

JANUARY 14, 1954

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

OUTSIDE MACON COUNTY		INSIDE MACON COUNTY	
One Year	\$3.00	One Year	\$2.50
Six Months	1.75	Six Months	1.75
Three Months	1.00	Three Months	1.00

Significant Omission

Most intelligent and fair-minded Americans almost certainly applaud the overall program presented by President Eisenhower in his State of the Union Message last week. Most thoughtful persons, in fact, regardless of party, find themselves in agreement, except for a point here and there, with everything the President said.

But the significance of the speech well may lie not in what the President said, but in what he did not say.

Mr. Eisenhower seeks an America strong enough to defend itself against its enemies; he wants a sound and growing economy; and he is convinced the government has a social responsibility to citizens in distress.

Those are desirable and necessary objectives; nearly all of us want them. But those three—national security, prosperity, and aid to the needy—are identically the things the Soviet rulers promise their people.

The message was ominously silent on a fourth and equally important objective.

A casual reading of the address, it is true, reveals much space devoted to the discussion of the preservation of freedom, but any careful reader cannot escape the conclusion—the context makes it obvious—that what Mr. Eisenhower really was talking about was national security, the freedom of this nation from physical conquest by Communist Russia.

Nowhere in the entire speech is there one word to indicate concern for the preservation of the personal freedoms guaranteed Americans by their Bill of Rights.

Those freedoms are under attack today; some of them already have been greatly modified, and others are in danger. Indeed, our own efforts toward national security gravely threaten them, because national security and personal freedom often conflict. How to resolve that conflict is the most pressing problem facing this nation today.

For after all, the only really important difference between life in the United States and life in Soviet Russia is the difference in personal freedom.

Toward Fairer Taxes

Many Macon County people favor a more accurate, and therefore a more just, appraisal of property for tax purposes.

Most taxpayers list their property at some arbitrary figure of "about two-thirds" of its real value, or put down a figure that they "guess would be about right". Under this hit-or-miss, guess system, the person who is honest lists his property at a figure far closer to its true value than the person with less conscience.

The inevitable result is that the taxpayer who tries to be honest pays his share of the taxes, plus a considerable share of the less honest person's.

It has often been pointed out that a genuine revaluation, with property listed for taxes at its true value, not only would be a far fairer arrangement than the present one, but also would enable us to reduce our tax rate substantially. And a low tax rate always is an important point in bringing people, and industries, into a community.

Orange County recently has had a scientific revaluation—with some spectacular results.

The Orange commissioners hired a team of expert appraisers from outside the county to come in and appraise all property at what seemed its true value. The commissioners, however, compromised and listed property not at its true value, but at 70 per cent of the value put on it by the appraisers. None the less, the listings are based on scientific, impartial appraisals.

The first result was that, even listing property at

only 70 per cent of its actual value, the total valuation has come up so much that the county has been able to cut its tax rate from \$1 to 60 cents.

And Orange is one of the state's poorer counties. (A large proportion of its property is on the University campus, and thus, being state-owned, is not subject to county taxation.)

The second result was the raising of some people's taxes, the lowering of that of others, a pretty clear indication that the old system resulted in tax inequalities.

In the following five examples, listed in The Chapel Hill Weekly, of old and new valuations and taxes on Chapel Hill homes, note that both tax reductions and increases apply to homes of various values:

- Example 1: Old assessment \$8,850, new \$10,330; old taxes \$271, new taxes \$233.
- 2. Old assessment \$6,191, new \$11,491; old taxes \$163, new \$188.
- 3. Old assessment \$2,500, new \$7,000; old taxes \$66, new \$113.
- 4. Old assessment \$720, new \$1,050; old taxes \$19, new \$16.
- 5. Old assessment \$11,660, new \$17,500; old taxes \$305, new \$285.

The Mess In Charlotte

Bombings, murders, police "protection", tax evasions, secret deals, double crosses, hidden "fixes", federal officers used as errand boys — all these things have figured in the hearing at Charlotte in which a police chief is accused of malfeasance.

Charlotte is the nearest thing we have in North Carolina to a big city. In recent years it has attained great prosperity as a business center, and its growth has been remarkable. Has too big a price been paid for that growth?

The outside world has somehow got the impression that during the boom years certain sections of Charlotte's population have been trying to make a fast dollar—and have not been too scrupulous about the methods used.

