

THE PILOT

Southern Pines

North Carolina

"In taking over The Pilot no changes are contemplated. We will try to keep this a good paper. We will try to make a little money for all concerned. Where there seems to be an occasion to use our influence for the public good we will try to do it. And we will treat everybody alike."—James Boyd, May 23, 1941.

Should The Mayor Be Elected By The Voters?

The council-manager form of government generally follows the rule of having the elected council choose the mayor from among its members. The question has been raised in several quarters: is this the best way?

Would it be better to make the thing automatic and let the councilman who gets the most votes, out of the five, be the mayor? Would it be better still to allow the people to vote for a mayor and four councilmen?

We are of the opinion that the system might well be changed and that it deserves serious thought. Of the two alternatives suggested, we strongly favor allowing the people to elect their own mayor.

Voters have a right, and an obligation, to know what they are voting for. If a man is voting for a mayor to head the town government, he wants to know it; if he is voting for a councilman, he wants to know it, too. The chances are he will be looking for some very different qualities.

For mayor, he wants a man with qualities of leadership. He wants a man who is well-rounded in his interests and character, to get along with all groups. He wants force but diplomacy, too. He looks for a man with some proven administrative ability. But when looking for a candidate for councilman, while these qualities are certainly desirable, they are not essential.

A councilman may be not diplomatic at all but even fiery and argumentative and be a stimulating asset to the group. Or a man may lack the drive essential to leadership or the breadth of interests to command wide support yet be the most valuable councilman, the anchor-man of the team, confidence-inspiring for

his straight thinking and sterling character.

There's another angle: councilmen are often chosen as representing a certain point of view or a geographical area, but it would be highly undesirable that a mayor should be strongly identified with any special interest or section.

Again, a mayor ought to have some proven administrative ability, but it is possible to imagine that a councilman who was purely a stargazing backseat driver could be pretty useful. At least, he would have ideas and the courage to express them, something that has been over-scared, from time to time, in a good many governing bodies. . . not only town councils. The jcker is, of course, this stargazer might well be universally popular and cop the most votes. . . and what a fix the town would be in if, by such means, he became the mayor!

There is a further argument for letting the people elect the mayor: it would tend to put an end to the behind-the-scenes maneuvering that is bound to occur under the present system. The pulling and hauling that is now almost inevitable could build up antagonisms in the council that might well endanger the unity and therefore the effectiveness of the group.

In sum: it would seem that the idea of letting the council choose the mayor is of doubtful value and might breed trouble that could easily be avoided, while the system of giving the position to the councilman with the most votes is full of evident pitfalls.

It comes down to the fact that government by the people is generally the best way, but if the people are to do the governing they must know what they are doing. They must know whether they are voting for a mayor, or voting for a councilman.

Sabotaging The Refugees

There is now getting under way in Europe a conference of all agencies engaged in the care and resettlement of refugees. To this conference the Administration, in a move that smacks of senselessness, to say the least, and gross hypocrisy, to say the most, has sent a delegation headed by the two men who have done more to sabotage the refugee resettlement program in this country than any other factor. These two are Security Officer Scott McLeod and Senator Francis Walters.

McLeod owes his post as security officer in the State Department to the influence of Senator McCarthy. To McLeod is largely attributed the undermining of morale, and therefore effectiveness, among State Department employees, through his over-zealous interpretation of security regulations and the star chamber proceedings which his regime and the Justice Department have instituted.

McLeod is, of course, the official who was responsible for the resignation of Edward Corsi,

from his post as head of the refugee program. Appointed by Secretary Dulles with highest praise as "the man ideally fitted to carry out the President's program," Corsi lays at McLeod's door the major blame for his failure.

Walters is co-author, with the late Senator McCarran, of the immigration act that bears their names. Unfair in many of its provisions, obstructive and rankly prejudiced, its effect on the handling of the refugee problem has been almost fatal. Of the 214,000 persons whose entry was decreed under the President's plan, less than 2,000 have been admitted to date.

We cannot imagine men less fitted by temperament and outlook to attend a conference meant to facilitate and, if possible, bring about a solution of this complicated and tragic human problem. Their selection as delegates to represent the United States at this conference is a misfortune for the United States, a gratuitous insult to the earnest people who will meet with them, and, for the refugees, a catastrophe.

Secrecy In The Saddle

The Pilot is thankful that Moore County is one of the few to which the provisions of a General Assembly bill allowing county commissioners to meet in secret does not apply, yet the shame of the Assembly's action—or lack of action—on this bill is felt in Moore as throughout the State.

To Senator Hawley Poole and Rep. H. Clifton Blue go our appreciation for putting Moore County on record for freedom of information.

The case of the bill in question is, as The News and Observer in Raleigh called it, "one of the strangest pieces of legislative emasculation in history. . ."

