



Steve Plaisance

Peddlers: Trying To Earn A Living

The peddlers on Franklin Street were banished last week. Everybody knows that. The Chapel Hill Board of Aldermen passed an ordinance on June 22 making it illegal for persons to "display, sell, rent, offer for sale, or rent any goods, wares, merchandise or commercial products of any kind on the streets or sidewalks of the town of Chapel Hill."

But because of the "asthetically beneficial" nature of their wares, the "flower ladies" were allowed to continue vending, provided they procure a license from the town for \$10. If this isn't a clear cut case of discrimination, then may the bird of paradise defecate on my typewriter.

A local Franklin Street merchant has been quoted as saying, "We just want to stop

these people from pressuring the customers on the street."

I've been up and down the length of Franklin many times in past months and never have I been "pressured" by street peddlers. As I remember, they usually spent most of their time working, talking to friends and just sitting around studying the chicks walking by. I've never heard of anyone using the Tijuana tactics of grabbing customers off the street.

So, after weeding through the flimsy excuses given by area merchants and the B.O.A. for busting street peddlers, we come to the monolithic question: Why not have street peddlers? Here are some possible reasons.

What do the street peddlers look like? Joe College? No, they're classified as "hippies" (pronounced "Hee-pees"), part

of the great unwashed, dope peddlers, derelicts, degenerates, advocates of insurrection and revolution. The Chapel Hill city fathers certainly don't want this kind of person on the street as a representative of this "fair community."

The peddlers represent a menace to business in this area because they sell the same wares sold in existing stores, but don't have the added burdens of overhead and employee payrolls. The only costs they encounter are in materials, and the rest goes to pure profit.

Chapel Hill merchants are also scared of what the coming of the street peddlers represents—an open door to anyone wanting to sell anything on the streets, from rings to real estate. They can see a trend coming and they're running scared.

These are quite probably the major reasons for the ban on peddlers, with exception of personal reasons and vendettas which can't be seen on the surface. It is obvious, by the actions of the B.O.A., that the concepts of private enterprise, economic freedom, and the rights of the individual are sadly neglected in favor of protecting the local mercantile minority.

What about the peddlers themselves? In the eyes of local merchants and the B.O.A., they're a bunch of kids on a lark, trying to pick up some extra money while they loiter around the street. But from my personal experience, they're a group of people trying to make a living, like anyone else. They have special skills which allow them to make their own products, so they employ these skills to support themselves

during the summer. And everyone knows how hard it is to get a job here.

So we are still left with the question of why shouldn't peddlers be allowed on the streets? I can see no rational reason. It is true that the sidewalks shouldn't be crowded with hawkers of all kinds of merchandise, but I see nothing wrong with a person selling on the street wares he himself has made.

And as far as the flower ladies are concerned, they should be treated as any of the other street vendors, not given special privileges because of their traditional position in the community.

As one of the street peddlers recently said, "We just want a fair deal. We figure that whatever goes for the flower ladies should go for us too."

That sounds like a reasonable request.

Peter Brown

Agnew: Bring On The Hard Hats

No doubt Vice-President Spiro T. Agnew is engaging in very dangerous politics when he makes remarks that some of our finest leaders, including the great Mayor John V. Lindsay of New York are defeatists and acting unpatriotic. I think he has overstepped the boundaries of even political good taste and common sense in such unwarranted attacks.

Sen. George McGovern said it correctly: "I think he (Agnew) has done more to divide and weaken the country, perhaps than our enemies in Hanoi have done. He is undercutting the whole possibility for a unified American people. He is a divisive, damaging influence on the people of this country."

Why cannot certain elements in the federal administration, namely Vice-President Agnew, insist on certain *a priori* facts of life: we

are not going to win the war in Vietnam in any traditional sense.

Remember his ridiculous statements that "The era of appeasement must come to an end..." and that our college campuses are inhabited by a body of "... criminal misfits".

One can only say that the majority of students have not been infected by a Communist virus. Rather Agnew refuses to see, through his verbose fog, that these misfits are people he is sending to fight in a way that saner folks are trying to stop.

Even when Agnew makes such remarks in the safe shelter of cozy Republican dinners around the country, the press coverage of his comments increase his impact among those who do not understand the "new Puritanism" on the college campuses.

Here in North Carolina, letters poured in to the

university from people who simply could not rationalize the frustration on campus and could not see any reason to have a strike.

