

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.

Too Much Make Believe

Is there too much thought being given to the way things will seem to others and not enough to what the things themselves are going to do?

Sometimes it seems so. Take the two Geneva conferences. This newspaper was among a few to take the first hallelujahs with a bit of cotton in the ears. Not that it was all too good to be true, but simply that it was hard to see what all the shouting was about. True, the creation of an atmosphere of good will was a fine accomplishment, but when that atmosphere was created only because of one man's smile and the fact that no controversial topics were allowed to be discussed, the carrillons rang slightly pianissimo. Especially when some of the press boys spilled the beans that they had been urged to "play up optimism," as one put it.

Then several things seemed to happen. Those interested in balancing the budget, only possible, it seems, through cuts in military appropriations, smiled. It might be possible, now, to get some cuts. Across from them was the Defense Department's frowning facade with "DANGER" written all over it. So, quickly, get back into the middle. Forget Geneva I and get ready for Geneva II. Take the halo off Secretary Dulles and put his harrassed frown on again. Stop playing the Hallelujah Chorus and give us the Dead March from Saul.

The foreign ministers went to Geneva, knowing exactly what was going to happen. The West would propose terms which Russia could not possibly accept: Russia would propose counter-terms which the West could not accept: everybody would frown at everybody and go home. This duly happened. And thus a slight deflation took place in the chorus of praise for Geneva I, now judged to have been slightly excessive. So the second conference was played down in gloom as the first conference had been played up, with full orchestra both times and the result judged not by the quality of the music but by the reaction of the audience.

It is the same sort of psychology that causes Secretary Dulles to unleash Chiang one minute

and, when the public and our allies throw a fit, tie him up in a treaty the next.

It might well be asked what use were the two conferences? The first one was definitely useful as it emphasized, through the words and personality of a leader whose honesty and goodwill could not be doubted, the friendly attitude of this nation. It was useful but it was not stupendous, and the very attempt to ballyhoo it into something stupendous has made it far less useful than it started to be. It is, however, hard to see much use in the second conference. It's only reported use is stated to be the fact that Russia's position as the villain of the piece is made more unmistakable. In other words, again, the conference is useful for its propaganda value.

Belief in the usefulness of propaganda, in the value of the manipulated public opinion, is widespread in America today. Far from being shocked and repelled by the rise of the Goebels formula here, the nation seems to have fallen for it, hook, line and sinker. It runs with the manipulated radio audience, the commercialized Hit Tune vote, the "built-up" stars and athletes. And more and more, in government, things are done, things are said, not for their own value but for how they will seem to the public.

This is dangerous. And not only because it insults the independence and will undermine the integrity and faith of the American people. It is dangerous, too, because it presupposes infallibility in those who presume to direct how the public is to think. And they are not infallible.

The administration, it will be recalled, put on one televised "cabinet meeting." More people laughed or groaned than cheered and they never put on another. They learned a lesson then but it has not gone far enough.

It will be a good thing if this upsy-downsy, summit-to-valley, Geneva I and Geneva II recalls the lesson of the One Cabinet Meeting: to forget propaganda—even the coaching of that pleasant guy, Robert Montgomery—and play it straight to the people.

A Sensible Request

The National Association of Daytime Broadcasters, of which Jack Younts of Southern Pines is president, is starting proceedings before the Federal Communications Commission to obtain a ruling that would allow these radio stations to operate on a uniform daily time schedule, with broadcast hours from 5 a. m. to 7 p. m. At present, as listeners of local radio station WEEB know, the daytime stations are allowed to operate from sunrise to sunset. This throws their sign-on and sign-off hours at varied times throughout the year. The situation is an aggravation and inconvenience for both the station and the public and is based on outmoded rules adopted when there were less than 500 radio stations of all types operating in the nation as compared with today's 2,800.

The Association of Broadcasters assures us that the technical problems responsible for the time rule under which they operate now, for the most part, no longer exist. In the North, daytime stations must leave the air as early as 4:45 p. m. in December. In this latitude, the

sign-off hour falls as early as 5:15 p. m., preventing stations from bringing to residents of the community at the traditional supper-time listening hour the news and community service announcements that people expect.

Radio stations everywhere have a fine record of community service activity. It is no disservice to newspapers to say that people count on radio for the latest announcements and instructions in times of disaster or emergency, and in all such situations radio has played its part well.