Here is the Raleigh newspaper's outline of the background:

Early this session officers of the State Association of County Commissioners appeared before a House committee to present a duly adopted resolution of the association requesting that a mistake made in 1951 be rectified. The mistake was the inadvertent omission of a long-standing requirement that meetings of county commissioners be open to the public, which was inadvertently omitted when the laws relating to county commissioners were rewritten in 1951. The delay in the request was explained by the fact that the omission did not gain any public attention until after adjournment of the 1953 General Assembly.

Ordinarily such a request would have been granted immediately and without question. But secrecy is not an ordinary

Years Of Achievement

Next Sunday's formal dedication of the sanctuary and educational building of Brownson Memorial Presbyterian Church marks the culmination of 20 years of effort.

A church that began as a small group holding services at the Civic Club and that was organized with 90 members in 1936 finds itself in 1955 with a membership approaching 600 and a physical plant of which any church organization could be proud. More than 250 of the church's members have been added within the past five years—testimony to the growth of the town as well as to interest in the church.

The Rev. E. L. Barber, who served the church for its first six years after organization, will be here to take part in the services Sunday, with the Rev. Cheves K. Ligon, the present pastor. Thoughts of those attending will go back to the Rev. Marcus A. Brownson, for whom the church is named and who died in 1938, and to Dr. Thompson E. Davis who was pastor in the years 1943-1950.

Our congratulations go to the church for its remarkable achievements in its first 20 years. We are confident that it will continue to grow with Southern Pines and to play a major role in the spiritual life of the community.

In City Manager's Budget Message To Council

'Significant Strides' Made By Town In Past Year But Much To Be Done, Says Cunningham

Following is a portion of the message submitted to the town council last Thursday night, by City Manager Tom E. Cunningham, with his proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The council adopted the budget, with one minor change, as reported in a news item elsewhere in today's Pilot. Also reported in a news item elsewhere are some of the "Expenditures by Departments" which were included in the budget message.



MR. CUNNINGHAM

This budget has been prepared with three paramount objectives in mind: (1) The maintaining of all essential services at the highest possible level and the continuance of the new programs started last year, such as rear yard garbage collections, and the collection of yard rakings and tree trimmings; (2) The equipping of Town forces with the best possible equipment to perform their responsibilities smoothly, efficiently, and with maximum economy; (3) In the face of increasing costs, especially in the metals and chemicals line, this budget is prepared to at least hold the line as far as the present ad valorem tax rate is concerned and the continuance of removing from the tax dollar those expenses that are for the peculiar benefit of individual citizens and property owners.

Much To Be Done

With regard to the removal from the tax dollar of expenses that are for the peculiar benefit of individual citizens and property owners, I believe that much remains to be done. It is my opinion, that careful study should be given by the Town Council to such permanent improvements as curbs, gutters, and storm sewers, which are customarily in the vast majority of municipalities throughout the country borne to a large extent by the abutting property owners. Town forces are still expected to maintain shoulders of the roads in front of some properties, assist in opening private driveways, and bear the burden of storm sewers, where the basic responsibility lies with the individual property owners and is related to the actual value of their property.

Closely related to the preceding paragraph is the responsibility presently taken by the Town with regard to opening streets and assuming responsibility for their maintenance. It is my conviction, and I believe this would be backed up by the practice of a very large percentage of municipalities throughout the country, that the city should not assume any new responsibility for the maintenance of any street, nor should the city provide any services whatsoever in any street, except where the abutting property owners provided themselves with permanent municipal improvements, such as curb and gutter, and storm sewer.

ing, and installed 5100 feet of asphalt guttaring, the overall picture of our street improvements could be much improved by a permanent improvement policy on the part of the Town Council. Since 1950 the total mileage of Town streets has increased from 23 to 35 miles of streets. The total paved mileage has increased from 10 to 18 miles of paved streets, and there has been practically no curb and gutter installed except for the Knollwood Apartments area.

As a point of information, I should point out that in the year 1950-1951, our street expenditures were approximately \$35,000 or \$1,500 per mile of streets. In the budget which I submit to you tonight, total street expenditures are estimated at \$38,291 or \$1,100 per mile of streets. It is my opinion that the continuance of this program of street improvements coupled with the increase in mileage of our city street system will result in the necessity of an enormous bond issue being the only solution to an overwhelming problem.

Re-evaluation Needed

The overall picture of municipal public works during the past seven years and during the coming year, in my opinion, demonstrates clearly the need for the Town to completely re-evaluate its program of capital improvements and public works in the light of our healthfully growing municipality. For example, last year actually no funds were spent for what might be considered permanent street improvement, yet for the streets which were added to our Town street system and general Town responsibility during the last year alone, the costs of permanent improvement would be at least \$25,000. It will cost us better than half of this figure to hold them together as dirt streets during the next 10 years. If this trend continues during the next twenty years, the cost to routinely maintain our streets as well as the ending necessity of the permanent improvements themselves will be staggering.

I am proud to say that last year our required permanent improvements for sewer was reduced and considerable headway was made towards eliminating this problem. There still exists an immediate need for a minimum of approximately \$100,000 worth of sanitary sewer work to adequately provide these all important sanitary facilities for all of our community.

