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Seldom has a greater distinction come to this city by the Neuse and Trent than to have two of its New Bern High school students win the Aycock trophy as the finest scholastic debating team in all North Carolina.

Marshal Ball and Richard McEnally faced terrific competition, and the pressure a teen-ager is under when he manages to reach the finals is something they won't soon forget.

Visualize hundreds upon hundreds of keenly intellectual youngsters who have devoted thousands of hours collectively to intense study and practice, and you begin to realize what a stupendous achievement it is to finish at the top of the heap.

Thus, it isn't surprising that never before in New Bern's history has a debating team from here gone all the way. The overwhelming majority of North Carolina's high schools, both large and small, have likewise failed to gain such recognition, so our past failures are no cause for embarrassment.

Through the years, debating teams representing the State's small high schools have more than held their own against schools with a much larger enrollment. Which goes to prove once more that brains and talent are just as prevalent in the smaller communities as they are in the center of heavier population.

If you're a regular or even occasional reader of *The Mirror*, you're aware of the fact that we repeatedly contend New Bernians can do what anyone else can do. And yet, as a town we are prone to place confidence in outsiders that we wouldn't think of according our own native sons and daughters.

Never was this demonstrated in more sickening fashion than when we spurned the talent in our own midst, and hired out-of-towners to put on a 250th anniversary celebration we should have put on ourselves. It is a shame and disgrace that those who handled the matter displayed such a complete lack of faith in our own citizens.

We have no quarrel with the hiring of Kermit Hunter to write a pageant for us. His previous dramas (staged outdoors instead of in a high school auditorium) have been creditable productions, so reaching all the way to western North Carolina for an author might have been the thing to do.

The real pity in this connection is that Hunter's creative ability is at its best when devoted to an outside spectacle. As a result, it is our considered opinion that he was handcuffed when restricted to the limits of an indoor stage. In other words, we are paying handsomely for a man's talents, without permitting him to use those talents in the fullest sense.

Hiring Hunter has been just a small phase of the money tossed to outsiders. Behaving as if we didn't have enough sense to get in out of the rain, much less stage a celebration, we went elsewhere to hire a director and a collection of performers to supplement the comparatively few New Bernians who will appear in the "pageant."

And, it is our understanding, the celebration committee is shelling out money to an out-of-town agency to handle publicity, and still more money to an out-of-town agency to handle advertising. These are things that most certainly could have been handled right here on the scene, at home.

We're not ready to admit that the New Bern we were born in, and have lived in ever since, is completely peopled by a bunch of dumb bunnies who are incapable of doing an outstanding celebration job in their own right.

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**PIONEER MUSIC MAKERS**—Continuing our series of priceless photos from the distant past, we proudly present today the New Bern High school orchestra that hatched harmony for chapel programs just 52 years ago. Ask any old-timer, and he'll tell you this 10-piece combo was a

mighty tuneful outfit. Front row, left to right, you'll find Ruth Watson, Daphne Coward and Mary Mitchell. On the second row are Elliott Pittman, Harvey Brown, Jessie Wyatt, Cora Munger, Lavinia Folsom, Stein Basnight and William Blades.

## Don't Forget, This Sunday We'll Observe Law Day USA

New Bern's official observance on Sunday of Law Day U.S.A. will coincide with similar observances in every city, town and hamlet throughout the Land of the Free.

Offhand, it might seem somewhat inappropriate to select the Sabbath for such an occasion, but this is hardly the case. As a matter of fact, New Bernians need only to turn to their family Bibles to discover the importance placed on law by their Creator.

Familiar to us all, of course, are the Ten Commandments that were handed down to Moses, and passed along to us in the Book of Exodus. Equally pertinent is the reminder in Leviticus that "ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country; for I am the Lord your God."

And in Proverbs, it is observed that "where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." Add to this the portion of Psalm 119 which tells us that "great peace have they which love the law" and it becomes clear that rather than being inappropriate, the Sabbath above all other days of the week is a time to renew our respect for law and order.

That law is necessary in a Democracy such as ours, no man of reason would deny. Naturally, it's important as a means of livelihood to the 30 local attorneys who have chosen it as a profession, but no less important to the average citizen. Without it the American way of life would die in short order.

What, to be specific, are the



BERNE ZOOLOGICAL SCENE

principles of Americanism that are protected by legal restrictions in this country of ours? According to the American Heritage Foundation, they are the right to a good education, the right to live where we please, to work where we want to, to worship according to our conscience, the right to a fair and speedy trial when accused, the right to vote secretly, to join and belong to an organization, to own property, to start our own business, to manage our own affairs, and to make a profit or fail—depending on our capabilities."

Through necessity, there are also limiting principles. Our founding fathers wisely took steps to see to it that the rights of an individual shall not interfere with the equal rights of other individuals. The rights, in fact, of an individual shall never interfere with the welfare of the people as a whole.

Obedience to the laws under which we live are part and parcel of our limiting principles. Admittedly, some of our laws are less popular than others, depending upon how much they cramp us. Some, no doubt, should be removed from the books. Others should be enacted. This can be accomplished by citizens themselves, if they elect officials of vision and high integrity.

New Bern, fortunately, compares favorably with other American communities when it comes to a general observance of the laws of the land. It is no misstatement of fact to say that almost without ex-

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