

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. Wherever 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.

School Capital Outlay Troubles Again

Now that all three school systems of the county have submitted to the county commissioners their proposed budgets for the next fiscal year, starting in July, it is apparent that again there will not be enough money to go around for proposed capital outlay expenditures—new construction and renovation projects.

Members of the county board of education, planning to go ahead with construction of the second of three consolidated high schools, say it will take \$377,150 in county funds, over and beyond the \$847,850 available from last fall's bond issue, to build that second school in the 1964-65 year. They say that their program of consolidated school construction will be hamstrung unless they have every dollar of the extra needed capital outlay funds—and that they also desperately need other capital outlay money in the coming fiscal year, for other projects around the county, for the total of \$618,650 that the county board is asking.

Pinehurst has put in a modest request for \$38,263 for a renovation project.

Southern Pines, on the other hand, has asked for \$175,300 to undertake projects that would also use all this school district's \$554,700 in bond issue funds, making a total of \$730,000 in proposed construction, renovation and land acquisition during the next fiscal year.

The total of all these requests, not including bond issue funds, is more than the county will have available and the commissioners again will have to play Solomon while school officials in all the districts remain uncertain, probably until a final budget is approved in June or July, on just what they can count on.

There is no answer to this impasse—the kind of thing that generates bitterness and recriminations among the school units—except frank and open advance planning by all the units together and the reaching of substantial agreement before the requests for money are made to the commissioners.

County school system officials say that such an agreement, in general terms, was reached in a conference of board chair-

men and superintendents, some months ago, and they view the high proposed Southern Pines budget as submitted in violation of that understanding.

In addition to this aspect of the matter, there is the very important point brought up in a letter on this page: should the Southern Pines school board, in good conscience, commit all its bond funds, plus the large additional sum asked, to projects that ignore the possibility of consolidation with the Aberdeen and West End Districts (possibly Pinehurst also)?

What about the survey that Southern Pines school officials say will be made as soon as possible, by an outside educational agency, to determine whether or not the local school system would benefit by such consolidation?

Isn't the proposed Southern Pines capital outlay budget an indication that the local board of education has no intention of considering consolidation, no matter what the results of a survey might be? Otherwise, it's being asked, why wouldn't they hold their requests down, as they had been asked to do by the county system so that the big county program could get started, wait and see what results of the survey and local public opinion might urge them to do and then make their plans, and their budget requests, after all the information is in?

The Southern Pines request includes an item of \$300,000 for a building to be located on land that the board of education does not yet own nor, as we understand it, has any solid assurance of ever owning—at the price of \$40,000 that is tentatively budgeted for it, at a higher price, or at all. This seems, at best, a peculiar procedure.

These capital outlay muddles will continue, to the detriment of the school program in all the districts, unless boards of education can work out, in advance of each fiscal year, solid agreements on dividing the funds—and stick to those agreements.

Better yet, of course, eliminating all such disrupting competition, would be the creation of one good, big school system for the entire county.

For 'A More Beautiful North Carolina'

Richardson Preyer's endorsement of legislation to restrict billboard advertising along Interstate highways may not be the most momentous statement of his campaign for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, but we welcome it and we are sure many other Tar Heels agree.

While the endorsement was given in a letter addressed to the garden clubs of North Carolina, its appeal extends far beyond that group of lively and interested ladies who have done much for community beautification over the state.

"We will keep North Carolina tourist industry growing, and our state more prosperous, if we show tourists that we mean what we say when we invite them to the most beautiful state in America," Preyer said.

Those are not idle words — as we in this Sandhills resort area can testify.

The legislation that the candidate approves is the same as that defeated in both the 1961 and 1963 sessions of the General Assembly through efforts of a billboard lobby that, Preyer points out, can be expected again "to fight us every inch of the way."

In turning down the legislation, North Carolina lost not only the benefits that beautification would have brought but also the federal "incentive bonus" — a large sum available, under legislation passed by Congress, to states that agree to control roadside advertising along the federal, Interstate road system.

While that is lost and gone for the approximate half of the Interstate system that has already been built in North Carolina, approval of legislation to restrict billboards, in 1965, might still not be too late to garner a proportion of these financial benefits.

We have never been able to understand the influence wielded by the billboard lobby. Surely, no very large proportion of North Carolinians is deeply concerned in preserving roadside advertising on Interstate highways. A far larger number, we'd think, if they had any opinions at all, would welcome uncluttered vistas and be grateful for temporary relief from the incessant commercial bombardment of eye and ear that is the lot of modern Americans. Yet somehow, a majority of the members of the North Carolina Senate and House have been persuaded that they are acting on behalf of the people by rejecting billboard control legislation.

Preyer's endorsement of this legislation is one aspect of a major emphasis of his campaign—his pledge to make conser-

vation and protection of natural resources a central concern of his administration, if nominated and elected.

