

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.

Nature's Worst and People's Best

Reporters, officers and others who witnessed all or part of the nightmare events near Robbins last week—when a flash flood swept three persons from automobiles to their deaths—had high praise for the response of the people of the Robbins community to this emergency.

Led by the Robbins volunteer firemen and the community's rescue squad, dozens of men gave full time to rescue and search efforts, with no thought for their personal businesses or affairs.

The deaths of a Lexington woman and her daughter occurred early Friday morning. Rescue by boat of others who had been in the car, recovery of the bodies and the automobile in which the victims had been riding, as well as another automobile from which one man had escaped took most of Friday. Volunteers work-

ed up to their necks in muddy water. Then, on the supposition there might have been another victim who had been a passenger in the second automobile, the search continued and late Saturday night, a third body was found.

During all this time, there was never a lack of volunteer assistance in all tasks to be performed. In this area, where the elements are generally kind, as compared to some sections of the nation, the flash flood proved to be the most lethal and the most dramatic occurrence that has taken place in many years.

But while Nature was shown in the flash flood at her worst, the best in human nature was displayed by the people of the Robbins area. Their unselfish efforts and accomplishments, at great personal discomfort and inconvenience, will not soon be forgotten.

Challenge to the Railroad and the Town

The tragic death at the New Hampshire Avenue railroad crossing last week marked the third time in less than 10 years that an elderly pedestrian has been killed by a train at a local grade crossing. And other persons have lost their lives at these crossings when automobiles in which they were riding were struck by trains.

The lesson in this record is clear: the warning devices and measures now being used at these crossings are inadequate to protect the lives of residents of this community—no matter how effective they appear to be.

That is the challenge that must now be met by the Seaboard Air Line Railway and the Town of Southern Pines.

From the record of the three pedestrian deaths, it is apparent that whistles, bells, flashing lights and other normally effective warning signals are not sufficient to deter elderly persons on foot from walking in front of oncoming trains.

Automatic gates such as those installed at the Main St. and South St. crossings in Aberdeen would seem to be the only answer to safety at railroad intersections in this community where there is an unusually large proportion of elderly persons.

Such gates go down automatically as a train approaches and are lifted automatically when the train has passed by. While there might be daredevils who would try to slip by the gates, it is likely that such a system would give complete protection to the deaf, preoccupied or

careless elderly persons who appear to be those to whom the present system poses the greatest threat.

Gates would stop, too, a common practice of local motorists: trying to beat the train at crossings, after the warning bell is ringing and the signals are flashing. (Let it be noted, also, that some local grade crossing street-railroad intersections are not protected even by warning lights and bells—a situation that is as great a threat to motorists as to pedestrians, since the car driver, shut up in his vehicle and with the sound of his own motor in his ears must hear the bells from another crossing or the toots of the locomotive horn before he has warning that a train is coming.)

Seaboard engineers, it seems to us, do all that they can to protect the public and make the presence of an oncoming train known, as they pass through Southern Pines. In none of the fatal accidents, automobile or pedestrian, at local crossings, has there been to our knowledge any question of negligence on the part of the train engineer.

The fact is that here in Southern Pines we are faced with a peculiar and especially dangerous situation: the railroad running down the middle of the main business section street, with people, including a large number of elderly persons, crossing the railroad as frequently and as casually as they would cross the street if the railroad were not there.

The special dangers of such a situation call for a special remedy. Automatic gates, it seems to us, would answer the problem.

Citizen Cooperation Puts Teeth In Laws

The local ordinance regulating charitable and religious solicitations, which was adopted by the council recently, will be of little use unless it receives the cooperation of the public.

Persons asking for money for any charitable or religious cause—unless, of course, they are known to a householder or businessman as representing a recognized organization—should be asked to exhibit their permits. And if they do not have permits from the city manager, the police should be called.

In its need of public cooperation for effectiveness, the new ordinance is like the older local law prohibiting house to house selling which figured in the news when fraudulent magazine salesmen bilked some residents here earlier this year.

Many persons would probably prefer to donate a small coin to an unknown and possibly fraudulent appeal for a religious or charitable

cause than to go through the rigamarole of asking to see a permit and then becoming involved as a witness by calling the police.

This attitude is understandable but it could in no way be called good citizenship. Small coins from dozens or hundreds of persons form a pretty good haul for a professional panhandler—or even a quasi-legitimate but entirely "outside" organization—to be taking out of Southern Pines.

By enacting the selling and solicitation laws, the council has adopted the most complete and effective legislation on the two problems that is now available to municipalities. Both the ordinances are regarded as model laws.

In return for this effort to protect residents of the town from fraud and waste and to protect legitimate local charitable and religious appeals, citizens should cooperate with enforcement of the laws, even if it means some slight personal inconvenience.

THEY'RE SAYING

'Prime Example of Fascism'

Harry P. Cain made the best possible use of his invitation from Senator Hennings of Missouri to appear before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights. The Eisenhower appointee to the Subversive Activities Control Board told the Senators, and through them the country, of case after case of gross mistreatment of American citizens, in the name of security.

