

# The Franklin Times

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## LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

### Inviting The Buzzards

A front page article today relates the disappearance of several window air conditioners belonging to the county. It is conceivable that all are in proper places doing proper service to county-sponsored agencies. However, there is no assurance that this is the case.

Since seven are accounted for—four purchased and paid for and three others where the county could get them, if necessary—the concern is for the remaining eight (two sources report five).

As far as can be reasonably determined there is no county office with any record what so ever on this property, purchased at some time in the past with the taxpayer's money. There ought to be a better way.

It is possible that somewhere somebody is enjoying a free cooling at the taxpayer's expense. The units belong to all the taxpayer's and somewhere a record should be kept as to their whereabouts.

This brings to mind, the thousands of dollars spent on other furniture and

fixtures contained in the courthouse and other county buildings. One must speculate if the same records are being kept on this county property as were being kept on the missing air conditioners.

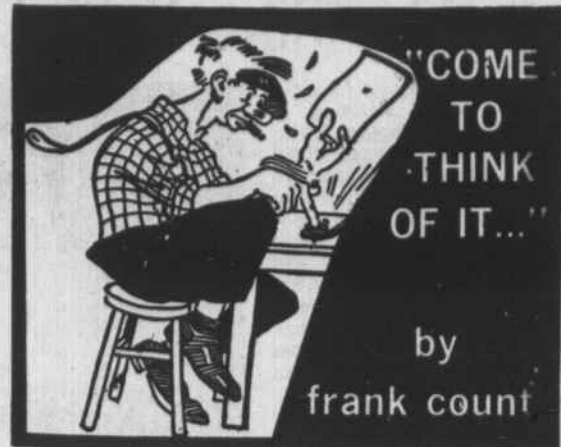
If not, there must be some reason. Granted that most people are honest, business is still business and the taxpayer's business should be operated as efficiently as anyone else's.

If several air conditioners disappear from a building almost wedged between the courthouse itself and the local police station, what could happen to furniture and fixtures in buildings not similarly located?

If there is a record of exactly what the county owns by way of equipment, furniture and fixtures, it should be made public. If there isn't such a record in existence at present, one should be made post haste.

If, as one high official said, the chickens got the air conditioners, it would seem in the absence of adequate record keeping, we might be inviting the buzzards.

Man In The Moon



I don't usually spend much time hanging 'round the newspaper office. It ain't that it ain't a pretty good place. It's just that it don't seem proper to hang around. Might give the place a bad name.

But now and then I get called on for advice by the boys in the back room and being the forgiving sort, I always forgive them for all they done to me and this column and help them out. It ain't like I want to do this, you understand, but I usually do.

You see, them boys in the back room are good boys. They ain't heavy hung with intelligence, you understand, but goodness they got. They don't know about all this new modern technology and stuff.

And when the screw got more 'n two heads, these back room boys get lost. That's when they call on old Frank.

It ain't that I know everything. I'd be the first to admit, I don't know everything. But to be perfectly fair and honest, I got to admit I know most everything.

Well this ought to set the stage. The boys got in a new press last week and they needed old Frank to help get the thing going. I was glad to be of assistance. They had their problems alright.

All the thing-a-bogs and thing-a-ma-gigs come. They was all in good shape when they was unloaded. Looked like any child could a put it together. But wait. There's more. Along with all the stuff the company sent something else. They sent a Yankee. That's right. They sent a Yankee to supervise. And if there's anything in the world a Yankee thinks he can do perfect, it's supervise folks from the South.

Well he couldn't git along with the electrician. He didn't win no awards with the welder and I thought the plumber was gonna kill him outright. The boys in the back room spent the whole week muttering about knives, guns and poisons.

I thought... being as educated as I am... I could get everybody together and get the job done. This was a mistake I was to learn later. You can't get a Yankee together. Unless that is, you put him with another Yankee. It ain't that they ain't folks—although some doubt it—it's just that they're somehow blessed with more sense than anybody else. It's a strange thing to me how come the good Lord give everybody north of the Mason-Dixon line more brains than he give the folks South of the line. This has always been a mystery to me. I'd rather get the answer to that question than to play with them moon rocks.

