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FEBRUARY 5, 1953

Be Getting Somewhere

The State Utilities Commission has denied the petition of the Southern Railway System to discontinue passenger trains Nos. 111 and 112, connecting North Carolina's east and west.

Because there is a "public need" for the service, the railway must continue to operate these trains, says the Commission order, "even though it does not appear possible to make their operation profitable".

The Commission has said, in effect, that the railroad, being a monopoly, must provide needed service, even at a financial loss, and count on making up that loss elsewhere.

Now if the Commission will just apply the same yardstick to the bus companies, we'll be getting somewhere.

Democracy At Its Worst

History repeats itself—again.

Once more, dispatches from Raleigh indicate, any proposal for a state-wide referendum on liquor is to be smothered in committee. The 1953 house committee on propositions and grievances, the body that normally would act upon any referendum bills, is clearly dominated by the wets, reports the Associated Press. That almost certainly means that no referendum bill will reach the floor of the house.

Thus a little group of men not only will deny the people of North Carolina the right to vote on this issue, but will even deny the people's representatives in the general assembly the right to say whether the issue shall be submitted to the voters. That is democracy at its worst.

This newspaper questions nobody's motives. It would take conclusive evidence to convince us that the members of this committee either are wicked or in the employ of the liquor interests. Chances are the committee members are doing what they think is best for the state.

Obviously, they fear the result of a referendum would be to dry up the state, and they think that would be bad. So they carefully see to it that there shall be no referendum.

That attitude, unfortunately, is not new among North Carolina political leaders. There long has been a considerable element in this state committed to the theory that good government demands rule by a benevolent plutocracy; a small group deciding, in its superior wisdom, what is best for the people.

The liquor referendum issue throws into relief once more this conflict between plutocracy and democracy.

For the issue in this case is not prohibition vs. legal control.

The issue is the right of the people to rule—their right to decide for themselves; their right, even, to be wrong.

This Is News!

This is news:

The latest army punishment for desertion and going AWOL is assignment to combat duty in Korea. A dispatch from Ford Meade, Md., describes the loading of about 100 of these deserters and AWOL's on a West Coast-bound plane, under armed guard.

This new policy inevitably raises some questions:

What sort of soldiers will we get from men who

have to be escorted to the front lines under armed guard?

What will such a policy do to our traditional concept of free men voluntarily fighting for their country?

How much closer can we get to Soviet methods—and still have anything left worth fighting for?

Letters

WHAT THE DIMES DO

Dear Mr. Jones:

I look forward to receiving The Press each week and enjoying reading the news concerning my Macon County friends. I was doubly pleased to learn that the polio drive was getting top billing there. This came as no surprise because I remember that Macon County always goes all out for a worthy cause. I would like to give an additional plug for this March of Dimes drive.

While I have been studying physical therapy here at the Medical College of Virginia, I have encountered many of the youngsters who are benefiting from your contributions to the March of Dimes. As you know, the care of these polio victims is an expensive one and your contributions provide the medical care which they probably could not have financed alone. About four out of every five polio victims need and receive aid from the National Foundation of Infantile Paralysis.

Extensive research, special equipment, as well as the training of personnel are other services which the National Foundation of Infantile Paralysis finances in order to make the future of these poliomyelitis patients a brighter one. Physical therapists are included in the medical team concerned with treating the polio patient. Scholarships from the National Foundation make this physical therapy training available to certain interested students—I should know, I happen to be one of the fortunate students receiving one of these scholarships.

I would like to add my personal thanks to those of you who have made this training possible through your contributions to the March of Dimes.

Sincerely,

Richmond, Va.

LUCILLE HANNAH

Others' Opinions

RATE MAKING: A NEW WRINKLE

(Asheville Citizen)

In its order granting a rate increase to Western Carolina Telephone Company, the State Utilities Commission apparently has established a new formula of rate charges which may save money for telephone users.

In brief, the Commission abandoned the mandatory "rate of return" method yielding a return of 6.5 per cent when it granted Western Carolina a \$76,000 increase. Under this method the larger telephone companies have won five substantial rate increases since the end of the war. They are now applying for a sixth.

