

## Occupational Licensure - A Medieval System

by Charles T. Byrd Jr., CPA

The relation between economic freedom and political freedom coupled with an analysis of the role of government in a free society produce many "areas of conflict and question" in a democracy. One such area is that of occupational licensure.

The overthrow of the medieval guild system was an indispensable step in the rise of freedom in the Western world. A sign of the triumph of liberal ideas, it meant that persons could pursue whatever trade or occupation they wished without the approval of government or governmental authority.

In more recent decades, there has been an increasing tendency for particular occupations to be restricted to individuals licensed to practice them by the state. It is this restriction on people to use their resources as they wish that has produced a new class of problems.

Occupational licensure is now very widespread. A few well-known examples may include pharmacists, dentists, accountants, lawyers, and librarians. Some rather remote examples include dealers in scrap tobacco, egg graders, tree surgeons, and potato growers.

Arguments that seek to persuade legislatures to enact such licensing provisions use as justification the necessity of protecting the public interest. However, the pressure to license an occupation rarely comes from the abused public but from members of the occupation itself.

The arrangements made for licensure mostly involve control by members of the occupation. Although this is natural in some ways, it also provides a lot of pitfalls to individual freedom. Many of the considerations examined in qualifying for a license, have no relation whatsoever to professional competence. An example is a loyalty oath that states that one is not Communist nor subversive.

It is my belief that many licensing boards limit numbers and raise qualifications, not to protect public interest, but to protect and increase the economic rewards of their occupation. Control over entry by members of the occupation itself, hence the establishment of a monopoly position, is surely not the most nor only desirable alternative for protection of public interest.

# Food Town And Lowe's To Merge

Food Town Stores, Inc. of Salisbury, N.C. and Lowe's Supermarkets, Inc. of North Wilkesboro, N.C., jointly announced the approval in principle of the merger of Lowe's into Food Town. The merger would be subject to a definitive agreement between the parties and would also be subject to various legal, financial and other conditions and would have to be approved by the shareholders of each company.

Under the terms of the proposed merger Food Town would issue 201,258 shares of its common stock to the shareholders of Lowe's.

Food Town is engaged in the operation of a chain of thirty supermarkets in the Piedmont Section of North Carolina. The common stock of Food Town is traded in the Over-the-Counter Market. For the year 1974 Food Town had sales of \$92,418,324.00 and net income of \$2,105,637.00. For the forty weeks ended October 4, 1975 sales of Food Town were \$95,826,423.00 and net income of \$2,476,041. Sales of Food Town for the forty weeks ended October 5, 1975 were \$68,495,523.00 and net income for that period was \$1,386,044.00. There are presently 915,000 shares of common stock of Food Town outstanding.

Lowe's also is engaged in

the operation of a chain of thirty-seven supermarkets which are located principally in North Carolina with two stores in Virginia and two stores in South Carolina. Lowe's had sales of \$76,041,224.00 for the year ended September 27, 1975, with

earnings of \$499,894.00 for that period. For the year ended September 28, 1974 sales of Lowe's were \$60,454,302.00 and net income was \$440,153.00. There are presently 786,284 shares of Lowe's common stock outstanding.

### CROSSWORD

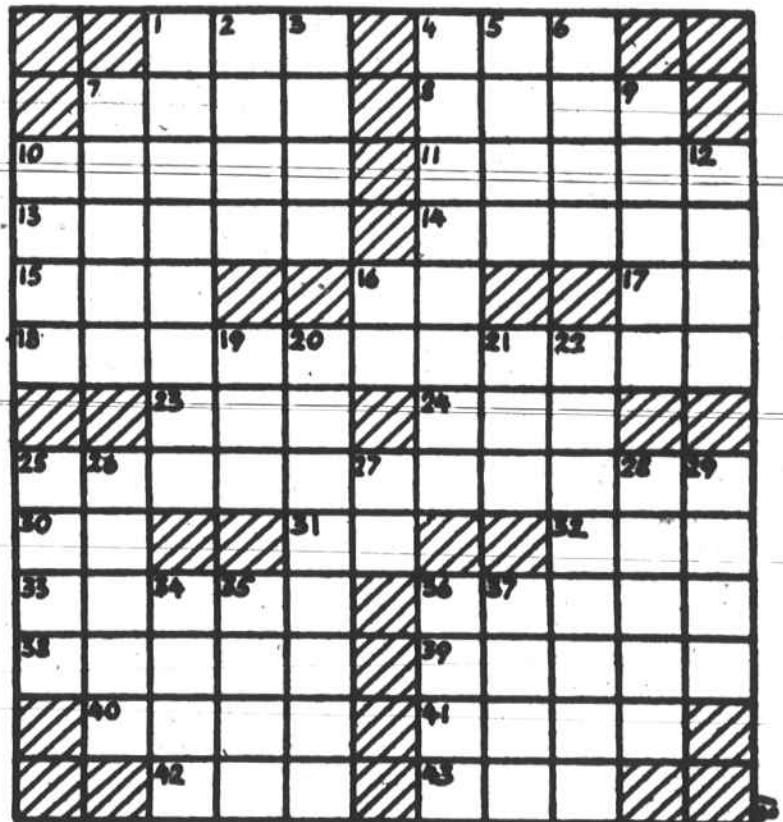
#### ACROSS

1. Lawyer's charge
4. Apron top
7. Heat, as wine
8. Girl's name
10. Anklebone
11. Oil of rose petals
13. Firearm
14. Social division
15. Cuckoo
16. Sign as correct
17. Pronoun
18. — National Park
23. A support
24. Audience
25. A limiting condition
30. Farm animal
31. Water god (Babyl.)
32. Self
33. Obeys
36. English princess (poss.)
38. Excuses
39. Companionable
40. Serf
41. Wine receptacles
42. Compass point (abbr.)
43. Norse goddess of death