But it seems that's the way it is. This Yankee said the sign that said turn here didn't mean to turn here. It meant something else so he turned something else. That made the boys work three hours overtime.

"Yankee", I said, "Why don't you listen to some of them boys. That electrician been lecturizing for sixty years. He ought to know something. That welder been welding for nigh on fifty years and he ought to know something. And that plumber been plumbing for nearly forty years. You could learn by listening."

"Mister", he said, "I do not know what capacity you have in this place but I do not take suggestions. The company says I do not have to take suggestions. I do not have to touch any of this machinery. I am here to supervise. How many presses have you installed?"

Well it won't no need of him getting personal about it. I ain't supposed to install no presses. I gets paid for what I know and I told him so. And he said, you must be on welfare.

But, even though I was born in the South, it won't yesterday. So I come up with a plan. And it worked. I called a good friend in a far away southern state and told him he had trouble with his press and I knowed where he could get a expert repair man. I told him where to call and to say it was urgent and I told him to ask that they send a Yankee 'cause that's the smartest kind.

Just when it looked that all was lost and the back-room boys would never get home, the phone rung.

"Boy", said the Yankee, "I know this will come as a blow to you but I have to leave you. There's trouble down south and I must go and advise another newspaper. I am sure you understand. I hope you can get someone else to assist you."

And he was gone. "Boys," I said, "Why don't you try pushing this button here that says 'Start' and see what happens."

You'll never guess. When they pushed the Start button, it started. And heaven help him-if that Yankee knowed that, he'd surrender. It was just luck, you understand. Southerners ain't smart 'n Yankees. They're just luckier.

## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

### When Bad Luck Is Good Luck

Written in the form of a letter to his electric power company and entitled, "Why I Haven't Sent My Check--A Letter From A Businessman," the following eloquently portrays the desperate condition of a growing number of people in this country:

"You asked me why I have not sent a check in payment of the bill I owe you, and are threatening to turn off my current. Let me explain.

"The present condition of my bank account is due to laws—federal laws, state laws, county laws, city laws and trade association laws. The only laws that do not affect my small business are outlaws. We never have been robbed illegally; only by elected and appointed officials.

"Because of these laws of many kinds I am compelled to pay taxes—a business tax, amusement tax, head tax, bank tax, school tax, gas tax, light tax, water tax, sales tax, excise tax, auto tax, phone tax, sewer tax, garbage tax, fire tax, highway tax and income tax.

"These laws also require to me to get a license at varying fees for my small meat store—a business license, refrigeration license, retailer's license, sanitation license, inspection license, weigher's license, dairy license, caterer's license, delivery truck license and interstate deliverer's license. I bought two licenses voluntarily, a marriage license and a dog license.

"My trade association insists that I contribute to causes. I have given to the Red Cross, Community Chest, United Fund, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Brownies, Salvation Army, Heart

Fund, Cerebral Palsy Fund, Muscular Dystrophy Fund, Child Care Center, Old Folks Center, Fund for the Blind, Fund for the Indigent, four hospitals, four churches, one synagogue and two volunteer fire companies.

"I have one employe. I must pay his Blue Cross, Blue Shield, unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation, Social Security, retirement pension fund and company life insurance premiums.

"For the sake of my bank, my creditors and my business, I am required by law to carry life insurance, property insurance, liability insurance, burglar insurance, fire insurance, accident insurance, windstorm, flood and earthquake insurance and freezer-loss insurance.

"I must pay these premiums promptly or my insurance, like my electricity, will be turned off.

"I am suspected and disrespected, and while I am bled white to maintain a constant flow of money to other people, there simply doesn't seem to be enough to go around.