After traveling to every county in the state, the candidate said in a remarkable speech last week, "I am more convinced than ever before that North Carolina's ultimate destiny, as a great State in our great union of States, is bound up in the land and the relationship of the people to it. . . . Pollution of air, soil and water, the threat of dwindling forest areas and wildlife—these are some of the problems he proposes to face and attempt to deal with, all part of his "land and people" theme.

Billboard control proposals fit naturally into this conservation-natural beauty emphasis—an approach to North Carolina's future that puts Preyer head and shoulders above the other gubernatorial candidates in those qualities that distinguish a statesman from a politician — imagination and vision.

"I think the people want a more beautiful North Carolina, now and for time to come," Preyer said last week.

Of course they do—and the General Assembly will eventually wake up to that aspiration. And nothing would more effectively hasten the awakening than having Judge Preyer in the Governor's Mansion at Raleigh.

Before, Not After

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture has withdrawn approval of use of the insecticides endrin and dieldrin on tobacco.

This is commendable if these substances are potentially harmful to tobacco users—but if they are harmful, why was their use ever permitted? Whatever harm they have done cannot be undone now.

Endrin and dieldrin are the two substances found "in significant quantities" in dead and dying fish in the lower Mississippi drainage basin and its estuarine waters in the Gulf of Mexico.

A source of the contamination was found to have been an insecticide plant at Memphis where there appeared to be irresponsible handling of plant wastes.

The incident recalls the ridicule heaped on the late Rachel Carson by the chemical industry for her outspokenness in warning the world of such carelessness with fantastically lethal poisons.

When will we wake up and take precautions, in this relatively unknown field of chemical poisons, before, not after, damage has been done?

"NOW WHAT—?"



EDITOR ANALYZES DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY RACE

How Are Governor Candidates Doing?

William D. Snider, associate editor of the Greensboro Daily News, who is one of the most knowledgeable of the state's political commentators, recently summed up, as he saw it, the status of the three leading candidates for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination—Dr. I. Beverly Lake, Judge Dan K. Moore and Judge L. Richardson Preyer. Mr. Snider's analysis follows:

The professional politician likes to assume he can predict the whims of the people, and so he continuously holds his finger to the wind sampling every changing nuance.

The North Carolina gubernatorial race—the Democratic primary phase—is now exactly 30 days from a final (or preliminary) decision; and it is time to listen for a moment to what the crystal-ball gazers are saying—even if they are dead wrong.

To trace the currents of the campaign to this point—as one must do superficially at least to find a pattern—let us go back to the Preyer kick-off in the Greensboro Coliseum last January. It was there that the former judge attracted 7,500 people to a monster rally which cheered his supporters and alarmed his adversaries.

'Medicine Show'
Both the Moore and Lake camps immediately dismissed the kick-off as a "medicine show" and Madison Avenue high-jinks. But Judge Moore's backers straightway began to organize their own convocation.

The second phase of the campaign occurred in early March when the Moore forces staged their own rally (medicine show?) in Raleigh Memorial Auditorium. The crowd numbered 3,000. An upsurge of Moore hopes followed, very similar to the Preyer upsurge earlier. Moore began to hit harder in campaign speeches. The impact, at least on the surface, encouraged his supporters.

All this time Dr. I. Beverly Lake conducted a low-key campaign, which surprised those who remembered his tactics in 1960. He planned no giant rallies; he avoided outright racist speeches; he decorated the state with few highway billboards and a minimum of television and newspaper publicity.

Sensitive to Timing
Lake, to hear his backers tell it, does not believe in building too much early steam. He has his reasons. The Raleigh lawyer is already well known—favorably or otherwise—all over the state. He does not have the heavy financial backing of his opponents. He is acutely sensitive to timing and will only begin opening up on his adversaries vigorously as the final weeks tick away.

That is the superficial, surface pattern of the campaign. The question is whether this pattern—a Preyer upsurge followed by

a Moore upsurge followed by a tapering off preliminary to the final, all-out assault—really tells much about the relative strength of the candidates.

Both Preyer and Moore are newcomers to state-wide politics. Nobody can predict just how they will register with the voters. Both are exerting themselves mightily to get around the state and build their county political organizations. They recognize that precinct-by-precinct attention can mean a great deal in a campaign where issues are not always clear-cut and where personalities are often more powerful than issues anyway.

Organization
So the real outcome on May 30 may rest more emphatically on the depth of organization, which reflects the real enthusiasm each candidate can inspire among his backers. Each has a hard core of support. Barring development of some overwhelmingly significant campaign issue, the decisive factors will surely lie in personal appeal and organization.

And if one looks objectively at the quality of organization, he must conclude that Judge Preyer will lead on May 30. His organization is full of youthful zip and zing. There are really two candidates on the Preyer campaign circuit—the former judge and his attractive wife Emily. They are going their separate ways, for the most part, attending coffees and

receptions, opening campaign headquarters and generally winning spectacular comments wherever they appear.

