

## LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

### A Long Time Until November

Congressman Jim Gardner came to Franklin County this week and a number of people were impressed. Nearly 500 gathered in a local warehouse for a rally and to hear the youthful lawmaker.

Gardner's every statement was tailor-made for his audience. He decried the things that are going on in this country and he made some very clever observations on how some of them might be halted.

He is a conservative and speaking to a conservative audience in a conservative county, he said all the right things. It was an enjoyable evening and chances are the Congressman made a few inroads into the Democratic ranks in Franklin County.

It was, perhaps, the things Mr. Gardner did not say that are worthy of note. For one thing, he made very little reference to the issues in North Carolina. He criticized the "tired and worn promises" of the Democratic administrations to the people of the East, but he never quite got around to making any promises of his own except to say he would make none he could not carry out.

The Congressman and his Democratic counterparts in Washington, continue to fill their constituents with oratory on how terrible conditions are in this country just as though it is all somebody's else's fault. We agree wholeheartedly with the things Mr. Gardner said here. Something does need to be changed. But, if our

elected Congressmen do not make these changes, who in the world is going to do so?

If Mr. Gardner and our own Second District Congressman and others from North Carolina can't make some of these changes in Washington, what are they doing there? If crime in our streets is a major issue — and surely it is — why has Mr. Gardner and the others not introduced legislation to help solve the problem?

Realizing that one lone lawmaker or even a few would find the going extremely rough right now should they attempt to buck the establishment, it is nevertheless a question that haunts us all. It is well and good that our representatives keep us informed of their views and certainly most of us here agree with Mr. Gardner that something must be done. The question which obviously follows any such expression by Congressmen, is "What are you doing?"

It is possible Congressman Gardner is doing all he can and if he is, we are grateful. But, if he intends to be elected Governor of North Carolina, he's going to need to change his approach. Somewhere along the line, he's going to be asked not only the above question, but others like it.

And somewhere along the line he is going to have to confront Bob Scott and issues closer to the government of this state. But, then it's a long time until November.

### Party Loyalty

It was disclosed this week at the Jim Gardner rally that there are registered Democrats serving as Republican precinct chairmen in the county. At least three men were introduced at the rally as such. Others, some of whom are former members of the Democratic organization have switched party allegiance and are now serving as precinct chairmen of their new party.

The makeup of the organization of these two parties and any others, is of course, a matter for party leaders and the particular party plan of organization. It is not the business of this newspaper.

However, this disclosure, if true, does bring to light one of the major issues of the coming fall campaigns. That issue is party loyalty.

In Franklin County, where Democrats have held control for so many years, it is natural that the budding Republican organization have growing pains. There are long time Democrats who do not fully understand the makeup of the party organization. It is understandable that some confusion could arise among the GOP.

Large numbers of Democrats may cross over in November; some for Gardner and perhaps more for Nixon or Wallace. Very few party leaders are expected to openly support the national party ticket. Most have long since separated the national Democratic party and the State Democratic party.

However, some Democrats are being eyed by their fellows with something bordering on contempt, because they accept positions within the party organization and go out and openly support a Republican candidate for state office. This is viewed as a kind of have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too sort of thing.

In theory, these registered Democrats are in position to vote on and indeed to formulate policies within the organization, which could conceivably bring aid and certainly comfort to the opposing Republican camp. The same, of course would be true if the parties were reversed.

It somehow doesn't seem right that this condition exists. If a registered Democrat wants to cross party lines in an election, it is his right as an American voter. The same is true of a Republican. This, however, is one thing. Accepting a position of responsibility in either party, however, and then while holding the position, work against the organization, is another matter.

Politics is a touchy game at best and this issue is designed only to make it more so. It would be well, it seems to us, that holders of positions within either or any party be registered in the party and abide by the rules of the organization. Unable to abide by such rules, one should search for another organization, with rules by which he or she could abide.