Take, for instance, what the former Republican Senator from the State of Washington, called a "prime example of Fascism." Here it is as Mr. Cain related it to the Senators:

A Seattle man, whose name Mr. Cain did not disclose (the man has now identified himself as Irving August and thanked Mr. Cain for calling his case to public attention) wore his country's uniform in the Korean war. As a front-line soldier, he received one of the most cherished of war decorations—the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

After the soldier was released from service, he became a worker for the Red Cross. The Red Cross had enough confidence in him to want to send him overseas. In due course the Red Cross asked the Army for overseas clearance for him.

The Army declined to clear the Red Cross worker who had fought for freedom in Korea.

Thereupon the Red Cross gave him a choice—he could either resign from the Red Cross or be fired. He resigned. That was last April 27.

Naturally Mr. August wanted to know what this was all about. So he wrote to the Army. He asked what the charges were and said he believed he was entitled to know since he had never been a Communist and had not been a member of any organization listed as subversive by the Attorney General.

The Army Department did not answer his letter. So then the former infantryman sat down and wrote a letter to President Eisenhower who used to be a soldier himself. To the President he sent, with his letter, his Combat Infantryman's Badge—as a "symbol of the injustice that I believe has been done to me."

He received no answer from the White House. And he did not get his Combat Infantryman's Badge back. But he heard again from the Army. The Army sent him a letter that made no mention of his request for a statement of the charges against him. The Army referred him back to the Red Cross. The cycle was complete.

No wonder Mr. Cain would report after his long-awaited conference with Mr. Eisenhower that the President was indignant when the facts about this case were told to him.

—ST LOUIS POST-DISPATCH



"The World Can't Be As Bad As They Say — The Churches Are Crowded"

'Sleeping Tar-Heels'

Constitution Blocking Progress

Only aroused citizen awareness of the many governmental and economic shortcomings of North Carolina can lead to bettering the state's standing, believes Dr. Roma S. Cheek, a Duke University professor who is author of the recently published booklet, "Sleeping Tar-Heels." Following is the fifth and final excerpt reprinted by The Pilot from this provocative booklet. Many more interesting and startling details appear in the original publication. The Pilot's editorial comment on the booklet as a whole will appear in an early edition. Sources of all quotations are given by Dr. Cheek in the booklet, but are omitted in portions printed by The Pilot.

North Carolina's present eighty-eight year old Constitution is out of date, contradictory and full of legislation. It was framed in 1868 by the so-called "carpet baggers" and "scalawags" and has been amended 64 times. Thirty-three states have Constitutions of a more recent date than North Carolina's.

Two attempts have been made in the twentieth century to revise the Constitution by Constitutional Committees: in 1913 and 1931. Both efforts failed.

Stripped of Controls

Under the present "pseudo-parliamentary" system of government which the Constitution and successive legislatures have created, the Governor has been stripped of administrative controls over the executive branch of government, which he is supposed to head.

Today the size and costs of state government have mushroomed to formerly undreamed of heights and the many complicated governmental problems cannot be solved without a proper division of authority and responsibility. While this lack of proper division of authority and responsibility is very evident on a state level, it is equally apparent on the local level for the legislature repeatedly refuses to grant the local communities of North Carolina "home rule."

Instead of spending its time on the many complicated problems of state government which so badly need its attention, the state Legislature appears more interested in its local political patronage, power and interests and continues to make even minor local governmental decisions in Raleigh. In the 1955 Legislature, for example, of the 1,999 measures introduced, 977 were local bills. Eighty per cent of all local bills introduced became law as against 54 per cent of the non-local measures.

Both the legislative and judicial branches of North Carolina are antiquated in many respects

and the state's entire system of law enforcement and criminal treatment needs overhauling.

A Stumbling Block

A state Constitution is supposed to contain only the basic framework and fundamental principles of government but the North Carolina Constitution now contains so much legislation that it can no longer properly be called a Constitution. It has become, in itself, a stumbling block to efficient, effective state and local government.

North Carolina's occupations and professions, which constitute the source of livelihood and the door of opportunity for the state's youth, have largely become a monopoly of vested interests. Each occupation or profession sets up its own special board to control its own particular field not only with the state's blessing, but endowed by the state with punitive powers to enforce its decisions.

During the past four years North Carolina has lost population by migration to other states at a very disturbing rate. "During the 1940-1950 decade, the state's rate of loss by net out-migration was three times higher than ever before in our history, but so far during the 1950-1960 decade the rate of loss is even higher." During the decade 1940-1950 North Carolina was seventh highest among the twenty-five states losing their civilian population through migration.

The Public Speaking

Pity Doesn't Strengthen Confidence In Leadership

To the Editor: The writer heartily endorses your editorial of June 28, "President Eisenhower Should Not Run."

Although a local critic writes that your statement "could have been evoked only by the ultimate in partisan prejudice," your reasons seem to most of us sound and reasonable:

(1) He can not do his work and no one can do it for him and (2) the country is in a state of nerves that is profoundly disquieting, threatening, at any crisis, to undermine morale and the nation's stability and initiative."

Until recently, The Charlotte Observer has tried in its editorial policy to be fair and to stand by our President, but a recent (July 11) editorial, "While Ike Is Drifting," backs up what you have written.