Weather forecasts, election returns and other news of vital interest often come first via radio, especially in the small communities where many of the daytime stations are located, and it would be of great advantage to listeners in these communities to be able to receive these reports up to a 7 p. m. sign-off time.

Uniform sign-on and sign-off hours, as requested by the Daytime Broadcasters, appear to us to be in the public interest by serving public convenience and necessity.

Traffic Safety: We Must Begin To Care

Moore County marks the nation-wide Safe Driving (S-D) Day today under the shadow of two highway fatalities within the past two weeks, and against a background of what appears to be steadily increasing traffic offenses.

It has been pointed out by students of public attitudes that, during World War 2, we gradually became hardened or immured to violence so that an incident of battle that would have deeply aroused or shocked the public before or early in the war drew little attention as the conflict progressed and the horrors of violence mounted to the peak reached by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Perhaps something like this reaction has been going on with automobile accidents: as the toll mounts, we tend to care less. It is a defense mechanism, we suppose, to insulate us from

the violent emotional shocks that we would undergo if we reacted sympathetically to all the terrible things that take place on the highways.

Even law enforcement officers who are used to extremes of human behavior could not conceal their amazement when five young men were tried in Moore County Recorder's Court this week for speeds ranging from 80 to 100 miles per hour, with an officer testifying that one of the young men had probably reached a speed of up to 115 miles per hour. Judge Rowe aptly commented that this is "like firing a loaded pistol into a crowd."

The purpose of S-D Day is to remind us, for 24 hours, of our minute-to-minute responsibility for traffic safety. Incidents like 115-miles-per-hour driving cannot be ignored. We must care, we must try to stop this sort of thing—today and every day in the year.

Imagination Makes The Difference

Life in Moore County is not as prosaic and uneventful as it seems to many who stay home and go to bed early.

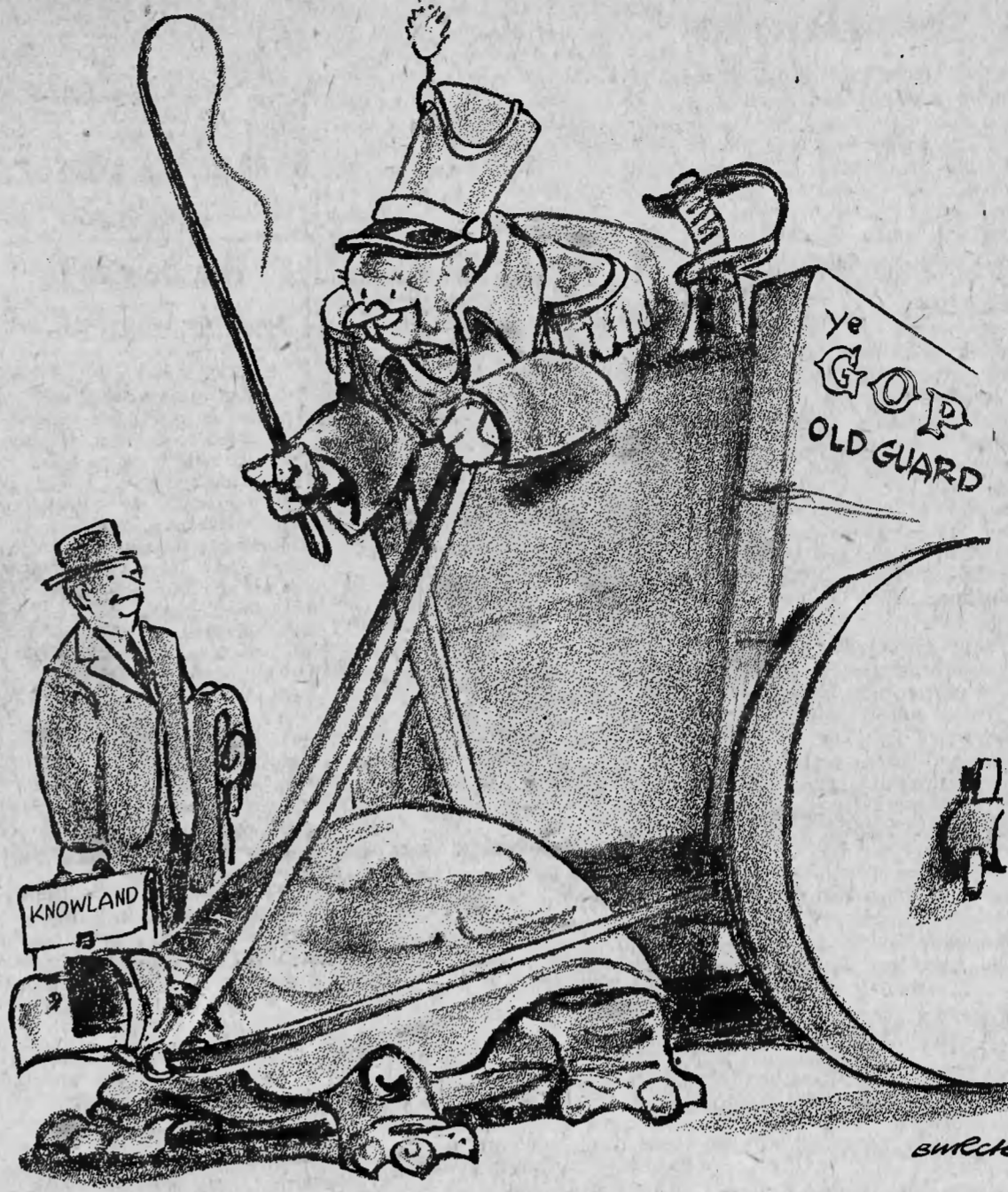
The spectator at Recorder's Court in Carthage, almost any Monday, sees and hears evidence of violence, jealousies, brutalities and mysteries that, related by a Mickey Spillane or other author of that ilk, would rival exciting scenes in books law-abiding citizens take to bed to read because everyday life seems dull to them.

