

THE GREATER OFFENSE

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 years. But note that it could not have occurred in the case of one of these youths at all if he had had justice in the court in which he was sentenced, if the assertion attributed to the Charlotte News is true. The News, in launching the charge that the boy was sent to the chaingang when the charge against him was not substantiated, hurls a charge against some court that is dreadful to contemplate. Any citizen may come before that court under circumstances that arouse suspicion. The inhuman treatment in prison



Senator Dudley Bagley
 A man of ideas of whom The State's Voice hopes to carry a sketch in its next issue.

can reach only the prisoners. The injustices of the court may reach just anybody who is so unfortunate as to be brought before it.

Here we see a clear case, if true, of the denial of the inalienable right of the men accused to be considered innocent till he is *proved guilty*.

But, maybe, sentencing to the chaingang without proof of guilt is a privilege reserved by the court for Negroes only.

Unfortunately for the court, the constitutions of the United States and of North Carolina make no distinction between white people and Negroes. If the action of the court is a resultant of race prejudice and innate barbarity on the part of the judge or the jury convicting a youth without proof, it is evident that at least one of North Carolina's courts needs to be reformed or abolished.



Representative W. F. Scholl
 of Mechenburg County.

If there ever occur any real race troubles in North Carolina they will arise from just such inhuman treatment of the defenseless Negro and the too general disregard of constitutional rights in cases in which their rights and liberties are concerned.

The practice in respect to the registration of Negroes qualified for registration is indicative of a too general disregard of oaths to support the constitution when colored

citizens are concerned. Prejudice overrides the sworn duty of the registrar, as it may have overridden justice in the court that sentenced the unfortunate boy to the chaingang despite the fact that they couldn't prove that he had stolen the camera. Such practices can but result in the lowering of the moral tone of the white people and in embittering the colored who are victims or even possible victims of such unholy procedures.

Of the sinners who sent the boy to the chaingang under such circumstances and the convict bosses who adopted the course that resulted in the loss of their feet and the endangerment of their lives, the former are the greater sinners against the state and against humanity. Who can blame a poor Negro youth sentenced, if innocent, if he should not be a model prisoner? The very offense which, in the eyes of the bosses, may have deserved a severe discipline could thus be traced to the court which, according to the News, sentenced a boy to the chaingang without proof of his guilt. It was an injustice even to the prison management to place thus under their charge a young fellow resenting an unjust penalty?

The automobile people got back the limitation of the sales tax on any one article to ten dollars on the ground that a full 3 per cent. levy would cause people to buy in other states. I guess that idea of collecting the tax on such cars when license is purchased had to be dropped because of its unconstitutional interference with interstate trade, since such a tax on a car bought in another state would be essentially a tariff tax. Nevertheless, it is unfair that a man who buys a \$2,000 car may pay only a half of 1 per cent. tax, or the woman who buys a \$500 coat will pay only a 2 per cent. tax, while the poor Negro who buys a pound of meat or a pound of lard will pay a 6 per cent. tax. Even constitutions can work injustices.

A merchant in another town humorously remarked the other day that more meat and flour had been sold in his town the past two years than in any five years previously. There has been no sales tax on those two articles. Making the sales tax apply to all purchases will make it much easier for the state to collect the full tax and will also considerably increase the sum that should be collected. That being true, a 2 per cent. levy should bring

in as much money as the 3 per cent. levy has brought in the past year.

Bob Gray has beaten himself in two recent editorials in the Raleigh Times, judging from the standpoint of conception and fluency. If I had the flow of words that Mr. Gray discovered for himself in his editorial on "September Morn" and that on "Tom Wolfe's Wordy Marathon," I would compliment the Raleigh editor in words as graceful and flowing as that of the editorials themselves. Mr. Gray was sick some time ago, but is evidently restored to his wonted editorial vigor.

Well, it seems solicitors are to have a \$750 raise, or a little more than the full salary of the A-grade teachers. It will be very gratifying if we once see a legislature which does not hold the age-long opinion that lawyers are a superior type of folk and deserve higher awards than the ordinary run of people. Many solicitors could spend the nights at home if they desired, as the judicial districts contain only a few counties. The traveling expenses and board bills of solicitors should be much smaller than those of judges.

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