

EDITORIAL

WEIMAR JONES, Editor

Worst In 82 Years

President Eisenhower last week signed into law what generally has been described — with dubious accuracy — as the first civil rights bill enacted in 82 years.

Well, the new law has another distinction: It is one of the worst pieces of legislation in 82 years.

It is bad legislation without reference to whether or how badly a civil rights law is needed. It is bad, moreover, without reference to the fact it is a civil rights law; it would be equally bad if it dealt with an entirely different subject.

It is bad because it violates basic legislative and moral principles generally accepted in the democratic world.

Major reasons why it is bad include these:

1. It is out-and-out class legislation. Nobody claims it is a general law, designed to protect the civil rights of all citizens; admittedly, it has for its sole purpose the protection of the rights of one group and one alone — the Negro. Nobody has suggested the even remote possibility of its ever protecting anybody else.

2. It not only is selective of those to be protected; its application is strictly regional. It is aimed quite frankly at a single section — the South. Surely there are occasional violations of the civil rights of citizens on the Pacific Coast or in New England or in the Middle West, but never once in the long debate was it indicated that anybody outside the South ever would be prosecuted under its provisions. And however wrong the South may be, that does not change a basic legal principle: A law aimed at any one individual or any one region is a bad law.

3. Enacted in today's too-common atmosphere of seeking first the immediately expedient thing, the law endangers a basic right of all citizens in its effort to secure another to one group. And it is worth noting that the right to a fair trial by a jury is a far older and far more precious one than the right to vote.

4. The Eisenhower administration, fearing trial by jury in contempt cases might lower the dignity of federal courts, obtained a "compromise". And so the law authorizes any federal judge to fine or jail any citizen, without benefit of jury trial—provided the fine does not exceed so many dollars or the prison term so many days. Thus we have the spectacle of Congress trying to compromise the principle of trial by jury. That is a little like trying to find a compromise between the truth and a lie, between honesty and theft. That won't work; for once you start to compromise on principle, there is no place to stop. And ultimately—and inevitably—every right based on principle will be lost, to all citizens.

... But Proud

If it is the unusual that constitutes news, it might be asked: Is it still news when a Macon County student wins a scholarship? The question is suggested by the increasing number of boys and girls here who are so honored.

The answer is: Of course it's news! The very fact it has ceased to be unusual for scholarships to come this way is news in itself.

And to all the scholarship winners of this year we say what we are sure is in the minds of most Macon County people: We aren't a bit surprised that your worth is recognized, but we are proud, mighty proud, all the same.

ONE MAN A MAJORITY

If He Has Courage For Little Things, He Can Meet Big Crises

I know one woman who is frank to say what so few people admit, that the trait of character she most admires is that of courage.

"Just what is courage?" I asked her. She thought a bit, and then said: "It's getting up and going on again, after you've been knocked down. It's choosing the right way rather than the easy one. It's having faith in yourself and being ready to back that faith. I guess it's just believing in God and that He gave you a job to do."

It must have been something like that of which Andrew Jackson was thinking, when he

said "One man with courage is a majority."

The dictionary describes it as "That quality of mind which meets danger or opposition with intrepidity, calmness and firmness."

If you really set your mind to it, you could do just that, couldn't you? When things looked black, my mother used to say, "Well, anybody can get through today and that's all I have to do right now!"

It takes courage to face apparent defeat, even in little things. It takes courage to go on plugging when you feel badly. It takes courage to stand up for what you believe to be right.

... Without Straw

How much does the average business in Franklin spend for advertising? We have no figures, but we'd guess, when you total the costs of all the various forms of advertising — newspaper, radio, motion picture, billboard; handbills, circulars sent by mail, special listing in the phone book, and a dozen others—\$1,000 a year would be a conservative figure.

How much, then, should a town spend for advertising? Surely more than a single business.

Yet Franklin bids fair to spend this year for advertising, through its chamber of commerce, about \$333! The chamber's total advertising budget is only \$1,000—and only a third of the total budget has found its way into the organization's treasury.

How much can the chamber of commerce accomplish with \$333? We'd guess about as much as the ancient Israelites were able to, trying to make brick without straw.

Intellectual Inbreeding

A good teacher is a good teacher, and where she comes from or where she went to school doesn't change her abilities.

The teacher, though, works in the realm of ideas; and ideas grow and multiply as they are stimulated by contact with other ideas, from other places and other atmospheres. For that reason, it is important that the teachers in a school system represent the widest possible variety of backgrounds and education.

Because that is true, it always has seemed to us we have too many Macon County persons teaching in this county's schools; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, we do not have enough persons from elsewhere. The same logic suggests we have too many from a single institution—Western Carolina College. That is said with no disrespect whatever to the Cullowhee institution; it is a fine school. But if we get virtually all our teachers from any one institution, we are depriving ourselves of the viewpoints to be absorbed at other schools.

This comment is suggested by figures published recently in The Press. The list of new teachers gave the educational backgrounds of 17. And of these, 13 went to W. C. C.

Again, Macon County produces some excellent teachers, and W. C. C. is a good school, turning out fine teachers. But we are in danger of intellectual inbreeding.

Others' Opinions

(Opinions expressed in this space are not necessarily those of The Press. Editorials selected for reprinting here, in fact, are chosen with a view to presenting a variety of viewpoints. They are, that is, just what the caption says—OTHERS' Opinions.)

