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JANUARY 22, 1953

## The Law And The Man

Charles E. Wilson, head of General Motors, unquestionably can bring great ability to government service. And nobody questions his honesty.

But Mr. Wilson betrays slight regard for the fitness of things when he insists on retaining his stock in General Motors while serving as Secretary of Defense.

As a matter of fact, the law specifically forbids a public official to do business with a firm in which he is financially interested—and the Defense Department buys more from General Motors than from any other corporation!

But even if there were no such law, Mr. Wilson should recognize that it does not make sense for a man, in his capacity as an office holder, to trade with himself, in his capacity as a private business man.

What is perhaps most disturbing is the proposal—which may have been acted upon before this is published—to so amend the law that Mr. Wilson can hold his office and have his stock, too.

It is not for the law to conform to the wishes of the individual, but for the individual to conform to the law. Mr. Wilson's acceptance of the office under such an arrangement would, in itself, be strong evidence that he is unfit for a position of public trust.

## Rural Fire Protection

Frequently Franklin's volunteer firemen roll out of the city limits and into the county to extinguish a fire—an illegal maneuver, if one wants to adhere strictly to the law, for fire protection in the county is an obligation of the county.

But Macon County provides no such protection for its citizens and, to quote Franklin Fire Chief A. C. Tysinger:

"... it's hard to tell a man who is pleading for help that you can't go outside the city limits."

Although Franklin, with its one fire truck, is left without protection when the truck answers a call in the county, the firemen consider giving help a moral obligation, regardless of the legality of the move.

Recently Franklin aldermen visited the board of county commissioners and suggested a joint scheme, involving the purchase of a fire truck by the county, to provide fire protection for both the county and the town. Nothing definite was agreed upon.

So Franklin's lone fire truck continues to faithfully roll out into the county on "moral" missions.

But who is really morally obligated to give fire protection out in the county, the town's volunteer firemen or the county government?

## Presidential Headgear

General Eisenhower's departure from the traditional wearing of top hat and formal dress at his inauguration Tuesday (he wore a homburg and dark flannel suit) came as a refreshing change to many. All too frequently tradition can border on the ridiculous.

But please, you future Presidents, no "beanies" and blue jeans!

Had the doctrines of Jesus been preached always as pure as they came from His lips, the whole civilized world would now have been Christians.—Jefferson.

## Letters

### ADVISES YOUTH: STAY WHERE YOU ARE

Dear Weimar,

Very frequently I receive clippings from The Press showing the progress of Macon County and Franklin. This has been a source of pleasure to me to note what great strides have been made in the past 25 years, and still on the upward grade. It is amazing what new and young blood have accomplished.

I left the county in 1900, as many other young men did, not to seek wealth elsewhere, but to make a living. Those conditions do not exist in Western North Carolina today.

My suggestion to the youngsters is, remain at home. They have unlimited opportunities, if only they apply themselves. From my observation, they have one of the most progressive states in the Union.

CHAS. T. ALLMAN.

Baltimore, Md.

### Lost A War... Won Immortality

EVEN AMONG the free, it is not always easy to live together.

There came a time, less than a hundred years ago, when the people of this country disagreed so bitterly among themselves that some of them felt they could not go on living with the rest.

A test of arms was made to decide whether Americans should remain one nation or become two. The armies of those who believed in two nations were led by a man named Robert E. Lee.

What about Lee? What kind of man was he who nearly split the history of the United States down the middle and made two separate books of it?

They say you had to see him to believe that a man so fine could exist. He was handsome. He was clever. He was brave. He was gentle. He was generous and charming, noble and modest, admired and beloved. He had never failed at anything in his upright soldier's life. He was a born winner, this Robert E. Lee.

Except for once. In the greatest contest of his life, in the war between the South and the North, Robert E. Lee lost.

Now there were men who came with smouldering eyes to Lee and said:

"Let's not accept this result as final. Let's keep our anger alive. Let's be grim and unconvincing, and wear our bitterness like a medal. You can be our leader in this."