### From The Office Of Congressman Fountain Pass Level Of Toleration

Washington, D. C. . . . Crime in this country has long since passed the level of toleration for any society which calls itself civilized. And murder, especially the public murder of national figures, paralyzes our consciousness and defies rational explanation.

The root causes of crime are many and complex. They cannot be cured by any one segment of our society but they can be attacked jointly and sincerely by us all.

Congress has now made a legislative beginning in enacting the bill known as the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968.

This law will not in itself solve our crime problems. But it should help those with whom we entrust the enforcement of our laws — the policeman, the sheriff, the highway patrol, solicitors and others. It should help restore the long lost confidence of our people in the ability and right of law enforcement officers to do their duty.

Several features of this act are controversial and probably will remain so until we have had enough experience in practice to see exactly how it will work.

One aspect about which I still have reservations is federal financial assistance to states. I believe the federal government already is participating in programs in which it has no business and, therefore, I always approach any such new program with wariness.

New ground was broken, however, in the crime bill. The \$100 million authorized for fiscal year 1969 and the \$300 million authorized the following year for assistance to the states will be distributed in bloc grants, an approach I have long favored where Federal aid is to be given.

This means that the states will determine their own needs for those funds to help in training law enforcement personnel, combatting organized crime, planning for riot control and prevention and in other areas of need.

Then, under the bloc grant approach, the state will decide how to use its share of the funds. For the present, there are no Federal controls but we must be eternally vigilant to keep law enforcement

that way.

Congress made a beginning with this approach last year with certain education funds. I hope it will continue and strengthen its efforts.

Another provision of the bill would permit voluntary confessions of a suspect to be admitted as evidence, under certain conditions, in federal cases. The jury, with proper instructions by the court, will be the judge of the facts. The Supreme Court in recent years has made it extremely difficult for prosecutors to get evidence given voluntarily accepted in court.

Wiretapping, which most of us abhor as a general proposition, and another controversial subject, would be permitted in certain instances and under specific controls, including court approval. Some examples include cases of murder, kidnaping, espionage, treason, rioting, presidential assassination, narcotics violations and so on.

Some persons feel this authority is too broad and too sweeping. Since it is aimed

at crime and criminals, and in view of the lawlessness so prevalent in our land, we had no alternative but to give it a chance to work.

Other sections of the bill deal with limitations on the sale of pistols by mail and across state lines, the immunity of witnesses, the suppression of evidence and the like, which I do not have the space to discuss at this time.

I do want to emphasize, however, that we have made a beginning in providing the tools needed to suppress criminal acts which threaten our existence as an orderly society. Let me emphasize—we must take the handcuffs off the police and put them on the criminal. The anti-crime bill we passed is not a perfect start but it is a clear expression of Congress' concern for all our citizens. If the courts, law enforcement agencies and officers, and we as individual citizens do our part, there is still an excellent chance that we can make America once again a safe place in which to move and have our being.



There is in this land of plenty . . . this land of opportunity and equal everything . . . one of nature's creatures that has been abused, mistreated and overlooked almost since the beginning of time . . . And it hurts a little to realize that nobody's marching . . . carrying banners . . . or even editoria- lizing about the plight of this creature . . .

It's almost as if nobody cares . . . but we know differently . . . There are some people who care a great deal . . . and the time is almost upon us when all of us can take some gallant actions . . . brave the opposition . . . and do something about it . . .

This tired and mistreated creature braves the elements . . . the public . . . the competition . . . and often times unbearable hardships to do his duty to his family and his community . . . Always unselfish . . . he gives the shirt off his back to almost anybody bearing his name . . .



Dogs like him and for the most part . . . kids do too . . . Some mothers are known to have given him a friendly pat now and then . . . grandmothers think he's alright . . . if he belongs to them . . . mothers-in-law frown on him . . . bill collectors bound him and the telephone is one of his worse enemies . . .

He is a peculiar animal . . . not demanding much . . . a little rest . . . a few minutes of peaceful quiet now and then . . . an occasional night out . . . at least one meal a day . . . more if he can get them . . . but all in all, . . . any old thing will do . . .