The Good Old Days

(Brillion, Wisc. News)

If you are one of those who is always longing for the good old days, just try reading your newspaper by an oil lamp.

In One Basket

(Franklin, La., Banner-Tribune)

Sometimes a community will pin all of its hopes on one industry and it will grow and thrive and prosper as long as the wheels of that industry turn.

Won't Bankrupt The State

(Asheville Times)

If anyone should question the wisdom or the ability of the State of North Carolina to afford \$165 per child for public education, he should be reminded that no state has ever become bankrupt because of its investment in education, no matter how great that investment was.

It takes courage to say no, when it needs to be said. There isn't a day that does not call for its modicum of courage.

A lot of the permanent "Be-wailers"—those people who find their pleasure in looking at the worst side of things, probably because it is so pleasant when the worst does not happen—say that Americans today have no courage. They contend that if we are attacked people will lose their heads and panic. (Maybe they are expressing what they think they would do.)

I don't think there is a date attached to courage. I think a person who has gone through life, meeting whatever it brings with "intrepidity, calmness and

firmness," will find the same qualities on call in big crises as well as in small ones. Character is a matter of long-standing habit, and, as I believe it was Scott who said—"He that climbs a ladder must begin at the first rung."

To finish with the word courage, I looked it up in my Concordance to the Bible and this is what I found that David said to Solomon: "Be strong and of good courage, and do it; fear not, nor be dismayed for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou has finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord."

"Just What Do You Mean, 'How About The Other Race Question'?"



Strictly Personal

By WEIMAR JONES

I often have been impressed by the stability of Macon County's population, and the other day I had another illustration of it.

In conversation with J. W. (Jake) Addington, right after he had sold his farm at auction, I was interested and pleased when he told me he had kept his home. One of the reasons:

"I was born and reared there, and my father (James B. Addington) before me. I want to spend the rest of my days there."

The house was built by the present Mr. Addington's grandfather, Henry Addington, in the 1820's; long enough ago for five or six generations to come to maturity. And all these years, it has been the home of Addingtons.

It might be said that that is an isolated instance. Well, this one isn't:

In the Do You Remember? column in last week's Press, a 65-years-ago item listed the precinct registrars for that year's election. And who were they? The ancestors or kin of people of the same name still living here. In most instances, in fact, the same names are to be found today in the same precincts even.

Those I was able to identify as the same families, still living in the same precincts, include the Rankins in Franklin, the Keeners in Sugarfork, the McConnells in Smith's Bridge, the Setters in Cartoogechaye, the Morgans in Nantahala, the Mays in Briartown, the Wilds in Burningtown, and the Rickmans in Cowee.

And that in a period when a big proportion of Americans never stay anywhere long—and live in an apartment while they're there!

Commenting on legislators

efforts to create the illusion that they are just country boys, Jay Huskins, writing in The Statesville Record, quotes Rep. Joe Hunt, of Guilford County, as saying "I've been no further from home than you can reach in a peanut sack". That may be all right for Mr. Hunt's purposes, in Guilford County. But if he'd wanted to make it really effective, here in the mountains, he'd have phrased it, "than you can reach in a goober poke".

And that recalls a phrase (whether it's a mountainism or once was used throughout the South, I don't know) I heard the other day for the first time in years: "... be no more left of it than of a pound of soap after a day's washing".

Another old phrase I like because it paints a picture is the one, "... looks like a breath of wind would blow her away".

Compare that with all the adjectives in the dictionary—thin, frail, anemic, etc. For vividness, I'll take the wind blowing description every time.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press

65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK (1892)

Wanted: a fine mechanic to build a cage for the bird of Smith's Bridge.

Mr. A. H. Welch, of Swain County, was in town last Wednesday. He has a beard that measures three feet and nine inches and reaches to a point halfway between his knee and foot. He's been 16 years without a shave, he says. When at work, Mr. Welch wears his beard "done up", like a woman's hair.

Some men were attempting to drive a mule steer on the scales last Friday to be weighed. Not liking the business, the steer turned and entered the door leading to Dr. Higgins' dental office and proceeded up the stairs. A young lady having some dental work done vacated the chair a great deal more quickly than she would have had Grover Cleveland entered the room. The Dr. dismissed him as unceremoniously as he had entered.

25 YEARS AGO (1932)

The Town Council is still deadlocked over the routing of N. C. Highway 28 through Franklin but three members and the mayor have signed a petition to the State Highway Commission urging location of the route over Palmer Street. On another petition are 438 names with the same request.

C. Tom Bryson, register of deeds—and Democratic nominee for re-election, replied this week to C. B. Stockton, who said he considered the appropriation for this office outrageous.

Mr. Stockton criticized the \$3,100 appropriation and said he'd do the job for \$1,800 in a letter to The Press last week. Mr. Bryson, in reply, said the total appropriation doesn't have to be spent. His figures show he's been filling the office for \$45 less than Stockton's offer.

10 YEARS AGO

Led by a heavy, charging line, the Franklin Panthers fought the Murphy Bulldogs to a 13-13 tie before more than 600 spectators last Friday night on the local field.

The Gold Mine school will open Monday morning, with Judson Smith as teacher, Supt. G. L. Houk announced this week. Earlier, parents told the county board of education if their school were consolidated with Higdonville, they would not let their children attend.

Paul Price has been named editor-in-chief of The Mountain Trail, Highlands school paper. Associate editors are Mary Phillips and Douglas Picklesimer.—Highlands item.

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