The new formula is as complicated as the old one and it does not settle the controversy over how much should be allowed a utility for cash working capital. In bare outline, it sets the rate of return through application of net operating income earned during a specified test period to the investment at the end of the period—instead of on an average net investment. The "rate of return" thus falls below 6.5 per cent, yet it is regarded as fair. "If the formula becomes a permanent guide," writes Jim Chaney in the Raleigh News and Observer, "telephone companies will be limited in the future to earnings no larger than those required to pay expenses, including taxes and depreciation, meet fixed charges such as interest on borrowed money, provide reasonable dividends and add reasonable amounts to their surpluses."

The "if" may have to be written in large letters. Southern Bell has requested an increase of \$4.7 million, sufficient to give it a return of 7.24 per cent. Carolina Telephone has asked for a return of 7.5 per cent. Both companies will get something. If the Western Carolina formula holds, however, the return may yield less than the old 6.5 per cent formula.

The Utilities Commission of course should not penalize the telephone companies. They are subject to rate-fixing because they hold exclusive franchises. A good case can be made, however, for questioning the Commission's past generosity and for the fear that essential telephone service is in danger of being priced out of the market. The new Western Carolina formula is the most significant change in telephone rate-making in many years. If it is truly equitable as between the utility and the consumer, it ought to set a pattern.

SAFETY NOTE

(Harnett County News)

A wag brings forth the following note on safety:

An automobile can help you see the world—but it's up to you to decide which world.

BETTER THAN SQUAB

(Miss Beatrice Cobb in Morganton News-Herald)

One night last week, just after my return from the luxurious Greenbrier Hotel at White Sulphur Spring, W. Va., where I had feasted on rich and fancy foods, including such things as crab meat, lobsters, scallops, squab, to mention just a few of the items I never have at home, I had corn meal mush and milk for supper. Of course, I know that such fare is not conducive to taking off the ten or fifteen pounds I need to lose in weight, but that mush tasted better than anything I had eaten in a long time, even at the swanky Greenbrier. I had determined

OUR DEMOCRACY—by Mat

LIFE THROUGH RESEARCH

UNTIL A RESEARCH EXPERT OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE PEERED THROUGH A MICROSCOPE EARLY IN 1922, ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER WAS A RUNAWAY KILLER DISEASE. THROUGH THE EYE OF HIS MICROSCOPE HE WATCHED A CARRIER TICK WHISPER AND SQUIRM, THEN HE GENTLY SQUEEZED A DROP OF EXPERIMENTAL VACCINE ON THE SLIDE—AND DEATH LAY DEAD.



FOR MANY YEARS, DEDICATED RESEARCH DOCTORS HAVE LABORED UNKNOWN IN MEDICAL RESEARCH LABORATORIES, FAILING AGAIN AND AGAIN, UNTIL ONE DAY THEY LEARNED HOW TO KILL THE GERM OR THE VIRUS THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY HAVE KILLED YOU.

at the Greenbrier, where all of us admitted to overeating, that, when I got back home and on "every-day rations", I'd at least make a gesture toward dieting. Laura's remembering that I had wished out loud for some mush, when I bought some water-ground meal a few days ago, broke down my dieting resolve before I could put it into practice. She surprised me with what she knew I'd consider a real treat, going back to "her" kitchen an hour earlier that afternoon in order to have time to let the mush cook slowly for at least an hour. It can be made, of course, in less time than an hour, but it is not as good as when cooked for that length of time in a double boiler. As a matter of fact my tastes in food seem to include all the things that are fattening.

CONJURE WOMAN

(Hamlet News-Messenger)

Zeke and I were almost inseparable. He was my colored playmate. He was awfully good to me, and I shared just about everything I had with him. He had nothing to share but his kindly disposition, and he was generous with that.

I went barefooted for about seven months of the year, Zeke practically the whole year through. Therefore his feet were tougher than mine in the Spring. It was then that the wild dewberries ripened. Although he was no bigger than I, he would carry me through the briars when we were making our rounds on the dewberries. And he would go into the hard places and get the finest berries, bring them out, and always share them with me.

One summer Zeke got warts all over his hands and feet. His mother switched him for playing with frogs. For that was a firm belief among them, that only toads caused warts.

That belief was well grounded in both of us, and we really hadn't been playing with frogs, although we wanted to. But nevertheless he got his whipping, for they just knew he had, for what else could have caused those warts? His grandmother was the old "conjure woman" of the community. She used conjure for them, and they soon went away. That consisted of making a cross on his foot with the back of a sooty frying pan and mumbling a few strange sounds. Guess the things would have soon gone away anyway. But when they did, we kids believed more than ever in the old conjure woman.

