



North Carolina

...contemplated. We will try to keep this a good money for all concerned. Wherever there seems to be the public good we will try to do it. And we will May 23, 1941.

School District Merger

of the school... by the... of such... lengthly... the right... conclusion... of the districts' re... ents, teachers, bond issue... able wealth would result in... l system than either of the... could have alone.

What we have in prospect is the construction of two large consolidated high schools—one for Southern Pines-Pinehurst and one for Aberdeen-West End within a few miles of each other. Whether this is economical and practical, whether this would mean a stronger program in both the schools, whether this would be for the best interests of the youngsters in all the area, over a period of years into the future—those are the vital questions.

The Pinehurst and Southern Pines school boards have at least taken a stand and laid a proposition on the line, subject to full debate and analysis. It will have to stand or fall on its own merits or defects. Also, we hope, it will rouse from an apparent state of apathy the many school patrons who have never thought seriously about the future of their school systems.

There is a standard last sentence to such an editorial as this—and a good one it is: let the needs and aspirations and potential achievements of this area's young people be the sole guide to the kind of schools we provide for them.

Demonstrations And The Community

orderly demonstrations that staged by Negroes at the Sun Theatre here followed many months attempt by the Good Neighbor Council to persuade the ownership of this theatre to alter its racial segregation policy. That is, the demonstrations were not begun until it seemed to Negro leaders that the goal could not be reached by discussions alone.

In the background was this fact: other theatres of the same ownership, at several locations over the state, had opened their doors to Negroes, after active demonstrations had been conducted. It is easy to see why local Negroes felt they had to try this method, when others had failed.

The Pilot commends the quality of the dignified demonstrations conducted here and points out that such a protest is deserving of as much or more response by the theatre ownership as the response evoked by protests—some of which, we

are told, were not as orderly—at other theatres of the chain.

Southern Pines has so far met the responsibility that falls on the entire community when racial demonstrations take place: the maintenance of order and the prevention of violence. This responsibility is shared throughout the community, it seems to us: by the theatre management which is morally obligated to meet dignity with dignity and peace with peace; by the police who must be alert to control provoking incidents that might lead to violence; and by the public which should recognize that in making their protest the Negroes are within their rights, whether or not the white observer agrees with the purpose of the demonstration.

We are proud of the way Southern Pines has met the theatre situation and feel that if all concerned continue in the same spirit, a satisfactory conclusion eventually will be reached.

Animal Displays Can Be Dangerous

On several occasions, The Pilot has expressed its disapproval of the public display of wild animals except under carefully controlled circumstances in professionally managed zoos and parks.

On those occasions, we were thinking of deer, wildcats, foxes, raccoons, squirrels and other animals who are caged, often in deplorably inadequate, if not downright cruel, accommodations at service stations, rural stores or other establishments.

Performing animals, such as the chimpanzee which was displayed in the business section here last week in connection with promotion of a commercial product, are in another category—but the fact that a child was bitten on the hand by the chimpanzee and that the animal also escaped from its keeper and ran more than a block through the downtown area before it was captured, brings into question whether such displays, outdoors in a congested location, should be allowed.

An added hazard was the fact that the chimpanzee involved in the Southern Pines incident was a big animal, estimated at 50 to 70 pounds in weight, and certainly could have been a formidable threat to children or even adults while loose and under pursuit, and so presumably frightened and on edge, in the business section.

It seems in order for the Town Council to adopt an ordinance, if one does not exist, that would control the public display of animals on private as well as public property, in line with the council's obligation to protect the public health and safety.

The ordinance should also specify that the animal should have decent, humane care. The chimpanzee in question was housed, between performances, in a steel box standing directly in the sun, although shade was available nearby; so hot was it that the top of the box was burning to the touch.

Saving Young Drivers From Themselves

Parents of 15 and 16 year olds in the local school are finding that the most important factor in planning activities for the summer is the schedule of driver training classes, to be held in three sessions in June, July and August, with youngsters assigned to one of the three sessions.

State law now requires that teen-age applicants for driver licenses take a training course, and enrollment here has therefore risen 160 per cent as compared to the voluntary training of the previous year.

The courses are arranged so that most families can work out a schedule for summer vacation or other activities to conveniently include one of the training sessions.

We note with interest, too, that the students due to take these courses are taking the matter seriously and, for the most part, are not resenting this bite out of their summer vacation play or work time. Rather, they appear to be anticipating the course with some pride and pleasure.

Attitude, in our opinion, is 90 per cent of the problem in recklessness by young drivers. If the training courses to be given here can somehow instill in young people a respect for the vital dead-

rights of other drivers, a giant stride will have been taken in the prevention of those most tragic of traffic accidents, in which are snuffed out young people's lives that have scarcely begun.