He is never hard to please . . . often times found alone . . . most of the time he's broke . . . but often times he's happy . . .

As far as we know no monument has ever been erected to one . . . Nor are the flags flown at half-staff when one is lost . . . Yet . . . this country would be in pitiful shape without him . . .

We're not advocating any mass movement . . . We don't even plan a sit-in or a camp-in or even a love-in . . . But we would like to see somebody stand up and be counted . . . rights, right . . . and it's time this poor underprivileged character got his . . .

We've seen several lately . . . mostly they look tired . . . worn out . . . and some have that far-away longing look . . . apparently looking and longing for some small recognition . . . which he so richly deserves . . .

They say it is always darkest just before the dawn . . . and in this saying . . . whatever it means . . . there might be some light . . . Checking the calendar, we see one hopeful sign . . . the day is near when this wonderful creature will be allowed to stand temporarily in the spotlight . . .

If it doesn't blind him . . . he might be able to see that for all the shortcomings those around him might have . . . he is still a very important part of his world . . .

In view of our feelings on this matter . . . let us suggest that on this particular day . . . Sunday, June 16 . . . buy old dad something nice . . . It's Father's Day . . . and it's high time somebody noticed this old bird . . . Be kind to him . . . You ain't never gonna have but one . . . . .

## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING Gun Control Laws

The Courier-Times, Roxboro, N. C.

The increased rate of violent crime in the United States, illustrated all to graphically by the assassination of public figures, has generated in this country a desire of the majority of citizens for strengthening gun control legislation.

The subject has caused considerable debate—not so much over whether tighter controls are needed as over the extent of control. The major question is how far can gun control laws go before they infringe upon the Second Amendment of the Constitution, which assures the people of the right to keep and bear arms.

Sportsmen and firearms manufacturers are particularly sensitive on the matter of gun control. However, the majority of sportsmen in this country, it will be found, know how to handle guns and rifles, they respect the lethal capabilities of such weapons and treat them accordingly. Unfortunately, the attitude and responsible action of sportsmen who use firearms for recreational purposes has not rubbed off on the remaining segments of the general public.

In short, guns don't kill people; people kill people—too frequently, the instrument involved is a firearm. It would seem, then, that gun control laws are needed to protect people from themselves and from each other. When one reads of

a death due to a firearm almost without exception, there is a human element involved—the mortal bullet wound is either self-inflicted, due to human carelessness or the result out-and-out murder.

Human frailty, as we see it, necessitates gun control, just as it necessitates restrictions as to who may and who may not operate a motor vehicle. To be sure, tighter gun controls will not completely eliminate gun accidents and murder by firearms. Hopefully, however, the potential and frequency of these incidents could be lessened.

We totally agree with a recent observation made by The News & Observer:

"We list real property, register and license automobiles, even dogs. But guns are afforded the status of legally secret sin and pleasure. Law enforcement could be given a tremendous assist if the ownership of firearms were policed at least as casually as the ownership of automobiles. Indeed, public protection could be measurably improved and the solution of crimes involving guns enormously increased, if the profitable traffic in guns were left untouched but owners were required to register their firearms."

Surely firearm registration is the least protection the general public could ask. It should be instituted.

## The Franklin Times

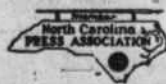
Established 1870 — Published Tuesdays & Thursdays by

The Franklin Times, Inc.

Bickett Blvd. Dial GY 6-3283 LOUISBURG, N. C.

CLINT FULLER, Managing Editor

ELIZABETH JOHNSON, Business Manager



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In North Carolina: One Year, \$4.64; Six Months, \$2.83 Single Copy 10¢  
Out of State: One Year, \$5.50; Six Months, \$4.00  
Three Months, \$3.50

Entered as second class mail matter and postage paid at the Post Office at Louisburg, N. C. 27549.