We do not mean that there is an excessive amount of violence in Moore: it's probably less than the average county experiences, if anything. But, while good citizens settle down to read thrilling tales of violence and adventure, real life adventures may be taking place—later to be revealed in court—not many miles from where eager fiction readers relax in bed or easy chair.

In court, of course, the perspective is different. Knockout punchers, knife wielders, jealous lovers, heavy drinkers, jolly roisterers, all those types who appear so tensely dramatic in fiction, show up amazingly drab and colorless—even dull and stupid—in court.

Imagination makes the difference. Sometimes a witness with a vivid personality or way of speaking makes a trial come alive like fiction. But often incidents of violence—described haltingly or evasively on the witness stand—seem in the courtroom no more exciting than two cars bumping together at a street corner. We have seen spectators yawn during the trial of defendants in a knife fight. Yet the same fight, in fiction, would have made their hearts beat fast with excitement.

We might conclude that the reduction of his personal drama to courtroom banality is one of the worst punishments the wrongdoer must undergo.



"Get On The Bandwagon, Senator!"

Grains of Sand

Christmas Fury

A new fury has been added to the Time of Peace. They—those People who are always thinking up something diabolical—are now wrapping Christmas tags in cellophane.

It used to be that you bought the tags in packages and opened them with ease. There was always a certain hassle with the strings that got twisted around each other or came out of their holes, or the holes themselves split. Now such little inconveniences are minor hazards of the job of Christmas wrappings.

Before you can even tackle the strings, let alone get ready with ink and pen to address the things, you have to get the pack of tags open.

There are several ways in which this undertaking starts. Generally you grasp the bit of loose fold of cellophane wrapping firmly and pull. The whole thing

slips gayly from your grasp and falls on the floor—with a merry nasty laugh, we swear. Business of fumbling among other impediments down in those nether regions, under the desk, the rug, the big chair, and retrieving the thing. So—start all over.

Don't pull this time. Try slitting the cellophane end with your fingernail. No soap. It is of a hardness to resist the Sword Excalibur. You chip the end of your finger on the sharp edge and quit again quickly.

After spending a few minutes sucking your finger, you try tearing the edges apart. They are there, quite clear to the eye, two edges, but glued inextricably together. Nothing will split them, the strength of Sampson will not tear them apart.

Take the scissors. You might as well have started that way, but even so there are hazards ahead. The edges of the cellophane wrap

are so narrow, the pack fits snugly, that if you aren't m-n-g-h-t-y c-a-r-e-f-u-l-ough, there you go! Cut right into the edge of the tag inside. In fact, cut right through the string with which it gets tied to the parcel. So now—yeah—look for the ends of string, tie them together, too short—get more string—too big for the holes—split the tag. say: "Ahem. HI-HO, THE HOLLY!" or some such capitalized seasonal remark, and get you a nice big envelope.

Write: "Hello, Uncle Jeremiah! Hope YOU have a Merry Christmas" on it and ship it off.