Understanding The Editor

We commend to readers the discussion on this page, by a fellow Tar Heel editor, of the role of the press in a democratic society. We are in agreement with its conclusions and reprint these excerpts from an address made by the editor because it hits squarely on the head several nails we sometimes also take a swipe at.

Every editor is brought up short, occasionally, by conversations or letters or hearsay that show misconceptions of a newspaper's policy and function.

An editor's most cherished asset is a reader's confidence—the knowledge that no news item, no editorial, no emphasis of news display or headline, is handled in a petty, flippant or contemptuous spirit, but rather is measured against a consistent set of values deserving of respect, if not always agreement.

Discussions like the one on this page may help readers understand what makes most editors tick.

Let's Make It A 'Knockout' By Moore County In The 'Third Round'—Take Oral Vaccine On Sunday, May 17



Zschiesche

TO HELP CITIZENS ACT RESPONSIBLY

The Free Press In A Democracy

Following are excerpts from an address delivered by Thomas J. Lassiter, editor of the semi-weekly Smithfield Herald, at Duke University's International Student Day last month.

Any discussion of the role of the press in a democratic society must begin with elementary consideration of the citizen's responsibility in self-government.

The citizen has basic political rights safeguarded by the Constitution—freedom of expression, the right to assemble peaceably, the right of petition, the right to vote. It is his responsibility to use these rights intelligently. He cannot act responsibly unless he knows what goes on in society and government. The right of the people to know also must be safeguarded as a basic right in a democracy.

The press stands as guardian of the right of the people to know. Its true role in a democratic society is to help the citizen fulfill his responsibility in self-government. The press fills this role not only by reporting facts about social and political affairs, but also by serving as critic of society and government.

Misunderstood
Sometimes the responsibility of the press to report and criticize is misunderstood.

The newspapers, contrary to a prevailing view, publish much information that could be classed as "good news." Their columns carry an abundance of news about the successes of people and institutions. But newspapers that fulfill their responsibility are under moral compulsion to publish "bad news" as well as good news, and the bad news sometimes reflects adversely upon the reputation of citizens.

Why, some readers ask, do you newspaper editors print so much news about the bad things people do? Why, they ask, do you hurt people?

The purpose of publishing news about the mistakes of public officials or the wrongdoings of plain citizens who violate laws is not to punish the wayward. A responsible press is no penal institution. Nor does it seek to sell papers by preying upon the curiosity of readers about the sins of others. It seeks only to give citizens the information they need for intelligent self-government. A citizen cannot use his vote and influence effectively unless he is aware of the evil as well as the good in society.

Facts Not Enough
Facts are not enough to undergird intelligent self-government. Facts need evaluation. Readers who insist that newspapers should be "boosters"—that is, praises only—rather than critics overlook the vitality that democ-

racy receives from criticism.

To play the role of responsible critic is to place an estimate on life's values; to discriminate between what seems to be good and what seems to be evil; to make significant comment on the manners, customs, attitudes and actions of the people; to analyze and pass judgment on the policies and practices of government.

The strong editorial page is a page of criticism. It interprets the news and stimulates thought about the social and political issues—sometimes by taking unpopular positions and prodding the conscience of the community.

The responsible editorial page does not flinch from a fight against injustice—racial, religious, economic, social, political injustice. It exposes fraud and hypocrisy, and it sounds the tocsin when democratic freedom is threatened.

Exchange of Ideas

Only people who understand the news and think through the issues critically will use their rights of citizenship intelligently. Sober thought and understanding come only through a free exchange of ideas. The press cannot fulfill its role in a democratic society unless it expresses ideas in an atmosphere of freedom.

Curb freedom of the press and you curb fundamental rights of the people. Freedom of the press is not the property of the newspapers. It belongs to the people.

When the Constitution guarantees freedom of the press, it does not confer a special privilege upon newspaper owners and editors. I happen to be an editor of a newspaper. But I have no constitutional rights or privileges as editor that the people in other vocational positions do not have as citizens.

Right to Know

The editor has the right to know what goes on in democratic government. He has the right to ferret out the facts about public affairs. The citizen has the same right.

The reporter and his newspaper accept the responsibility to give the people the information they need to guide them in responsible exercise of citizenship.

When newspapers cover state legislatures and their committees,

IMMORTAL?

The people I respect most behave as if they were immortal and as if society was eternal. Both assumptions are false: both of them must be accepted as true if we are to go on eating and working and loving, and are to keep open a few breathing holes for the human spirit.