#### DOWN

1. Brings to pass
2. Jewish month
3. Otherwise
4. It's north of Turkey
5. Greek letter
6. Morsels
7. Augusta is its capital
9. Glossy fabric
10. Waitress' aid
12. Plexus
16. Cry of pain

#### Answer



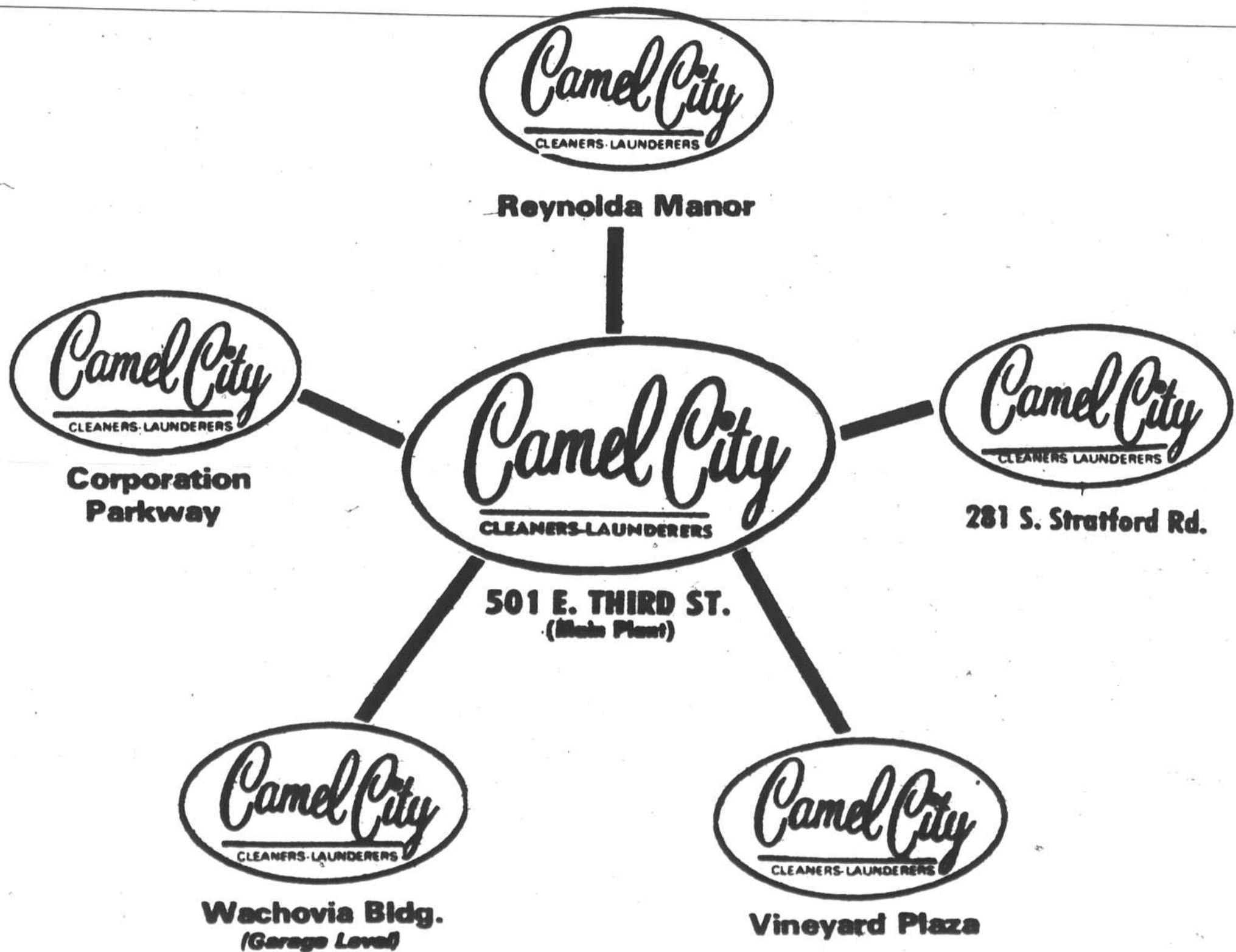
## Democrats To Hold Seminar

The Democratic Party of Forsyth County will hold a seminar on January 13 at 7:30 p.m. on the delegation selection to the Democratic National Convention. The seminar will be held in the large courtroom of the Forsyth County Courthouse.

Wayne A. Corpening, Forsyth Party chairman said the seminar was part of an effort by the Democratic party to assure that all members of the party, including the traditionally under-represented were fully knowledgeable of correct procedure for delegate selections.

"All precinct committee members have been notified of the meeting and have been asked to contact all persons in their precinct who may wish to be convention delegates and also persons who want to become more familiar with party affairs. We have contacted as many local groups as possible that represent the traditionally under-represented," Corpening said.

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