As far as I know, during the last decade the Town has made no headway in its storm sewer problem, and the condition as it exists today, is a sore point in the minds of many of our property owners and the condition is becoming more acute each year.

It might be well to point out that during the year ending 1955, funds for expenditures represent an expansion of our water distribution system out of cash income in the amount of approximately 7%, funds for expenditures represent an expansion of our sewer system in the amount of 12% and funds out of cash income are included for the expansion of our paved street surface in the amount of 9%.

The budget which I present to you tonight does not contemplate any increases in the present standards or levels of work being performed by the Town, and I do not recommend any across-the-board salary increases for all city employees. Although, on the whole, I believe last year was not too eventful a year in our municipal improvements and services, we made several significant strides as follows:

1. We experienced a very large building boom which of course, is directly related to our expenditure requirements. Building permits alone, at the close of the year (the fiscal year ending June 30—editor) will amount to approximately \$500,000.
2. Related to our growing town, at the close of the year, we will have installed during the last fiscal year alone, three miles of sanitary sewers at a total estimated cost of about \$30,000.
3. Also, we will have installed at least 3,664 feet of six-inch water main, seven fire hydrants, and 6,100 feet of two-inch water main, at a total estimated cost of \$16,095.
4. Although last year we installed about 6500 feet of paving, resurfaced 3200 feet of existing pav-

Memorial Day

Mrs. L. A. Des Pland, who is active in both the American Legion Auxiliary and the Daughters of the American Revolution, sends us an interesting article about Memorial Day which appears in the May issue of the DAR magazine.

The article traces the custom of decorating graves with flowers back to the ancient Greeks, Romans and Druids.

Other predecessors of the modern custom which finds its expression in the national holiday May 30 are listed as memorial services held by the Benedictine monks in the sixteenth century and the French "Jour des Morts," a festival in which all the graves of all cemeteries are decorated.

Origin of Memorial Day in the United States is traced to a New York newspaper story published in 1867, telling how women in Columbus, Miss., had been strewing flowers on the graves of both Confederate and National soldiers. The story attracted much interest and inspired a number of poems and songs.

In May, 1868, John A. Logan, National Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, named May 30 as "Decoration Day" when graves of soldiers were to be decorated "while a survivor of the war remains."

As the idea caught on, it is related, State legislatures, one after another, enacted laws for observance of the day. Later, the name was changed to Memorial Day.

About Pinebluff

Mrs. Robert F. Stewart, former resident of Pinebluff and widow of the late R. F. Stewart who was mayor there for many years, sends from Bethesda, Md., where she now lives, a few pages from a Pinehurst Outlook of March 15, 1915, which she found among old family papers and which describes Pine Bluff (as some persons spelled it then and some still do spell it) as "a retreat for the men who sought to escape the bustle and excitement of Southern Pines in the early days when Southern Pines was in its less staid and dignified infancy."

Hmmmmmm . . . sounds like we might have missed some lively times here by not being around 60 or 70 years ago.

Here is a further colorful description of Pinebluff's founding by John T. Patrick who, of course, also laid out and first promoted Southern Pines:

"To do the thing right, he put the town about a mile from the railroad. . . (Don't we wish we had done the same thing here!) . . . which resulted in having the station a mile from the town. At the station Patrick built a dam which made an attractive lake and also gave an excuse to set up a printing press to print cheerful things about the Sandhills for distribution among the unbelieving Pharaohs of the Baked Bean Provinces of the North Atlantic coast. "Most folks will listen to a man

Grains of Sand

with curly chin whiskers, and Patrick had a nice bunch. So presently some strangers were observed coming up the walk, and Col. Patrick chased the dog under the porch and told the newcomers to make themselves at home, and then Pine Bluff was begun."

Recognition of two men still living in Pinebluff, Levi and David Packard—the latter being a former resident of Southern Pines as well—made in the old Outlook article:

"A history of the deluge which forgot to mention Noah would be just about as complete as a history of Pine Bluff that overlooks the Packard brothers and J. W. Pope who have been so long and substantially identified with the town. . ."

Also mentioned is Dr. John Warren Achorn, Boston physician who was a great influence in the early upbuilding of Pinebluff and who organized the unique and now almost forgotten recreation of canoe trips down Drowning Creek, which he rechristened the "Lumbee River," starting from Blue's Bridge, which is now the east entrance to Camp Mackall, and going all the way to the sea below Georgetown, S. C.

Welcome Rain

Farmers and gardeners welcomed last Friday's downpour of rain which was general throughout the county. The Weather Bureau station at town hall showed a fall of 1.94 inches. The many driveways and dirt streets that give trouble in heavy rains were all washed out as usual.

Water entered The Pilot building, pouring into the rear yard from the center of the block around the back of the A & P store. When water gets on the floor, the customary method is to throw down old newspapers to soak it up—but only a few days before, we had thrown out stacks of old papers that were cluttering the office.

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