THE GREAT DISMAL

(Vernon Sechrist in Rocky Mount Telegram)

I went back into the Great Dismal Swamp again the other afternoon and, with two companions, came out the next day feeling better than I had felt in years.

John Reed, Kel Landis and I were members of the latest expedition. We penetrated deeper into the Swamp than ever before—but not until we had taken careful compass readings and kept checking on our surroundings all the way.

Incidentally, a dry late summer and early fall had dried out great sections of the Swamp that couldn't be traversed afoot on previous excursions. Lake Drummond, up in Virginia, had gone almost dry and the canal leading to it from the outside has become empty, too.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing we have discovered about the Swamp is that it is almost completely free of insects. There are no mosquitoes, no ants, only an occasional harmless spider and hardly any insects winging their way over the wastelands. Reasons that have been advanced are that the bird life and the fishes take such terrific tolls of larvae, eggs, etc., that insects are unable to multiply. But it certainly is refreshing to be able to stretch out in a sleeping bag with the knowledge that nothing worse than an occasional bear or wildcat can do you harm—and everybody knows that one mosquito buzzing, humming, and biting in the night is much worse than a dozen wildcats or bears.

He alone is happy and great who needs neither to obey nor to command in order to distinguish himself.—Goethe.

News Making As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

The outlook is so black on the farm front that one grasps in the dark for any ray of light that he can find. With this in mind we find the following news encouraging.

The State Farmers Market located at Dillard, Ga., which was set up two years ago is reporting a steady growth in their volume of business. Market sales for the year 1952 amounted to \$128,253.28 as compared with sales of \$102,348.00 for the year 1951. Since this institution offers a market for the sale of Macon County produce although it is operated by the Georgia Department of Agriculture we are interested in its growth.

On the whole, however, nation-wide the farm picture continues to look increasingly dark with farm prices continuing to decline while the price of the products the farmer has to buy stay at a high level. The economy of this country is too tied up with agriculture to shrug this off. Some of the same conditions seem to be developing that led to the depression of the early 30's. People in Washington had better start studying about what to do about farm prices?

One of the best things that could happen here for Macon County would be for the state highway department to speed up the time schedule on the construction of the highway from the Cowee gap to Sylva. If it is postponed until the Franklin-Ga. line section is completed our tourist business will suffer for four years instead of about two. Folks, that will hurt. Franklin businessmen would do well to "take their foot in their hand" so to speak and journey over to Asheville and hold prayers with the state highway officials there.

The weather seems to be on the side of our new tractor dealers. Anyhow it sure makes you want to turn dirt. Let's hope that more Macon County land is seeded in pasture than ever before.

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Mr. Lush Gribble, of Hiwassee, Ga., was on a visit to relatives here the latter part of last week.

Postmaster Furman Jarrett has added twenty-four new lock boxes to the post office. They are larger than those that have been in use for some time. The rental of the new boxes is 40 cents per quarter.

Mr. Zack Leatherman, who lives on the head of Cowee, was in town one day last week with one of the finest mules we have seen in a long time. He sold it to Mr. J. A. Porter for a figure considerably above a "C".

25 YEARS AGO

It appears to us about time to call an election with a view to changing the present form of town government to that of a city manager. Under the aldermanic form of government there is entirely too much passing of the buck when anything goes wrong.

Misses Katherine Porter, Thelma Ray, Timoxena Crawford, and Ora Sue Hunnicutt returned to Greensboro where they will resume their studies at N. C. C. W. Mr. Quince Norton drove Mr. J. A. Porter's car which carried the young ladies back to college.

Miss Fannie Thomas, who has been staying in New York for some months, is now at home with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Thomas.

10 YEARS AGO

Misses Agnes Hastings, Ruth Lakey, and Irene Mason, of Franklin, have returned home after spending a week in Gastonia and Asheville.

Miss Jessie Potts, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Potts, has been elected associate editor of The Clarion, Brevard College newspaper.

Mrs. Margaret T. Oliver, daughter of Mrs. John J. Tice, Franklin, Route 3, has completed her training at Sardis Radio School at Charlotte and has been transferred into the Signal Service Corps at Fort Monmouth, N. J.