"Please do not turn off my electricity, for due to a miraculous stroke of good fortune, you will get your money. While chopping a loin of pork this morning, I was lucky enough to miss and completely sever my thumb. It was insured. The money will arrive next week, at which time I will immediately endorse the check and forward it to you.

"I shall be grateful for your patience.

"Sincerely yours . . ."  
Anaheim (Calif.) Bulletin

### Fixing To Read This Piece

W. E. H. in Sanford Herald

How many times have you heard the North Carolina Southern expression, colloquialism perhaps, "I'm fixing to go up town?"

Or perhaps: I'm fixing to cook some steaks for supper. Or fixing to go to Raleigh. Or fixing to get a haircut or hairdo. Or fixing to take a nap and get some rest.

Fixing to do something is a way of life for folks down south. Nowhere else in the nation, so far as I know, is this expression used.

It's about as permanent in our native vocabulary as "I'm go cut my grass today," which is a short and non-scholastic way of saying "I" going to cut my grass today."

The use of fixing must go way back

into the folklore of our people. The dictionary says of fixing: it's the act or process of rendering permanent. As to fix the same book defines it: to rest, to settle or remain permanently.

I'm fixing to close this little piece up, and can think of no better way to do it than to say I've said all I can about it.

I hope you were fixing to read it.

Quote of the Week: Breckenridge, Minn. Valley Alert columnist Newell Grant wrote in his column "Alert Speaks" on things that bug him: Senator Kennedy, a military strategist ranking somewhere between General Custer and Nasser, who insists on attacking all Vietnam war decisions."

## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

### Local Option Sales Tax, R.I.P.

The Chapel Hill (N.C.) Weekly

Eight years ago, Governor Terry Sanford managed to persuade the Legislature to broaden North Carolina's sales tax. The total impact on family budgets was far from shattering and the extra revenue had been earmarked for a noble cause, to raise the disgraceful level of public school teachers' salaries.

Nevertheless, the taxpayers were so rankled and unforgiving that when they were later faced with a vote on a bond issue, also to finance worthy causes, they killed it dead.

The taxpayer has just been tapped (perhaps slugged is a better word) again by the Legislature, largely at the Governor's behest. But the situation today is vastly different from what it was eight years ago.

Because of the new taxes recently enacted, a man finds himself paying more for beer and whiskey (up to \$1.44 more a case for brew and 20 cents a fifth for booze). Gasoline costs him anywhere from 30 to 50 cents more a tankful.

Bank loans will cost him more, and if he wants to build a house and can find someone willing to finance it, that will cost him more too.

In October, cigarettes will cost him from 2 to 5 cents more a pack. Soft drinks will go up, probably 5 cents a bottle, to take care of a 1-cent crown tax. Then, beginning in January, he will have to pay more for his automobile license tag.

The revenue from these new sources was needed, some of it critically needed. But that is not about to take the curse off the new taxes, any more than dire need took the curse

off Terry Sanford's broadened sales tax in 1961.

To salt the wound, many local governments in the State are having to raise taxes to meet pressing needs. Here in Chapel Hill, for example, the Board of Aldermen is working on a budget that could raise taxes by as much as 25 per cent. If the Aldermen go at the budget with a meat cleaver they might be able to hold the increase to as little as 15 per cent. Orange County's tax situation is not so depressing, but some sort of increase can be expected there too.

This, of course, does not consider the federal tax drain on the family budget or the deep inroads being made by inflation.

Against this backdrop, voters in all the State's counties will decide next November on local option sales taxes. Those counties which approve the additional one cent will get half the proceeds, with the other half being pooled and distributed on a per capita basis.

Conceivably, the local option tax could relieve some of the pressure on ad valorem taxes and it would certainly ease local governments' financial binds. But that, it appears, will be largely beside the point.

From the mood of the taxpayer today—and it figures to get blacker by next November—the local option sales tax already is deadlier than Terry Sanford's bond issue which has been moldering in the grave all these years. Given the build-in inequities of local option sales taxes anyway, it's probably just as well.

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