



The Roundup

By WILBORNE HARRELL

The strong opposition to the proposal by the Woman's Club, entailing the removal of the Confederate monument on the Court House Green to the Broad Street waterfront, came to my attention as a complete surprise. Maybe I'm not old enough to appreciate the emotional and sentimental values involved, being quite young when the monument was erected and unveiled. I also realize there are many who feel very strongly about the matter, both pro and con and this is in nowise written as criticism of these persons. I am merely setting down my objective opinions—to be honest, I can do no less.

The removal of the monument would be no desecration of the dead (the Green is not hallowed or sacred ground), as would be the case if the monument marked the place of burial of our fallen Civil War heroes. The monument stands as only a symbol of commemoration, and

We should give as we would receive, cheerfully, quickly and without hesitation; for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers. —Seneca.

WISDOM of the Ages



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where it is erected may be arbitrarily and freely determined. Edenton has no greater asset than her historical background. It is well and good to be proud of the past, but the present and future are more immediate, and any improvements to our historical properties that may enhance their value as a tourist attraction; must not be overlooked. Erected at the foot of Broad Street, the monument would be a beckoning beacon to any tourist who entered Edenton from the north. Further, tourist interest would not cease at this point, but a curiosity once aroused would seek out other points of interest.

New Bern, Williamsburg, Man-to, to name a few at random, have made history pay off, and Edenton's historical potential is just as great or greater than any of these. It is high time we waked up and put this potential to work for us. But we will never do it if we do not

Your County Government... And You

By CARSON BAIN

For North Carolina Association of County Commissioners

From the earliest colonial days, the inhabited areas of North Carolina have been divided into counties. Counties are created by the state to carry out certain activities within the boundaries of the county that the legislature believes can best be carried out under local administration. For example, counties in North Carolina must build and maintain necessary school buildings. They must care for the poor and the sick. They must provide law enforcement through the sheriff's office; the recording of deeds and certain other documents through the register of deeds' office; and judicial administration through the office of the clerk of court and through the inferior and superior courts. And they must conduct elections for county and state offices. All of these activities are required to be carried on, and county commissioners must levy taxes to raise necessary funds.

The General Assembly may add to or subtract from these responsibilities from time to time, as state policy demands. And it may provide detailed administrative procedures as it has in some cases, or it may authorize local determination of procedures as it has in others. These are policy questions to be decided by the legislature, not by the counties or the people in

have the courage and the will to break the fetters of stagnation—and move forward with the trend of the times.

The best argument I can see for keeping the Confederate monument in its present location is purely sentimental. In this respect, there is no regard or consideration for the progressive impetus that this initial step may give to any historical program we may undertake. If we are to exploit our historical heritage, or frankly, to capitalize on it, we must make a beginning somewhere. What better beginning than this present Woman's Club project?

In my opinion, it seems to me that the Woman's Club's suggested improvements to the Court House Green, and the creating of a park at the waterfront end of Broad Street, in which would repose the Confederate monument amid appropriate surroundings, would be a decided progressive movement.

the counties.

But the county has come to be recognized by the legislature as more than an administrative subdivision of the state, created to carry on certain required activities. It is also a unit for local self-government. In this capacity, counties have been granted power to decide whether or not other activities, appropriate to county government, shall or shall not be carried on; and if carried on, counties have power to decide the extent to which the activities shall be performed. The General Assembly, for example, authorizes counties to have a public health program, to carry on farm and home demonstration work, to maintain a veterans service office, to conduct an electrical inspection program, to maintain a civil defense program, and to provide rural fire protection. Counties may also build and operate airports, libraries, hospitals and recreational activities. But under our statutory framework, whether these activities will be undertaken, and to what extent they will be supported, are matters for local determination. The board of county commissioners of each county, in response to the wishes of the people of the county, makes the decision.

Thus, a county serves a two-fold purpose. It is a subdivision of the state created to carry on certain required activities that the General Assembly believes should be locally administered. And it is a unit of local self-government, with power from the General Assembly to undertake other activities, not necessary to the state as a whole, but which may be desired by the people of a particular county.