But Lee shook his head at those men. "Abandon your animosities," he said, "and make your sons Americans."

And what did he do himself when his war was lost? He took a job as president of a tiny college, with forty students and four professors, at a salary of \$1500 a year. He had commanded thousands of young men in battle. Now he wanted to prepare a few hundred of them for the duties of peace. So the countrymen of Robert E. Lee saw how a born winner loses, and it seemed to them that in defeat he won his most lasting victory.

There is an art of losing, and Robert E. Lee is its finest teacher. In a democracy, where opposing viewpoints regularly meet for a test of ballots, it is good for all of us to know how to lose occasionally, how to yield peacefully, for the sake of freedom. Lee is our master in this. The man who fought against the Union showed us what unity means.

—From an advertisement of the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company.

## Others' Opinions

### WE NEED AN INSPECTION LAW

(Chatham News)

With the statistics of holiday tragedies still fresh in our minds and the next session of the General Assembly upcoming in a matter of days, public awareness of the need for a motor vehicle inspection law is a "must" on the agenda.

Since the repeal of the 1947 law there has been a constant increase in the accident rate on North Carolina highways. There has also been a corresponding increase in the casualty insurance rates.

It is not being claimed in this corner that a motor vehicle

## Rail oddities



## OUR DEMOCRACY—by Met

### OH BUILD ME A HOME—



IN COLONIAL TIMES OUR FOREFATHERS BUILT THEIR OWN HOMES WITH THE HELP OF THEIR NEIGHBORS. THEY CUT TREES INTO LOGS, STRIPPED THEM, PLANKED THEM, NOTCHED AND LASHED AND PEGGED THEM INTO WALLS, FLOORS, ROOFS. THE PRICE OF A HOME WAS THE PRICE OF AN AXE.



IN THIS MODERN AGE OF SPECIALIZATION, A HOME HAS BECOME THE BIGGEST SINGLE EXPENSE IN THE LIFE OF THE AVERAGE AMERICAN FAMILY. YET MORE THAN HALF THE POPULATION OWN HOMES TODAY AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER FAMILIES ARE WORKING AND SAVING TO BUY ONE. AT THE SAME TIME, FOUR OUT OF FIVE AMERICAN FAMILIES ARE PUTTING A ROOF OVER THEIR FUTURE TOO, THROUGH INCREASED LIFE INSURANCE AND SAVINGS.

law is the answer to our highway ills. It will help, however, as it has in other states where a similar law has been in effect for many years.

No one claimed perfection for the 1947 law. Its administration, we admit, was poorly handled. Main opposition, we believe, stemmed from the public being subjected to a great deal of bureaucratic inconvenience such as long hours in line, arbitrary actions by inspectors and various other things of a petty nature that tended to lessen public favor therewith.

Despite all this there still seemed to be sufficient of a beneficial nature in the law to assure its retention. Its repeal was largely contrived for reasons of political expediency.

Since repeal of the first law there has been a continuous build-up of public sentiment in favor of a new law; one that will be free of the petty annoyances that killed the first one.

Thus far the public hasn't been sufficiently vocative for its sentiment to be heard in Raleigh.

Motor vehicle inspection can be effected with a minimum of bureaucracy. Surely there are a sufficiently large number of garages in North Carolina that could be charged with the responsibility for inspection. The procedure could be worked out so that inspection could be routine.

Any new law may or may not sharply curtail the accident rate on our highways. But surely it is a beginning.

### NO UNDUE DELAY FOR THIS DIVORCE

(Smithfield Herald)

Governor Umstead seems to have pleased most hearers and readers with the positive proposals of his inaugural speech, but one portion of it raises a question. That was his proposal that the divorce of the State Highway Department from the prison system be deferred for further study of the financial aspects of the situation.

There can be no reasonable objection to further study of all that such a divorce would entail, and yet there is no dodging the fact that this involves delay. What all good citizens will demand is that this delay does not eventuate in a shelving or shunting of the whole idea of divorce.