—E. M. FORSTER

Congress and its committees, courts, and all kinds of public agencies from county courthouses to Capitol Hill in Washington, their reporters are acting in behalf of citizens who have democratic responsibilities to perform and cannot perform them without information.

Citizen's Servant

The editorial as well as the news story is the citizen's servant, even when it expresses opinion contrary to that held by the citizen. Not only does the editorial stimulate thought and help the citizen clarify his own particular view; when an editor expresses opinions on social and political issues, he is exercising the right of free expression that belongs to the citizen. Every exercise of free expression, whether by press or people, strengthens the citizen's right of free expression. Freedom of the press can be lost by failure of newspapers to exercise it, and citizens can lose freedom of speech by keeping silent on public issues. Official censorship is not the only threat to freedom of expression.

Fortunately, there is self-criticism in American journalism. At national, regional, and state levels, editors often come together to discuss ways of improving their news reports and strengthening their editorial pages. They criticize one another's work in round-table conferences.

Recharged

Many an editor has attended press institutes or editorial conferences year after year, returning to his post charged and recharged with a sense of responsibility that is reflected in the news and editorial columns of his paper.

There is room for more and deeper soul-searching in the ranks of American journalism. The press should never become complacent. Nor should the press, imperfect as it may be, surrender to its critics who would welcome censorship as a check against newspaper irresponsibility.

In a free society, censorship cannot be the answer to abuses of freedom of the press. Censorship nullifies freedom—freedom of citizens as well as freedom of newspapers. It leads to evil far worse than the evil it seeks to correct.

Greatest Heritage

When there is temptation to put shackles on the press, this we should remember: The greatest heritage we have in America is freedom to express what we know and think. That freedom is what really distinguishes our system from systems of communism and fascism, in which the press and other agencies of information are under government censorship and in which there is utter disregard of the right of the people to know.

Grains of Sand

Political Mysteries

Every two years at Carthage the question is brought up of who shall be chosen to go to the state Democratic convention at Raleigh.

Here's how it went last Saturday: there is the chairman, impressive of voice and stance. He looks out over the audience of dedicated Democrats and asks: "Who is to represent Moore County at the State Convention?"

Silence. He rephrases the question: "How shall we choose these important delegates?" Again no answer. The chairman drops his voice down a few notes and suggests "shall we er-do as we always do and elect every Democrat who is in good standing?" "AYE!" shouts the crowd.

Does anybody say: "What's 'good standing'?" or "Who says who's in good standing?" Goodness, of course not! What an idea!

Ask Charles

There came the time at the Democratic convention at Carthage Saturday when people were being appointed to serve on a lot of different Democratic party committees. There was the executive committee, the legislative committee, the this-and-the-other committee; people were nominated to serve on each and approved with resounding "ayes". Then Charles MacLeod was nominated to serve on one and all of a sudden refused the honor.

Consternation. Why, for heaven's sake?

"Well," said Charles, "I already served long enough. Anyway, I guess I served. I never did know what the duties of the committee were. And neither did anybody else. I don't believe anybody knows." Cheers from the crowd.

Don't they say the Democrats make the most sense and have the most fun at their conventions? Typically at Carthage, Hon.-and-Beloved Cliff Blue and his fine speech and Charles McLeod and his committee got the most cheers.

Explaining Beauty

Says J. Donald Adams, of the Times Book Review: "Few intellectual operations are capable of being more tiresome than a detailed explanation or analysis of why something is beautiful."

The great poets might be able to explain beauty, for surely it is the heart and soul of great poetry. Yet not even the poets themselves could tell you what it is or why it is, what possessed Burns to write: "O my love's like a red, red rose That's newly sprung in June; O my love's like the melody That's sweetly played in tune."

Or Poe: "Helen, thy beauty is to me Like those Nemean barks of yore That gently, o'er a perfumed sea, The weary wayward wanderer bore To his own native shore."

And Shakespeare: "Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?"

Is it the picture? Is it the singing of the words? Is it the anguish of passing time, or passing love, or the passing of beauty itself? Goodness knows, goodness knows.

Tarbaby Ain't Sayin' Nothin'
A good deal of speculation has been going on in street corner and barbershop groups as to where Cliff Blue, Moore County's candidate for the position of Lieutenant Governor, stands on the governor's race.

Somebody came right out and asked him the other day: "Cliff, who do you favor for Governor?" "Well, now, replied Cliff, "here's the way I see it. All three of these gentlemen have their fine qualities, but I figure I'd better not start to say which one I think is going to win. You know, if I guessed wrong, I'd have a mighty cold four years up there in Raleigh."

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