Counties and Cities Contrasted
Perhaps the role of the county will become clearer if it is contrasted with the role of cities and towns. Cities and towns traditionally were created to provide services required by a compact community—services not needed by the people of the county as a whole. For example, cities provide a water purification and distribution system for people living too close together to use individual wells. Cities provide a sewage collection and disposal system, when people live too close to-

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gether to use individual septic tanks. Cities provide fire protection, when houses and buildings are so close together that a fire in one endangers others. Cities provide police protection to an extent not needed in rural areas, as concentrations of population require patrolling and traffic direction not needed to the same extent beyond city boundaries. And cities provide street systems, with abutting curbs, gutters and sidewalks, to provide for traffic and the drainage of surface water to an extent not needed in rural areas. These basic urban services, rendered by cities and towns, and other similar services, probably make up 90 per cent or more of the budget of a typical city.

Let's take a look at county services in a little detail. As we do, we will see that county services are really county-wide services, rendered to city people and rural people alike, just as city and rural people alike pay the property taxes that support these county services.

County School Activities
Counties today are building and maintaining schools for over one million school children. In addition, they are supplementing state funds for teachers, books, instructional supplies, and operating funds. Back in the early 1930's, the state assumed responsibility for paying the people who supervise, teach and operate our public schools; and the state assumed responsibility, as well, for providing books and instructional supplies and for meeting the cost of janitorial services and utilities. The state sales tax was levied to help meet this state responsibility. But state appropriations have failed to keep pace with increases in the number of school children, with inflation, and with school needs. So counties have had to step in and supplement state funds. Twenty-

five years ago, counties provided only 10 per cent of school current expense items. Today, counties provide closer to 20 per cent. And when total county effort is included, it amounts to around one-third of total school expenditures. In a typical county, 50 per cent of total property taxes levied go for school support, and in many counties the percentage is higher.

This county effort is often lost sight of in discussing our so-called "state" public school system. In reality, we have a state-county system, and county support is increasing each year. When I speak of county funds, I mean county-wide funds. County-wide taxes for public schools are apportioned among all administrative units in the county. Funds to meet current expenses and routine capital outlay items are apportioned on the basis of the number of school children in the administrative units, and major capital outlay appropriations are apportioned on the basis of need. Thus city people as well as rural people have a stake in county school support, both on the paying and on the receiving end.

County Welfare Activities
County public welfare programs provide financial support for around 300,000 people, and each year another 200,000 people receive some kind of non-financial assistance from the welfare department. Looking at county

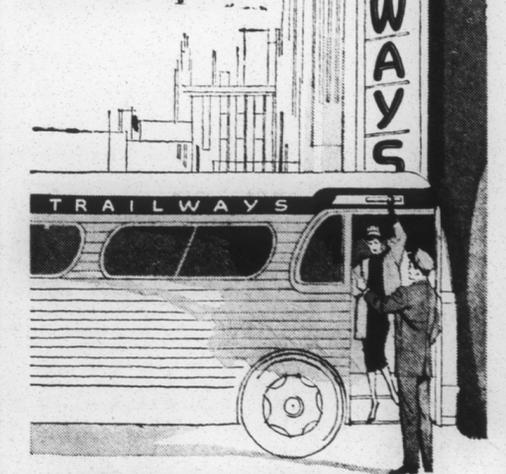
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welfare expenditures as a whole, in a typical county more welfare funds are spent proportionately in cities than are spent in rural areas. This results from the fact that more city people live away from their families and relatives and hence have less resources to meet financial emergencies.

Counties have two interests in public welfare. First, they have the financial responsibility of matching state and federal funds. County financial responsibility amounts to around 20 per cent of total welfare expenditures. Two-thirds of the total comes from the federal government and 14 per cent from the state. Public welfare appropriations usually take up from 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the county property tax rate.

In addition, counties have administrative responsibility, though at times they are hamstrung by state and federal regulations. I assure you that county officials work hard at eliminating irresponsible people and deadbeats from the welfare role. I know that you hear about the worst cases from the papers and from general discussions. But remember that for the few you hear about (and there are several hundred thousand and poverty stricken people that welfare programs are feeding, clothing, and sheltering. These people, without welfare aid, would starve or freeze to death.

County Health Activities
Public health programs provide public health services for 1.4 million and a half million North Carolinians. These services include inspection programs covering places that produce, prepare, and serve foods; nursing programs to teach good health practices; school health programs providing regular dental and medical examinations; and clinics for expectant mothers.

pre-school children, and others unable to afford the services of private physicians. In addition, there are the increasing number of county-operated hospitals providing hospital care for the people of the county. Public health programs average between 5 per cent and 10 per cent of total county property taxes, and these county funds meet over 80 per cent of the cost of total public health services. Again, city people as well as rural people benefit, and often there is a higher proportion of public health services rendered in the built-up areas in and around cities and towns. (Concluded next week)

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