The people of the state are pretty well convinced that the shotgun union between highways and prisons is an artificial and political one, and one that is not working out well in practice. There is an uncomfortable feeling that highway prison camps, with a few exceptions, are grisly affairs, and that all is not well within the prison system itself. It would seem to be common sense to expect the best efficiency when there is the best concentration on highways on the one hand, and on prisons on the other hand; and that there should not be any confusion, or overlapping, or divided attention.

The constant parading of convict work gangs along our highways does not present a pretty sight to tourists, or make a good impression on visitors. And the whole state will feel better when a better disposition is made of beardless youths, offenders though they may be, than to put them on such gangs under a grim display of guns and guards.

Let the prison system be conducted by trained and experienced men, and let the highway system enjoy the same kind of leadership. A separation is called for, and Governor Umstead will make a good impression by favoring it and pushing it.

### COURTESY FOR COURTESY

(Rocky Mount Telegram)

We recognize the fact that a certain amount of carelessness must be expected from the school age child. They cannot be expected to remember the rules of safety that they are asked to abide by. Nevertheless, the child who rides a bicycle on the public streets has a duty to the motorist, just as the motorist recognizes a responsibility toward the children.

That duty is to ride and walk carefully, observing the rules of safety that are designed to protect the child. The children should also recognize their responsibility to the driver and return courtesy for courtesy.

## News Making As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

Tomorrow (this being Monday morning when I am writing) a new president will take office. With the inauguration of Dwight Eisenhower there will be a new administration and a "new look" at the problems of running the government of the United States.

It will not be, as the most rabid republicans (included in this group are many of the democrats for Eisenhower) hoped, a complete turning back the clock to the days of high tariff, no minimum wage, and farm prosperity only when all conditions such as market, supply, and weather were just right. However, there will be more curtailment of government activity than had Stevenson been elected president.

The foreign situation—who knows? There are too many question marks. For example, will Stalin continue his recent policy of keeping pressure on the free countries of the world by fermenting trouble at every spot possible? Or will he extend the dove of peace seated on an olive branch in an effort to again lure us into a sense of false security only to club us in the head 10 years hence if we go to sleep?

I think that the new president will do all in his power to bring peace, but I do hope that he will not become so intent in this effort that he will give up any of the principals for which American soldiers have died for on any battle fields. Remembering the talk (this was not campaign talk) that Eisen-

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## STRICTLY PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

"Where would the South be today, if there had been no Civil War," a friend asked the other day.

The question provokes interesting speculation.

Nearly a century after the Civil War, the South is only now about to catch up with the rest of the country. It took this region almost a hundred years to regain the ground lost in the sixties.

At first thought, then, it would seem reasonable to say that, had there been no Civil War, the South today would be a century ahead of the country as a whole.

That assumption, however, fails to take into account a lot of factors.

The two most important ones, perhaps, are: Slavery; and the FAVORABLE effects, on the South, of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

No one can study American history without reaching the conclusion that, as far as slavery was concerned, there was no reason for the war; that it was a needless tragedy, brought about by the fanaticism of abolitionists, plus the hysterical fear of Southern extremists.

For slavery was on the way out long before the outbreak of war. The moral conscience of the South recognized that the institution was wrong. Perhaps even more effective was the economic consideration. The increasingly industrialized North had learned, early in the nineteenth century, that slavery just didn't pay. And by mid-century, the fact that it didn't pay, even in the largely agricultural South, was being recognized. The result was the freeing of more and more slaves.

Without a war, slavery would have disappeared in the South, long before this. But it would have disappeared far more SLOWLY.

And that fact would have served as a brake on Southern progress. The South not only would have borne the economic burden of slavery longer; it also would have borne the moral burden longer—for slavery probably was an even greater curse to the Southern white man than to the Negro.

The Civil War left the South economically bankrupt. Furthermore, the war that freed a race from slavery brought slavery, in a different form, to a whole region. For 15 or 20 years the South was in political slavery to the rest of the country; its economic slavery is ending only now.

But the war and what followed did something to Southern character that explains better than anything else the phenomenal progress of the South since 1865; the poverty and hardship and difficulty of