

A Heavy Tongue Licks The Sky

By MURRELL SMITH

From afar a child's brown hair and curly like a poodle's skips at twilight upon a green hill. In her pink face can be seen the flame of beauty—from afar she can hear her mother's cry, "Come in, dear, and get ready for supper."

From afar a child gently skips at twilight in her face can be seen the flame of beauty—the gentle music of summer aroused in the earth—summer's green fingers burst forth from every bush and tree.

The winds roam aimlessly through the open windows blowing dry dust and ashes like soft powder.

Her mother's white sheets hang loosely on the clothes line and flap in the unsettled dust.

From afar a child with hair like a poodle's skips at twilight upon a green hill.

From afar her mother's cry, "Come in, dear, and get ready for supper."

At twilight she stops and drops a soft round pebble into a lucid pool into the ripples she can see her beautiful pink face and red lips—

She can see her hair that is curly as a poodle's. She slowly touches her face ever so gently in the lucid pool—her toes curl up and squeeze the mud between each toe—it tickles as the mud wriggles through.

The stars at twilight reflect from a worn out past—through a torn screen door she can see her mother watching her.

At sunset in her youth the sky was so brilliant tears ran down her soft pink cheeks and red lips.

From afar a child with brown hair and curly like a poodle's skips at twilight upon a hill. In her face can be seen the flame of beauty.

From afar her mother's cry, "Come in, dear, and get ready for supper."

On her way home tree ferns bend to the ground as if they were weeping with dew.

Walking through the garden gate and past an old well she can see the path of twilight—it is so worn and slick the stars reflect from the very ground.

As she enters the front door with a torn screen door the scarlet is so brilliant tears run down her soft pink cheeks.

Now at noonday when the town siren screams she scrambles home for a brief hour then parks her car on the black asphalt in front of my house.

I listen as the wheels turn into autumn and the town clock claps away the long years and sleep in time forgotten and with a heavy tongue licks the ash-red color of the sky.



Noel N. Coltrane, Jr.

Noel Coltrane Moves To Area

ELIZABETH CITY—Noel N. Coltrane, Jr., a Greensboro architect, has moved here and opened an office at 116 Farm Drive.

Coltrane is a native of Guilford County and received degrees from Pfeiffer College, N. C. State University at Raleigh and International Correspondence School, Scranton, Pa.

He has 21 years of experience in architecture and related fields and was licensed by the N. C. Board of Architecture in 1963 and became a corporate member, American Institute of Architecture the same year. He was associated with Adrian P. Stout in Greensboro before moving here.

Coltrane received the Randolph E. Dumont Design Award from the Committee on Church Architecture of the United Methodist Church for Rural Church Design through the Duke Endowment in 1970-71. The project receiving this award was Hickory Grove United Methodist Church in Guilford County.

The Coltranes have two sons and are Methodists.

Senator Sam J. Ervin Says: . . .

WASHINGTON—In the final weeks of the 92nd Congress a seesaw battle has been going on between Congress and the administration over how to regain fiscal control over the federal budget.

At the end Congress refused to give the President the power to impose a rigid \$250 billion ceiling on federal outlays for the current fiscal year. Much has been made of the unwillingness of the Senate to go along with the administration's request for unrestricted power to decide which programs would be cut. Indeed, the White House has pointed an accusing finger saying that any tax increase that now occurs should be blamed on the Congress.

A review of the circumstances which led to this impasse may be helpful in clearing the air for constructive action. In my judgment, the real opportunity to win the battle of inflation and fiscal responsibility was lost on September 9, 1971, when the President addressed the Congress and laid before it his new economic policy. Wage and price controls had just been imposed and Congress and the people would have accepted curtailed governmental spending as necessary to fight inflation had he called for it then. The federal deficit was then running at an annual rate of about \$29 billion. It would have been logical for the President to call for reduced federal spending. Instead, the President was

strong on rhetoric but made no specific call for cutbacks in the budget, and indeed endorsed again his proposed "guaranteed annual income" welfare program and urged Congress to approve tax cuts. Months went by and on January 24 deficit spending got a new boost when the President submitted his fiscal 1973 budget to the Congress. He urged Congress to appropriate \$36 billion more than general revenues would provide in the current fiscal year.

All of this was tantamount to telling Congress that the President was not much concerned about deficit spending or taxes. Indeed, as recently as September the President was urging Congress to pass a new revenue sharing bill which would give the states and local communities \$30 billion over the next five years. The President was also committed to a whopping increase in welfare payments through welfare reform. I might say that I did not support either of these new spending proposals. By late September the political winds were blowing strongly against a tax increase. The administration then began to back a proposal to give the President the right to pick and choose what federal programs would be funded to keep spending within a \$250 billion ceiling.

The tragedy of the whole matter is that neither the President nor the Congress have taken effective action to

curb deficit spending. I fully support a balanced budget. I think it is foolish for this country to embark upon a fiscal policy which will ultimately lead to confiscatory taxation or possible bankruptcy.

But I do not think it is wise for Congress to give the President an absolute power over the purse. Many in the President's own party profoundly disagree with him on this issue. Congress and the President must find a way of controlling the federal budget, but the formula brought to the Senate in the last days

of the session would only compound this problem.

This spending ceiling battle involves more than whether the Congress or the President is at fault in failing to restore fiscal responsibility. It involves the whole system of checks and balances which has thus far prevented the abuses of unchecked and absolute power.

As much as I would like to restrain federal spending, I do not think that Congress ought to give the President a blank check and say "you fill it in for any programs you like up to \$250 billion."

I am hopeful that Congress and the administration will give fiscal responsibility a higher priority at the next session.

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