The second question is the big one: Which of the other two candidates, Moore or Lake, will be runner-up? Following the events of March, Moore appeared in the lead; but now there is much talk about a Lake "silent vote" and a quiet upsurge. The Moore people have even begun to accuse the Preyer people of encouraging Lake—which is a sign that Lake may be gaining.

The Preyer forces will naturally aim for a first primary victory, but they cannot afford to boast about it or even mention it; for the margin between gaining a little more than 50 per cent of the votes or a little less is so small that psychologically to miss by a hair's breadth could be harmful in the second primary.

Predictions
So what shall we conclude here just four weeks from primary day? We will stick our necks out and say that Judge Preyer's outstanding qualifications, his personality and organization give him a huge plus mark which could come near putting him over the top in the first primary. Then we would add—and all this may be radically changed 30 days from now—that Moore and Lake will run fairly close for the second spot, with Moore favored by a nose.

The Public Speaking

How Can School Board Plan Without Survey?

To the Editor:
Our citizens will note with interest the recent request for additional funds for expansion of the Southern Pines schools. Our School Board barges ahead to spend money to provide education while operating with numbers which are considered by almost all authorities to be below the minimum number of students to provide adequate comprehensive education.

This proposal for expenditure is being made without a survey by our State Board of Education or an independent organization for the purpose of determining whether consolidation could produce better education for our students.

A survey of our school was made in September, 1963, but this survey was made merely for expansion of the facilities at the school, not for a comparative study of whether consolidation would improve our education. Certainly this survey would cause one to question whether we should consider any further additions at the present site. Note several quotes from this survey of 1963:

"The population density of the present school is excessively high due to the cramped site. . . . Expansion of a li-

brary would be somewhat hampered by the narrow building bay. . . . Other parts of the building present a similar problem. . . . It would appear then that the only answer is to construct a building to house this phase of the program (facilities for instruction in art and industrial arts), although it is with reluctance that the Committee recommends additional construction on this already crowded site. . . ."

How can our school board plan to spend the taxpayers' money before a valid professional survey directed at the question of possible consolidation has been made?

Incidentally, and further illustrating the confused climate of this situation, an outstanding educator in our State, Dr. Guy Phillips, has been misquoted by a member of the Southern Pines Board of Education as stating that our school would be better off without consolidation. I have talked personally with Dr. Phillips and he is displeased, to say the least, that he should have been so misquoted by a member of our board.

This is an important matter deserving of careful study before any irrevocable action is taken.

CHARLES PHILLIPS, M.D.

Grains of Sand

The Last First

Nancy Langhorne Astor has added another First to her record. When she died Saturday, she didn't die of septiconomia or emphysema or thoracic-pulmonary tuberculosis like most of us, these days. Not at all. Nancy died, simply, of Old Age.

That is what the British doctors claim and, undoubtedly, that is what Lady Astor decided. She was 85 and that was long enough. "Old Age" was as good a name for it as any.

Lady Nancy Astor was one of the first suffragettes; she was the first woman member of the British Parliament, where she stayed in the House of Commons, a thorn-in-the-male-flesh, for 25 years. She was one of the five Langhorne Beauties—and nobody ever dared to try to say which was First in that quintet. Born in Danville, Va., she came close to being the First Titled Tarheel—only not close enough by 15 miles, more's the pity.

She was probably the first and only person ever to sass Churchill and get away with it.

And now, still remarkably aloof from the usual pattern, she is the First in many a moon to die "of Old Age."

They Had Fun

Among scores of famous quips from the Astor-Churchill chats:

Lady Astor: "Winston, if I were your wife I'd put poison in your coffee."

Churchill: "Nancy, if I were your husband, I'd drink it."

Bad As All That?

Though, like many others, Columnist James Reston is in a tizzy about President Johnson's health, he is highly exasperated at the advice recently given to the President by his physician. The doctor has advised Johnson to take up golf and Reston has an extremely low opinion of golf. Not just because Ike played golf ad infinitum-ad nauseam, but because Reston considers it "a plague invented by Scotch Calvinists as a punishment for man's soul."

But the columnist has another gripe. He claims it is impossible to find anyone in Washington that President Johnson can beat. (How's that for a couple of back-handed kicks?)

Seriously, Mr. R., have you tried Senator Howard K. Smith of Vaahginiah? At least he OUGHT to be beat.

Cracked Record
The National Association of Manufacturers fears it may be considered "picayune" in its opposition to President Johnson's anti-poverty plan.

Well, no, NAM, we'd say: not exactly "picayune." Let's see: instead of the President's plan NAM suggests: economy in government, save the dollar, tax cut for the big boys, crack down on labor unions, let the states handle "public assistance."

That's not picayune, NAM: just the same old cracked record.

How's That?
A visitor to an institution for the insane was struck by the look of intelligence and understanding on the face of one of the patients. Her curiosity was so aroused that finally she asked him: "If you don't mind—just why are you here?"

Said the patient with a friendly grin: "I'm here because I'm not all there."

Watch It!
Sign in a Lexington, Va. restaurant: "Watch Out for School Children—Especially If They're Driving Cars."

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