

## LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

### Still A Molehill

The much-ado over that unpaved road in northeastern Franklin County smells of splitting hairs. The Raleigh newspaper seems to be attempting to make a mountain from a poorly constructed molehill.

The 1.86 miles of gravel-covered red clay is hardly worth all the fuss and bother surrounding it at the moment. True it will shorten the distance between the sections of Franklin and Warren Counties involved and this is worthy of note. However, the unkept dirt roads leading to and from it make its useage doubtful.

Rep. James Speed's involvement in the controversy has been misinterpreted and while Mr. Speed is capable of defending himself without our help, it should be pointed out that the final approval of the project was left to the Board's of County Commissioners in both counties.

The funds for the road will be taken from each county's secondary road allotment. Somewhere, someone is doing without a road improvement in order that State Road No. 1444 can be built. This, however, is a decision arrived at by the elected members of the Board of Commissioners. If the decision to use money in this manner

instead of elsewhere was a poor one, it is nevertheless their decision. If it was wise, it is to their credit.

Our investigation shows a number of people could benefit from the road. Forty-five families live between the Speed residence and the connecting road and while all, some or none may use the new strip, it is nevertheless there for them.

The Raleigh newspaper obviously went to great lengths to "uncover" this little item. It was hardly worth its time. If it is truly interested in Franklin County roads, it might wish to search out an answer as to what ever happened to N.C. 56 and more recently, what's happening to N.C. 39.

If the Raleigh newspaper's inference that Mr. Speed has exerted influence to gain a little piece of dirt road is correct, then perhaps Mr. Speed might exert a little more and find answers to the above questions.

In any event, our investigation has disclosed no wrong-doing in the matter and as long as the two governing Boards of the counties are satisfied it is likely the mountain will remain what it has been all along—just a molehill.

## Two Views Of Franklin FBI At Franklin Schools

Durham Morning Herald

The Franklin County Board of Education, which has had more than its share of problems, opened its schools this year under a sweeping court-ordered integration plan and fortunately found that a threatened massive boycott has failed to materialize.

But it did find 15 FBI agents and two Justice Department attorneys on hand as "observers" and it promptly protested, first to the Justice Department in Washington and then to the

### The Ervin Version

The News and Observer

FBI agents were on hand last week for the opening of public schools in Franklin County, the scene of much racial unrest in the past and the subject of a new desegregation plan just implemented in the classrooms. The presence of law enforcement officers was undoubtedly an affront to some Franklin citizens, but it was surely aimed at preventing rather than causing trouble. And almost anyone familiar with Franklin County's recent racial history could see some justification for this precautionary measure.

The "almost" must be stressed. U. S. Sen. Sam Ervin no sooner got wind of the FBI's appearance in Louisburg than he fired off a letter of protest to U. S. Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark. The letter was part argument for "freedom of choice" school desegregation plans, part indignation about Clark's inflicting FBI officers on Franklin County. "I would expect such conduct in a police state," Ervin wrote, "but not in a society which is supposed to be free... I feel it compounds tyranny many times for you to assign to the FBI the job of supervising our State schools."

The letter deserves analysis. Franklin County schools are not under the supervision of the FBI, of course. The FBI presumably was on hand in case violence broke out. The schools were ordered to integrate under a court-approved plan, to bring the educational system into compliance with federal law. The FBI's role was to make sure that order was preserved in the process of compliance with the law and the court plan.

Senator Sam's criticism puts him in the rather unlikely position of being opposed to law and order. But then one man's "law and order" is another's "police state."

offices of Senator Jordan (who was out of the country on a mission) and Senator Ervin.

Just what the government had in mind by sending FBI agents to the schools on registration day and then returning them, despite the board's strong objection, on two subsequent days hasn't been explained by the government other than the reported FBI excuse that they were there to "observe". But the government does owe Franklin County a full explanation.

The school board occupied a tenable position in its contention that the FBI presence would serve no useful purpose, and that it could cause some parents to keep their children at home by indicating trouble might be brewing. The board can be credited with doing the best it could under trying conditions to open the schools. It deserves praise, not harassment in any form.

In his message to Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark on the Franklin issue, Senator Ervin has made one point in his observation that FBI agents could have been "more effectively and legitimately used in other parts of our nation fighting organized crime" and another in "that state and local officials in North Carolina have every intention of upholding the law even if they disagree with it." It would be difficult for Mr. Clark to disagree on either count.

Whether in Franklin or in other counties with school integration problems, the key to real and lasting progress toward solving them rests largely with the citizenry. Presence of federal agents on the scene, as in the Franklin instance, can create the impression, whether or not such is the case, that Uncle Sam questions the good faith and lacks confidence in the ability of school officials and patrons to deal with such matters.



'Well! Welcome back... to... to...'

## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

### Road Service

The News and Observer

That \$32,000 road which State Rep. James Speed so ardently sought to bridge Warren and Franklin counties in an area where he lives and farms bears little resemblance to those which cross Champion McDowell Davis' plantation acreage near Wilmington.

This road, now under construction, is not being built on private property in apparent violation of long-standing commission policy. It is not laid to serve just one corporate or individual beneficiary. It isn't named — yet — for any public official's wife.