Choked Up

Got ourselves all tangled up trying to understand the award that Ed Cox got from the British Society for Psychological Research. Ed said it had to do with research "on the human capacities which we commonly call 'supernatural,' such as clairvoyance, precognition and psychokinesis."

Asked Ed what that meant. He told us but we choked up and missed it.

Ended by drinking a glass of water, and looking it up. Found it, too. (Nothing chokes Mr. Webster.) Dictionary says: "A violent seizure of temporary insanity due to defective inhibi-

The Public Speaking

Wants Railroad Photos

To The Editor: We would appreciate your bringing to the attention of your readers our urgent need for photographs of the 1860-1890 period of early locomotives and trains for inclusion in our worldwide visual education displays, designed to perpetuate locomotive history in photographs from the earliest days to date.

We are not endowed to purchase such photos, but believe many would gladly present them to us for this work, instead of allowing them to repose up-attic where they cannot be of wide-spread value and interest to coming generations.

We credit all photos presented to us to source of origin, as donor. Thank you.

DAVID GOODYEAR
Curator, Railway
Historical Museum
Box 52-D, High Falls, N. Y.

'It Was Just Murder. . .'

To The Editor: It seems that you are always harping about the Till murder in Mississippi.

You try to give the Impression that it was a lynching it was just murder and should be taken as such.

I have never heard you condemn him for insulting a lady. Neither have I heard you say a word about the 3 little children in Chicago who did not insult any one that was murdered or do you call it lynching when gangster shoot people down on the street of N. Y. Why don't you clean your own house and stop contaminating the young people of Southern Pines with your whiskey ads in your paper and why don't you start a crusade against all the gambling in Moore County if you don't know of any say so and I will tell you some things that will shock a decent person.

Of all the news papers in N. C. I don't know of but 2 that carries whiskey ads, but of course a dollar makes a difference.

Yours truly,
JEFFERSON CORTLAND

Don't know any more than when Ed told us what it meant. But immediately following both explanations, experienced temporary attack of psychokinesis. Drank more water. Got pounded on the back, put arms over head. O. K., now. Or maybe not?

Lonely

Clif Johnson sold his little burro. The one who made the pages of The Pilot last summer.

Clif and Helen loved him and he loved them, but it seems he loved their cocker puppy even better. They were inseparable companions. The almost inevitable dog tragedy came along and carried off the pup and, from then on, the burro mourned.

He went around everywhere looking for his friend and brayed so dolefully that it broke your heart to hear him. Finally the Johnsons decided to get him away from the surroundings that would always remind him of his friend. They found a home not too far away where there were children, who love him. In time, perhaps the little fellow will get over his almost-human grief.

Almost? How do we know? Maybe more than human.

Are We Meeting Children's Needs?

Henry Steele Commager, in an article which appeared in the Saturday Review, deplored the failure of today's American writers to write for children and longed for the era of the magazines, Youth's Companion and St. Nicholas.

Dr. Commager wrote, in part: "This is not a criticism of the writers. They are, after all, a part of their society. They are part of a society that has substituted the comics and television for Youth's Companion and St. Nicholas. . . They are part of a society that thinks two cars a sign of a high standard of living, but not six children. They are part of a society that spends billions on automobile roads and nothing on bicycle paths. . ."

"Never before have children been as pampered as they are now in America. Never have they been provided with better schools, larger libraries, with more elaborate playgrounds, or devices and techniques for recreation. But it is not enough that we provide our children with good schools. It is not enough that we provide them with substitutes for countryside or the village. It is not enough that we give them every gadget that inventors can think of or adver-

tisers sell. These may starve rather than feed the imagination. . . It is essential that we return to childhood what belongs to it, return to it simplicity and independence, privacy and imagination. A society that produces St. Nicholas and 'Little Women' and 'Tom Sawyer' is healthier and richer than a society that produces, for its children, comics and television."

The PILOT

Published Every Thursday by THE PILOT, Incorporated Southern Pines, North Carolina

1941—JAMES BOYD—1944

Katharine Boyd Editor
C. Benedict News Editor
Dan S. Ray Gen. Mgr.
C. G. Council Advertising
Mary Scott Newton Business
Bessie Cameron Smith Society

Composing Room
Lochamy McLean, Dixie E. Ray,
Michael Valen, Jasper Swearingen

Subscription Rates:
One Year \$4. 6 mos. \$2; 3 mos. \$1

Entered at the Postoffice at Southern Pines, N. C., as second class mail matter

Member National Editorial Assn. and N. C. Press Assn.