Has Charlotte been bowing too low before the golden calf? Has the town been blinded by the dollars dropped on its eyelids? Has it turned over its leadership in social and political life to men of low character and odorous morals? Has the decent citizenship in Charlotte been submerged by gangsters coming from a putrid underworld?

What the right answers to these questions are we can't say. Our only comment would be that, at this distance, it seems that Charlotte is due for a drastic dry cleaning at the very centers of its life.

Some of the people there are of old Covenanter stock. They have no truck with criminals or soiled money, but will they rise up and cleanse the city now, or leave it as an object-lesson in failure?

Others' Opinions

A SHORTAGE OF DISKS

(Chicago Daily Tribune)

The noteworthy absence of flying saucers in the last year or so makes us feel a little like the schoolgirl at whom the boys suddenly quit throwing spitballs. What is the matter with us that they should lose interest so abruptly?

NOTE ON AN UNDOING

(Greensboro Daily News)

The Nash County Board of Commissioners struck a blow for freedom of information, which is at the base of our system of representative government, earlier this week when it unanimously passed a resolution calling for repeal of the 1951 legislation which struck out a previous requirement for public meetings of county boards.

The Nash commissioners' action is especially significant in that the surviving co-sponsor of the 1951 bill at point was that county's own representative in the house, Tom A. Williams. Mr. Williams, be it said to his credit, has already declared that he introduced the act by request of the State Association of County Commissioners, that he had no intention of legalizing closed sessions and that he is in favor of restoring the mandatory open session provision.

That has been the attitude of county commissioners generally, with Guilford's board sharply to the forefront. That attitude we commend and on the basis of it assume that the organized commissioners themselves will, despite the fact that the New Hanover County board brought the repealer to light by falling back upon it and holding a secret session, take the initiative in restoration of the secrecy ban at next year's General Assembly.

Despite all these developments, however, and the relief which they portend, we cannot get away from the fact that this now generally repudiated legislation was placed on the statute books in 1951 and that about three years went by before anyone dis-

covered it. Somebody—with the press itself included in our sweep—was asleep at the time and has a share of responsibility for what happened. Any unacceptable legislation on the books ought to be removed; but that does not obviate the primary obligation of keeping it off in the first place and avoiding any losses, deprivations, discriminations or injustices which it may temporarily bring. Eternal vigilance remains the same price of liberty that it has ever been.

Letters

CONGRATULATIONS

Dear Sir:

We wish to offer congratulations to communities of Oak Grove, Carson, and Clark's Chapel—winners of the recent decorations contest.

We would especially like to thank the Nantahala Power and Light Company for sponsoring this contest, as it did much toward promoting community interest during the Christmas season.

We would also like to commend the ones who did the judging for a difficult job well done.

Sincerely yours,

The Patton Community Development Organization
Erwin Patton, President
Mrs. Ted Blaine, Secretary-Treasurer

A LATE THANK YOU

Dear Sir:

Old news is the last thing a newspaper wishes to be found guilty of printing; so out of the kindness of your heart may you find room for a late 1953 THANK YOU.

The nativity scene, placed at the foot of Town Hill during the Christmas season, under the direction of Mrs. J. W. Long and Mrs. B. L. McGlamery, would not have been a very successful story without the assistance of the following: Dr. Edgar Angel, for the location; A. A. Brooks and the Nantahala Power and Light Company crew, for shrubbery; Boy Scouts, under the leadership of Dr. G. R. McSween, for the thatched roof; James Cunningham, for lighting; and Macon County Supply, for the pole for the star.

The garden club wishes to express its sincere appreciation for the helping hands, hours of time, and "know how" necessary to make the display the success it was.

MRS. R. G. LICHTENSTEIN,
President, Franklin Garden Club

COMMENDS CHURCH PAGE

Dear Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those who sponsor the church advertisements in The Press. They are to be commended for their public interest in the churches of Macon County.

The insert in last week's church page, entitled, "I Don't Need To Go To Church", was very impressive indeed.

I have been out of N. C. for 27 years. I am now back again to live here for a while. The cleanness of the county has not escaped my notice. Clean, well kept farms, good roads, and nice homes, give one the feeling that it is "God's Country", and must be a good place to live.

The good order in the town of Franklin, the absence of drunkenness and such things as go with it, is certainly the evidence of efficient public officials, who are carrying out the wishes of the majority of the people of Macon County.

I am now the pastor of The Assembly of God Church at Culasaja, and trust that our effort there in the preaching of the gospel will help to make this county an even better place in which to live.