Representative Speed disclaims any search or personal convenience in urging construction of this road which will make it considerably easier for him to get from his home in Franklin County to a farm he leases in Warren County. The road, he says, will help various interested parties, including the State Forestry Service, which will gain new access to timberlands along

the road, and "several hundred" local citizens who would like a better route between the two counties.

Still, questions arise. The new road will extend a dead-end route which is the site of only one house, and that is the one on the farm Speed leases. It probably will never be a school bus route. This route doesn't meet regular State secondary system, so it got in by being dubbed a "connector road." And, whether it is coincidental or not, the fact remains that the distance between Speed's home and the leased farm will be shaved from approximately 11 to five miles.

The first question this leads to is whether the \$32,000 estimated as the ultimate cost of this road was not more urgently needed elsewhere in the highway district in which Speed resides. If it was, the central question is why State Highway Commission procedure and policy permit such expenditures.

## On Our Decline And Fall

The Courier-Tribune, Asheboro, N. C.

TWO NEWS reports attracted our attention this week, seemingly unrelated. But maybe they weren't entirely.

In fact, each represented in their way a foreboding of America's decline and fall much as ancient Rome surrendered to its sad fate.

Oh, we're not decrying mini-skirts, the youth rebellion and other forms of moral degeneracy that popularly were supposed to have brought the sprawling Roman Empire to its knees. No, sorry.

What happened to our togas, wine-loving Italian friends was probably far simpler to explain.

Historians might argue that Rome's aristocracy was fun-loving and decadent — in fact, addicted imbibers of the grape. But the moral turpitude was only part of their declining glory. Their obituaries might have been written in the additives they employed to reduce souring of wine.

Chemical analysis of Roman remains shows unusually high amounts of lead, a University of California che-

mist has revealed. It came from a germkilling chemical, lead oxide, used to preserve wine.

Life span of Roman aristocrats was notoriously low, perhaps attributable to lead poisoning that makes modern mining and painting a hazard.

In twentieth century America, U. S. automobiles exude tons of lead into the atmosphere through their exhausts — boosting the average concentration of lead in citizens' bloodstreams to 0.25 parts per million. This is about one-third of the amount found in patients suffering from acute lead poisoning which could result in death.

So, draw your own parallels between ancient Rome and the highly-mobilized, exhaust-poisoned U. S. of A.

The second news story we mentioned?

Oh, it had something to do with a new vending machine some foreign nation invented and imports to the west. The first landed last week in Miami. It dispenses money.

Instant credit. All you do is insert your credit card and out pops fifty bucks. No different from the other credit cards the average shoppers carries about, except that this one pays off in ready folding money that you'll pay back later.

In relation to the decline and fall of the American empire, we suspect the latter news item speaks for itself.



I been crying all night. Its' got so this ain't a fit place to live and raise youngins' in. If somebody don't move them busy-bodies out of Washington the whole world is going to come smashing down on each and everyone of us...

I wasn't too concerned when they give Russia all that wheat... and I didn't cry when they let Cassius Clay run loose... and even though I stayed awake... I didn't take no pills when the Democrats picked Hubert... but this latest thing is about to trouble me to death...



Some nut slipped a small-lettered provision in the 1964 Civil Rights Act... (we didn't think much of the provisions in regular size print neither)... that takes the cake... and we suspect is gonna take quite a few other things too, before its over with...

The white coats that is going to handle this latest little fag... is a gang known as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission... and if that ain't enough to turn your stomach... read on... This bevy of bureaucrats in Washington... where else?... are going to begin... on November 30... (that's after the election, if you get what we mean) to enforce this little-lettered provision.

And what do you suppose these bitty-brained bureaucrats have come up with now? You'd never guess. Now they say (oh, me)... "There is no difference in the world between men and women." See... I told you you wouldn't believe it. Want me to repeat it? They said... oh, well... They said it... we sure didn't...

After that date... if the white coats are still around... if you want a lady to sell lingerie... you're liable to get a big old burly truck driver... 'cause you can't say in the ad that you'd really rather have a girl... Now this makes about as much sense as many other things coming out of Washington these days... but let's face it... this time they've gone too far...

Even though... with the long hair... tight pants... black boots and love (love?) chains these days most of us can't tell the difference... and with these kind of examples... who cares to know? But... there is some nut loose in this country that needs to be caught... and we mean right now... If he don't know the difference... boy he's dangerous...

The EEOC... (sounds like what I said when I first read the notice)... can surely think up something more sensible than this... Why don't they find another street corner for Stokeley... or find a job for that fellow in the White House who is... joyfully... going to be unemployed shortly after the turn of the year... And they might as well be looking a good drug store location for Hubert...

Whatever they're doing... one thing is clear... Congress passed the law and if EEOC don't know the difference between boys and girls... maybe Congress ought to tell 'em...

There may not be any difference where EEOC lives... but there sure is here in our part of the country... and we want everybody in that buggy place called Washington to get one thing straight... we don't want anybody making that difference illegal, either.

And we thought HEW was nuts...

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