Many of us are sorry for Eisenhower, but pity does not strengthen confidence in the leadership so much needed.

FRANCIS M. OSBORNE
Pinehurst

Young People Leaving

Especially the young men and women are leaving North Carolina during their most productive years so that North Carolina may become primarily a state of children and old people. The young citizen must consider his own future, however, and he or she can ill afford to remain in his home state when other states offer much greater opportunity for success.

North Carolina appears to be using the "sparrow-approach" in meeting many of its economic needs. Much of the state's natural resources and potential economic resources are underdeveloped with corresponding failure to develop a more greatly diversified industry and agriculture. In this as in other areas there is great need for more state-wide planning and action.

Yet there is no over-all state-wide planning agency. The Legislature has in recent years refused to appropriate any funds for the state-wide planning agency provided by law. Some of the individual state departments plan as they can for the state as a whole but this is at best piecemeal and inadequate.

Leadership Reluctant

Another serious handicap to North Carolina is the difficulty of securing a sufficient amount of capable and courageous leadership required to give the state the necessary guidance in the solution of its many complicated problems. Lack of adequate libel laws is a major stumbling block here. The most capable citizens often refuse to run for public office because they and their families do not want to be subjected to "character assassination" and have reputations of a lifetime destroyed by the type of "low-level, mud-slinging campaigns" permitted in North Carolina. The enactment of adequate libel laws should take the state's political campaigns out of the "gutter" and remove one of the great barriers which now prevents many capable citizens from running for office.

The elimination of fraud at the polls and the revamping of out-of-date election laws and procedures would stimulate more capable North Carolina citizens to become politically active.

Time To Awaken

Although other "red flags of danger" can be cited for the citizen's attention, the before-listed items should indicate to many "Tar Heels" that it is time to awaken and discharge their political responsibilities for the good of themselves, their families, and their state. The job of securing effective, efficient, economical, and responsible government can never be accomplished by the "Let John do it" approach which is what those "Tar Heels" who are now somewhat awake seem to conclude.

Grains of Sand

Double Sunflower
Harold M. Fowler of 710 N. May St., brought a "double" sunflower to The Pilot office Monday morning—one that appeared on one plant in a row of sunflowers in his garden.

Instead of the usual circle of petals around a large center, the odd sunflower had small thickly clustered petals over its entire surface. It was about six inches across and looked like a huge orange chrysanthemum.

Mr. Fowler said that there are other buds on the plant and he's wondering if all the flowers will be of the same unusual appearance.

Beating Our Time

Having established a reputation among readers, so we hear, of being inordinately fond of dogs, The Pilot has taken some pride in its extreme position . . . but now we find ourselves out-dogged to such a degree that we hand over for the palm and slink away in shame for our comparative lack of enthusiasm.

In a letter received at the office recently, the National Dog Welfare Guild of New York City asks for financial help and points out that National Dog Week is coming up September 23-29. But here's what puts us to shame: emblazoned on the letterhead is a kind of seal showing a man and a dog with the caption underneath: "Dog's Best Friend."

Even the dog-minded Pilot thinks it's going a little too far to rate man in terms of his relationship to dogs.

Also on the letterhead is the slogan, "Education, Service, Research."

Kind of gave us the creeps, it did, and conjured up the picture of a lot of super dogs up there in New York City carrying on a program of education, service and research on behalf of pitiful mankind.

We could picture an alert little poodle licking and sealing the envelope in which the communication came (poodles ought to be good at such tasks).

The letter closes: "With kindest regards and thanks from those who would say thanks if they could . . ."

See what we mean? Probably a big sleek boxer—but a kindly one—signed all those letters, sitting behind a highly polished desk. We can see the cute cocker secretary handing them over to the fox terrier messenger boy to mail . . .

Monster of Monsters

With nerves somewhat frazzled by Moore County news events of the past week—including four tragic accidental deaths and a murder—we picked up the phone Monday morning to hear an excited voice telling us about a monster—"one hundred feet long, teeth five inches long, nine inches across the eye sockets, covered with red hair . . ."

From the sound of the voice, we were convinced the creature was coming down Broad St., scooping up hapless pedestrians as it progressed.

But then Jim Baird, who was the caller, got around to telling us that it was a news story about a monster found in Alaska, a story in Monday morning's papers.

A standing source of chuckles in the newspaper world used to be the stories of monsters that would pop up when the news was usually somewhat dull in the dog days of summer.

Usually, the story would originate at Loch Ness in Scotland. There would be vivid eye-witness descriptions of the Thing that had been seen in the lake. Usually the stories came along in August.

Hmmm . . . well . . . this is any-way late in July . . . Oh yes, what was that it said at the end of the story: the carcass of the monster is in danger of being washed away by the tides? . . . Hmmm . . . By the time a scientific expedition reaches the spot, we'd be inclined to bet a high tide would have washed it away. Too cynical? Maybe so.

Anyway, that red hair all over it beats anything that ever came out of Loch Ness.

The PILOT

Published Every Thursday by THE PILOT, Incorporated Southern Pines, North Carolina 1941—JAMES BOYD—1944

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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.