

# EDITORIAL Weimar Jones Editor

## Questions And Answers

When you don't know what else to do, you can always appropriate another billion dollars.

That psychology would appear to have been back of President Eisenhower's request, within hours of the convening of Congress, for the immediate appropriation of an extra billion for missiles; and will be back of Congress' sure compliance with the request.

It appears that way for this reason: The administration plans to spend at most only one-tenth of that billion prior to July 1; and that is the beginning of a new fiscal year, to be provided for in the new budget. In short, there seems to be no immediate need whatever for nine-tenths of what is asked; one-tenth of a billion is all that can be used, in that period. Why, then, the big request? Well, a mere 100 million wouldn't have sounded very impressive, when a fearful public is demanding action.

The incident illustrates the growing feeling, in and out of Washington, that all that is necessary to secure adequate national defense is to spend more money.

Is it as simple as that? It takes money, of course; lots of money. But what is it that counts — how much we spend? or what we buy with it?

Ultimately, solution of the defense problem depends primarily on brains and imagination and initiative. All money can do is to buy those talents; no matter how big the amount, money can't assure they are used to the best advantage.

Is there convincing evidence we haven't had enough money to buy the best brains and imagination and initiative available? Isn't there, instead, an alarmingly large body of evidence that what really has hampered us is such things as red tape, inter-service rivalry, excessive and cumbersome security regulations, and lack of a definite sense of direction?

Maybe there are good and satisfactory answers to those questions; it would be reassuring to know there are. But they are questions American citizens — whose money it is and whose defense is at stake — have the right, indeed 'the duty', to ask — and to have answered, in detail, and with evidence.

## Respectfully Referred

Since the county board of education is responsible for the county's school buildings, it seems only proper that the board should set up regulations for the use of the buildings for non-school purposes. And since there is some expense incident to such use—for heat, lights, janitor service, etc.—it is logical for the board to make a small charge for use of the buildings. Finally, the schedule of fees seems reasonable. We have no quarrel whatever, therefore, with the board's action last week.

We were surprised, though, at what precipitated the action — a requirement by the state. The school buildings in this county belong to the people of the county. By what right, then, does the state tell us how we may use our own property? we asked.

The answer is: The state pays a portion of the cost of heating, lighting, water, etc., and pays the janitors.

That is a tiny fraction of the money Macon County people have invested in the schools. Yet the orders come from Raleigh!

We respectfully refer these facts to those who are sure we can have federal aid to education, "without federal control".

Add this to your collection of signs on the rear of trucks: "Don't hug me. I'm going steady."—Chicago Tribune.

### 'PASS A LAW'

## CENSORSHIP AND SENSE---FREEDOM OF CHOICE

*Morganton News-Herald*

Whenever parents, the church, and the state fail to do their job in teaching the art of living, the easiest way out seems to be "pass a law against it."

The latest example is the farce of comic book censorship. First, the Legislature passed its famous censorship law. The lawmakers were prodded by parents, teachers, and church folks.

Next the N. C. Sheriff's Association published a blacklist of certain comic books and other magazines, sent it to all the sheriffs with the suggestion that they be removed from magazine stands.

Now comes the real comic opera part.

According to John L. Goldwater, of New York, head of the Comic Magazine Association of America, 15 of the 20 comic books listed were out of existence before the list was distributed.

Most of them had been out of existence for more than a year, Goldwater said in protesting the list as "outdated, unfair, unrealistic."

He went on to talk about the comic book publishers setting up a code authority and efforts to clean up the book on cartoons. But that is not pertinent to our discussion.

What we wanted to get across is that self-appointed censors almost always wind up showing their ignorance.

## Interesting Experiment

Now, on a few stretches of road, North Carolina motorists may drive 60 miles an hour, legally.

In line with permission granted by the last General Assembly, the State Highway Commission the other day designated a few zones for a 60-mile speed limit. Does the new ruling make sense?

Well, this certainly is a two-sided question.

It's as plain as the nose on your face that 60 miles is safer in some places than 55 in others. But it would be equally logical to argue that there are areas where 65 is safer than 60 is in others. Somewhere we've got to fix a top speed limit; somewhere there's a speed that isn't safe on any highway — as the driver's manual has been careful to get across to all of us.