We extend a warm welcome to our many friends and strangers as well to worship with us.

Sincerely,

January 9, 1954

REV. W. C. JOLLAY.

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

CHAPEL HILL.—Here, believe it or not, is the subject that was announced for a public lecture to be given here:

"The Optimum Properties of Certain Non-Parametric Decision Rules."

Not because I expected to be interested in what the speaker said, but because I was dying of curiosity to know what in the world the subject meant, I went to the lecture.

You guessed it; I still don't know what it meant!

Small incidents often reveal a lot.

Two such incidents have come my way recently; one here, one in Macon County.

Imagine, if you can, two greying university professors, one for many years holding high administrative position, the other the distinguished author of a long string of books—imagine these two dignified professors singing "Amazing Grace" as a quartet with two Negro janitors.

I was present for just that unusual situation, a few days ago.

And nobody was drunk! It was part of a planned, though rather casual, program.

The occasion was the retirement, after long service to the University, of Willie, one of the janitors; his successor was the fourth member of the quartet. A group of some 25 persons from the building served by the two janitors gathered in the office of the department's dean for the event.

Willie, the retiring janitor, is deeply religious; he also has a fine voice, and likes to sing. And the program, a complete surprise to him, was planned by the two white professors to fit in with his tastes; they wanted it to be just what Willie would want.

So it opened with the whole group's singing "Blest Be The Tie". Then Willie was presented a billfold, stuffed with bills by the building's tenants. Willie, near tears, tried to say a few words, but couldn't, and so broke into a solo, "The Lord Will Provide", choking up once or twice. Then he and his successor joined.

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News Making As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

Random Thoughts on Politics in '54:

The greatness of Franklin Roosevelt stands out even more after each succeeding presidential message. Once again a president has outlined his program to the nation, but even though more than 20 years have passed since the initial pattern was set, Mr. Eisenhower did not suggest one basic change from the great New Deal.

The Democratic strategy of not engaging in partisan attacks on the party in power is something new in politics. It is a very commendable procedure, and of course the way each party should do. However it is much easier to go around sniping at the other side than to offer something constructive or to agree with your opposition when they are right. If they can follow the course throughout the year it will be interesting to see how the voters react. My guess is, however, that before the year is out they will be slashing away with a pent up fury and in full partisan regalia. The flesh of man is too weak to withstand the temptation.

The local political pot is beginning to boil some. We have two candidates for solicitor in the Democratic Spring primary, with Grover Davis, of Haywood County, opposing Thad Bryson, of Swain and Macon. On the County level the race for clerk of the court is wide open since Miss Kate McGee has said she will not seek the office again. If she did, observers feel that she could win the race hands down. There is no announced opposition to Lake Shope as Register of Deeds, or Harry Thomas as sheriff. The race for representative seems to be wide open with no candidate in sight. There seems to be a growing feeling here that we should try to elect a man who will return from year to year if such a man can be found. The Board of Education looks like a wide open race and I predict that not more than two of the present board will file for reelection. As for the Board of County Commissioners, I haven't heard a word said, but look for some surprise candidates in this

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Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

The Asheville milk men have organized and have raised the price of milk from 20 cents to 30 cents per gallon.

The Franklin Press has entered on its nineteenth volume. During all these years Editor Curtis has been working for a railroad to his delightful town and it looks like 1904 is to witness its construction. It is a clean, honest newspaper that rings true every time. — News and Observer.

Franklin has too many "gentlemen of leisure." If this species of gentry would engage in some regular and useful occupation it would be a great blessing to the town and to themselves in many ways. One of these blessings would be that they would not spend so much time annoying other people who do have work to do.

25 YEARS AGO

About the cheapest sport in the world is the fellow who borrows his neighbor's newspaper.

The influenza epidemic which broke out late in October on the Pacific coast has spread with startling rapidity until now practically every section of the country is affected.

Tuesday there were about a half dozen bond bidders at Franklin to meet the county commissioners, who have determined to sell \$100,000 worth of bonds to get money with which to pay off outstanding revenue anticipation short term notes.

10 YEARS AGO

A six-inch snow greeted Highlanders Sunday morning, transforming the village into a veritable fairyland.

Mrs. William Davenport, of Raleigh, is visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Moore, Mr. Davenport, after a brief visit, returned to Raleigh.

The Franklin Scout Troop won a ribbon on advancement and attendance at the district court of honor held in Sylva last Monday night.