swimming pools and soothing piped-in music.

Well-heeled dogs consider price no object. A miniature poodle in New York, for example, had four fittings for a \$1,000 mink coat that matched his mistress's. A woman in Alexandria, Virginia, outfitted her toy poodle in a gold lame evening coat and her whippet in a pink velvet evening coat with applied pearls.

A Cleveland, Ohio, industrialist paid a New York

stylist \$100 to fly to his home to fit a \$150 mink coat for his poodle.

In Matching Colors

A Wheaton, Maryland, woman paid an animal beauty parlor \$250 to outfit her pet in blue, and then had the little dog tinted the same hue.

Well-dressed dogs often lead a full social life. One, the pet of an ambassador's wife, became so popular that he was invited to parties where she was not. Another celebrated canine invited 78 people-friends to dine and dance in honor of her tenth birthday. The guests, wearing black tie and bearing gifts, toasted the hostess till dawn.

Most owners, of course, prefer that their pets look and act like dogs, not people. Some feel strongly about the whole matter.

As one man moaned after being dazzled by an assortment of little sailor suits, Santa Claus outfits, and similar costumes in a pet salon: "I wouldn't do that to a dog."

- Smithfield (N.C.) Herald



Hey, newsboy! Don't just toss that paper — aim it!



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