Another question: The state has spent much money and time educating us to keep within the 55-mile limit, at all times and on all roads. How much of that education is going to be lost, now that exceptions are made? Aren't many motorists, told they are permitted to drive 60 in some areas, going to have a tendency to drive 60 everywhere? . . . just as they now sail through 30-mile zones at 55.

It's going to be interesting to see how the experiment works out.

## Letters

### About 'Red Water'

Dear Mr. Jones:

Could I have just a small space in your paper to express my opinion on the editorial of January 2 ("Solution Over-Due") and on the letter of last week in reply to it.

I am not a member of the Town Board, but one of the taxpayers of Franklin who wonder if the editorial was "inappropriate, unnecessary, or unjust". But I do agree with it. Did it accomplish anything?

I do not have a Ph. D. degree from any college, but I think I have enough common sense to know when water has mud in it. When you have washed clothes and dishes, drunk, and taken baths for three years, you should be well enough informed and qualified to know what "red water" is. I have a five-year old daughter, and she can see that difference.

If anyone wants to be responsible for my water heater, they are more than welcome to drain it and see how much "red water" has settled in the bottom.

I could drill a well and solve my water problem (if I had \$1,000), but should I have to? I pay town taxes for that convenience.

I put new pipe in my house three years past. Has it gotten old and rusty in that time?

I wonder sometimes where the salvation of the problem might be — new wells, new piping, or new atmosphere.

A Neighbor to "Old Betsy",

WOODROW DOWDLE.

### Maintain Our System

(Albemarle Stanly News and Press)

Many people, at home and abroad, have lamented our loss of "prestige" since the failure of the Vanguard to hoist a tiny satellite into space.

The reaction is understandable, in a measure, but we do not feel that it is altogether justified. Certainly it is not a healthy sign for us to accent that feeling as final fact.

In fact, the launching of Sputniks by Russia, coupled with our own failure, may be a great blessing. If it serves to wake us up to the fact that we do not have a corner on scientific ability and knowhow, and to spur us on to new achievements, then it will have been a boon to our nation's welfare.

The most serious aspect of the failure of the first Vanguard is the attitude of gloom and criticism it produced among our leaders and our people generally here at home. When a people "quit", when they no longer believe in themselves, then they have real cause to worry. Others may apparently lose as much faith in us as they like, but we cannot afford to lose faith in ourselves.

We have had, and let us believe we still have, the greatest nation on earth. That is because we have lived under a system that made this possible. It is not because of numbers of people, other nations have greater population; not because of area, other nations have larger; not because of abundance of raw materials, others have more. It is because our resources have been utilized to their fullest possibilities; and these resources have been utilized because we live under a system that gives people the courage and the incentive to use them, a system wherein a man can risk and refuse to be frustrated, a system where a man can reap the rewards of his endeavors and shoulder his losses without a whimper.

We had better be much more concerned about losing the system by which we attained greatness, about losing our traditional way of life, than about losing our "prestige" abroad. It is this system which we must keep if we are to remain great. If we keep it, then loss of "prestige" abroad need give us little concern, and criticism at home will not amount to anything. If we lose it, then it makes no difference.

Burke County was fortunate in that Sheriff Ray A. Sigmon was not one of those who fell for the ban list. He passed it along for "information only," and said he, personally, didn't plan to do anything about it — that he was no censor for anyone.

In the final analysis, censorship belongs only to the Almighty. After all, He put man here and gave him the one real freedom he has — freedom of choice. If parents train their children in the recognition of right and wrong and help them to learn to master the difficult task of choosing right.

If the churches teach children to walk with God at their shoulder and show them the true way of Christian living — joyful and full of love as a way of life; And if our schools would be sure that they teach children how to read and how to think—instead of what to read and think—then even the most self-righteous bigot would not have an excuse to try to tell others how to live, what to read.

Because, if these things were taught by those who are responsible, there would be no market for the "salacious, immoral" or material "in poor taste."

## "—But Feel Free To Proceed In All Other Directions"



## Strictly Personal By WEIMAR JONES

### BOY VISITS COUNTRY:

School was out early that Friday afternoon, and soon the boy was eagerly on the way. This week end in the country had long been promised, and the days had dragged as he had waited for it.

It was seven miles, but he walked swiftly, expectantly. Each bend in the hard-packed clay road brought a new scene, a renewed sense of adventure. What would be around the next turn?