The majority of students are not bank burners, bombers, arsonists, Communists, pinkos, or even any longer liberals. The student now emerges as a frustrated adult, and that is, an understatement. He may be a "criminal misfit" in the Vice-President's eyes; but he has no control over the fact that upon completion of a four year education which instructs him in American values, he will be sent halfway around the world to participate in a genocidal war.

Agnew is a mockery of the First Amendment, and if he has not been muzzled, he should be.

The power of his remarks has been underestimated, and one realizes it only when the

hard hats begin to march in counter protests. Certainly students have tarnished their own image through careless and irresponsible acts of violence. But their primary demand is a simple one: end the war in Vietnam at any and all costs.

If all those who acknowledge this are defeatists then we are exactly that. But please don't bring on the hard hats. Their real ire should not be with the student, but with the administration which uses them for political expediency.

UNC graduate William Shirer, author of "The Rise and Fall of The Third Reich," points out in an excellent interview (Chapel Hill Weekly, June 21) how one can unfortunately compare Agnew's appeal *ad hominem* to the frightening and effective propaganda machine of a rising Third Reich.

Agnew has taken the liberty of lumping Senators Fulbright, McGovern, and Kennedy, former Defense Secretary Clark Clifford, ex-Ambassador Averell Harriman, and Mayor John V. Lindsay into the category of "summer soldiers and sunshine patriots." (These being the words of Thomas Paine about those who remained loyal to the king during the American Revolution.)

One should not dismiss the words of the vice president, for he has a great increasing following. But his tactics are antithetical to many student desires to reopen channels of communication, to work within the system.

Why must it be that those who look to Washington for leadership in this time of crisis are met with ill begotten invectives from Spiro T. Agnew?

'Just Another Day For Africans'

Cureton Johnson

It was Crispus Attacks, a black man, who died first in the Boston Massacre. At Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill, blood flowed and fertilized the soil for today's budding cries of hallowed patriotism.

Continental Congresses met extolling the virtues of freedom—condoning and sanctioning the practice of slavery. The founding fathers, some slave holders and others abolitionist, all wore faces of grief in confronting "What to do with the African people?"

"Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government," said Tom Jefferson.

Then as now the black man is not equally free. Independence celebrations mean less when one knows he was classified as three-fifths man.

A bus trip from Durham to Chapel Hill early Monday morning was a reminder to me.

A reminder that former years of slavery have turned into neo-slavery.

At the crack of dawn a dirty Trailways tugs out of gate seven in the Bull City. I, an unbathed, unshaven and hungry student whose car broke down the night before, must temporarily "leave the driving to them."

Every seat is filled. Two ladies and one man hold clenched fist against baggage racks as they earn a chance to warm-up for the day to

come—mopping, sweeping, walking, walking and... They got on last.

Forty-six, 47, 50, 52.

The number increases as Chapel Hill draws near. No more space to pack the people, but up the steps they come to journey to Chapel Hill. One more stop and we'll have to lie in the aisle and sing songs to forget the stuffiness. The more on board means greater profits.

Two white beings are present. One situated haughtily in the first seat where the breeze passes him and into the nostrils of those behind. The sight to the rear is only visible through a mirror above the driver's head. But the mirror can't reflect invisible people.

And the driver? Well, he sits all fat, sloppy and Klanish, driving his whip into the

passengers—first gear, second, third...

"What a damn way to start a Monday," someone mourns.

"Any day is ruint the way this mutha drives," answered a young man sporting tennis shoes and a brown lunch bag.

The slave ship (15-501) pulls into the awakening "Village"; past church steeples, white columns and brick sidewalks. A seven till four shift at the hospital; a morning and afternoon in Old East being greeted by smiling pale faces. "What's hap'ning, Willie, old boy?"

During the 1776 revolution, 65,000 slaves were lost to the British as refugees, fighters and informers. About 5,000 fought

for—America's birth. Who was right?

A stone caught in the grooves of the back right tire whispered kill, kill, kill on every rendezvous with the

pavement. With each rough change of gears from the Mississippi looking driver, I was reminded that Richard Wright's characterization of Bigger Thomas (*Native Son*) was part of me.

So July 4th is the birth of America to some citizens. To Africans it's another day. A rest between Friday's and Monday's bus rides.

What will be done? Who will seize the time?

Power to the people.