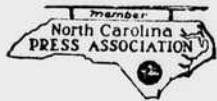


THE ROANOKE RAPIDS HERALD

CAROLINA'S FIRST
TABLOID NEWS PAPER

By Mail — \$2. Yearly — In Advance
ROANOKE RAPIDS, NORTH CAROLINA
THE LARGEST NEWSPAPER IN HALIFAX COUNTY



CARROLL WILSON, Owner and Editor

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EDITORIAL

ARE WE FAIR TO THE MAYOR?

• • Under the democratic form of government we live under, the people are the final and the supreme voice. They speak thru the ballot and elect officers who are (1) to act for them in all matters pertaining to public affairs and, (2) to appoint others who work under their orders and supervision in order that the many details of government are properly carried out.

The people of Roanoke Rapids elect a Mayor and six Commissioners to represent them in all matters pertaining to this city. This Mayor and Board of Commissioners appoint and employ others who work full-time on the details which must be done.

The Mayor of Roanoke Rapids receives a salary from the city taxes. By custom, his duties have been to act as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners when they meet once a month, to act as the legal advisor for the city, to act as Judge of the City Court (and also as Solicitor and jury) and to act also as the Police Commissioner for the city. The Chief of Police has reported directly to the Mayor and is under his daily and direct supervision. It would appear that under our present setup and size, the Mayor of Roanoke Rapids has too much varied and too many conflicting duties and powers or he is much underpaid for what is expected of him.

The City Commissioners, three from each Ward, six in all, serve without any pay at all. They meet once a month to transact the business of the city.

This Board has a Street Committee, two members, one from each end of the city; it has a Finance Committee, two members, one from each end of the city; it has a Fire Department Committee, two members, one from each end of the city.

But it has no Police Department Committee with two members, one from each end of the city. Custom has made the Mayor the Police Commissioner. We wonder if this is being fair to any Mayor.

DEMOCRACY AT WORK

• • The Mayor and City Board of Commissioners of Roanoke Rapids witnessed democracy at work this Tuesday when a group of citizens and taxpayers called on them at the regular monthly meeting to complain about some things and to suggest remedies.

Regardless of whether the complaints were just, it was certainly proper that this committee appear and air their grievances. After all, they helped elect the Mayor and the Commissioners;

American Family Album



they pay their share of the taxes; they are entitled to appear and have their say if they feel their elected officials or those appointed by their elected officials are not measuring up.

These were no "chronic belly-achers" or those "agin everything." These were honest, law-abiding citizens who were fed up with what they had seen and heard, from good sources, to the point where they had the guts to stand up in public meeting and profess their faith. Their testimony may have been faulty and faltering but it had the ring of sincerity which any wise person can detect. They spoke out in the open where so many of us speak only under cover and in idle and worthless gossip.

Democracy, government of, by and for the people, can only work right when men of truth, honesty and sincerity speak out, even if it harelips them. Nazi Europe is silent, except for the blasts of tyrants. America is still a democracy where truth will, even tho ground into the dirt, rise again to torment its tormentors.

We salute that valiant band which had the democratic courage to appear in person, voice the sentiments of many, set an example of the good old-fashioned Americanism which we must keep alive in this screwy world. It would be well if every elected official, every appointive official or board could get a taste of democracy at work by facing the people in person every so often. Noses would be cleaner.

DEMOCRACY NOT AT WORK

• • The right and privilege to vote in all elections is left only to a few nations today. That right and privilege has become a duty since our boys are dying to protect the American way of life. How did you perform that duty Tuesday?

Perhaps you said that the Democrats have no real opposition so there was no need to vote in Halifax County. You let George do it. But maybe George was thinking the same thing. Perhaps you said that you did not know who was running in the general election. Why didn't you know? Are you so little interested that you read only the sex and social news and pass over what is really important? Who was running for office and what were the issues? Was something else more important than a few minutes from your machine or desk or on your way to or from work to stop a minute and vote? What was it? It must have been something terribly important when your life, liberty and pursuit of happiness is at stake in this world war.

Hitler, Hirohito and Mussolini will be pleased to know that Roanoke Rapids, which has voted 4,000 in a hot local race, voted less than 400 on Nov. 3 1942; that Halifax County, "Banner County of Democracy", which has voted more than 10,000 votes, actually voted less than 2,000.

Must men and women, over 21, be hauled or dragged to the voting places in order to mark a few simple ballots which elect those who rule them? Is this small vote an indication of the lethargy, laziness, selfishness, indifference and ignorance with which the democracies are accused by our totalitarian enemies? Could this be the reason why we are having such a tough time on all fronts? Are we just in this war 10 or 20 per cent? While our enemies are all the way, 100 per cent?

These questions are food for thought and we would welcome a short letter from any of you as to the right answers.

The other day we talked to a strange sailor. We had seen a lot of strange sailors in Roanoke Rapids recently and wondered why. He told us this, "I have a week end leave. I am sick of Norfolk. I want to get to some quiet place about 100 miles away from Norfolk. I go to the bus station and tell the ticket agent. He tells me Roanoke Rapids is a good place where I can spend the week end and get a bus back in time because it is a bus terminal. So here I am." We went down to the Smith Hotel and talked to the clerk and found that from 25 to 50 service men stay at the Smith every week end. These are boys from all over the U. S. Many of them come back here every time they get leave. They like it here. Does that suggest to the City, the County and the city schools, which group has charge of the vacant and seedy-looking Armory, that their committee might open up the Armory for these boys on Saturday night and Sunday, a place where they might gather and meet the boys and girls of Roanoke Rapids under proper supervision, which might be furnished by the various civic clubs and recreation clubs? Maybe this is just another one of our crazy ideas. We offer it for what it is worth. If it is no good, throw it in the ashcan or bury it in the weeds growing rank in front of the deserted and desolate Armory.

More than \$15,000 was raised last week by the Roanoke Rapids Community Chest 1942 campaign. The goal set was reached and passed. This should silence those few who said, "It cannot be" (Continued on page 9, Section A)