Sometimes he met a man on horseback or a couple in a buggy. Occasionally, there was another on foot, with the invariable, soft-spoken "howdy" as he passed. Oftener there was a two-horse wagon, coming toward the town, heavily loaded with lumber or tanbark.

It was the fall of the year, with clear skies and bright sunshine. But, being fall, there was that strange autumn haze that gave

the piled-up mountains a mysterious look.

It was late as he breasted the last hilltop, and looked down on the spread-out valley, with wood smoke rising straight up from the houses, and occasionally his nostrils caught the smell of frying meat.

As he entered the house, most of the room was in shadow, despite the last rays of the falling sun slanting through the one window. They fell across the figure of an old lady, seated in a rocker, a small, round cheery table beside her. On the table lay an open Bible, spectacles beside it. She hadn't heard him, and he felt a little guilty for having interrupted when he saw the movement of her lips; in the old, tired eyes, there was peace.

A moment later, having grabbed two tea cakes from the plateful she held out to him, he was out the door, had bounded across the stile, and was on his way to the barn to see the old gentleman.

"Howdy, boy", boomed the hearty voice. "We've been lookin' for you; thought you'd never come. Me and the old woman get lonesome. Nothin' like havin' boys and girls around . . . 'specially boys", and his blue eyes twinkled, as though he and the boy alone knew what he meant.

"You want to milk the heifer, while I try this old dickens, and see if she's gonna hold it up ag'in?"

The rhythmic white streams beat loudly at first on the bottom of the tin buckets, then gradually dulled as the buckets began to fill and the foam to form.

Had the old man forgotten? the boy kept wondering as he gentled the heifer, "sa-a-ah", when his head, pressed against her warm side, felt a muscle start

to tense. A raised foot would upset the bucket, sitting on the manure and straw-covered dirt floor.

Then, as they started toward the house, came reassurance:

"See that hickory over there? I've had it seasonin' ever since I saw you last. Tomorrow—tomorrow's Saturday, ain't it?—tomorrow we're goin' to make you that wagon I promised."

The boy's heart missed a beat.

They always had dinner at 12 o'clock, so the night meal was a cold supper. But first, the old gentleman piled logs on the fire in the big living-bedroom, with its high poster walnut bed, its many-drawer cherry bureau, and its variety of rockers.

"It's getting cold", said the old gentleman, as he admiringly watched the flames shoot up the chimney. "Let's have supper in here. What do you think, Maggie?"

The old lady assented, and soon a small table appeared miraculously from nowhere, to be set in front of the fire.

There were cold biscuits, propped up in front of the poker, laid along the hearth for the purpose, toasted to a beautiful brown; Irish potatoes, pulled from the hot ashes; cold lamb and cold chicken; high glasses of milk; and, to spread thick on the biscuits, honey and wild strawberry jam. For dessert, were all the tea cakes the boy could eat, washed down with cold cider, canned last summer.

Then, the table cleared and removed, the old gentleman's command:

"Now, boy, I want you to take off your shoes and stockings and stretch out on that sheepskin rug and stick your feet out to the

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## DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press

65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

(1893)

The nearest approach to a regular Western blizzard this section ever witnessed came Saturday evening with the wind from the south and the atmosphere filled with fine snow. Sunday morning the snow was 12 inches deep. The Tennessee River has been frozen over in places. Monday morning the mercury dropped to 21½ below zero.

Several sleighs were on the streets Monday.

Mr. J. G. Siler has added a mill for grinding cow feed to his plant near town.

25 YEARS AGO

(1933)

A suggestion that the public library in the Masonic Hall be reopened is contained in a letter received by The Press from Mrs. Margaret Ordway, who recently moved here from Highlands.

Macon County is now supplying the outside world with a new material dug from its rocky mountainsides. Vermiculite is its technical name, and one of its uses is as an insulation core for the ultra-modern steel houses now being tried out in metropolitan centers.

10 YEARS AGO

For the first time in several years, Franklin High School plans to field a baseball team.

Craft classes, at the Nonah Craft Center on Cartoogehaye, opened last week under the direction of Miss Frances Barr.

For the third consecutive year, the birth rate in Macon County has declined. Last year's total was 416, as compared with 420 for 1946 and 437 for 1945.

Or are we?