

The Franklin Press

and

The Highlands Maconian

Entered at Post Office, Franklin, N. C., as second class matter
Published every Thursday by The Franklin Press
Franklin, N. C. Telephone 24

WELMAR JONES Editor
BOB S. SLOAN Business Manager
J. F. BRADY News Editor
MISS BETTY LOU FOUTS Office Manager
CARL P. CABE Mechanical Superintendent
FRANK A. STARRETTE Shop Superintendent
DAVID H. SUTTON Stereotyper
CHARLES E. WHITTINGTON Pressman

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

JANUARY 28, 1954

Radical? Well, Maybe

Macon County people and public officials would do well to ponder the following six suggestions for improving county government:

- 1—Give the counties "home rule" over strictly local matters.
- 2—Abolish every elective office within the county structure except that of commissioner.
- 3—Provide for the appointment, by each county board, of a county manager.
- 4—Abolish the offices of sheriff, register of deeds, and clerk of court—replacing the sheriff with a rural chief of police and reducing the other two offices to clerical operations supervised by the county manager.
- 5—Provide that all county recorders and solicitors be licensed attorneys, appointed by the county commissioners.
- 6—Limit county commission service to a single four-year term, with the board places arranged on a "staggered" basis.

"Radical", did you say as you finished reading them? "Theoretical"?

Well, maybe. But before you damn them as too radical to consider and too impractical to put into effect, consider who made them.

They did not come from a political science professor; nor from a newspaper editor. They came, instead, from a county commissioner. His name is J. C. Leigh, Jr., and he is a member of the Richmond County board of commissioners.

He offered the ideas to Chairman J. C. Ellis, of the State Association of County Commissioners, who had asked for suggestions.

In making the Leigh proposals public, Mr. Ellis—and he's also a county commissioner—commented:

"If these suggestions were actually put into effect, I am sure that it would shake the foundations of all the old county courthouses; but they need to be shaken. People do not go to the county courthouse now to transact their business in a horse and buggy. When they get to the courthouse they should not be required to have their business handled by a horse and buggy system."

Big Job

Our congratulations and best wishes to the newly elected officers of Macon County's 21 home demonstration clubs.

Theirs is one of the most important jobs in the county.

Why? Because their objective is better homes. And better homes mean a better county and better citizens.

The one direct solution of most of our present-day problems is by building better homes. That truth may be trite, it is a trite truth that a lot of people have forgotten.

Must Protect Ourselves

In cases appealed from New York and Ohio, the U. S. Supreme Court has held invalid laws permitting state censorship of movies.

Such censorship, says the high court, is an invasion of the rights of free speech and free press.

How, then, is the public to be protected from indecent, vicious, and just plain bad movies? The answer seems obvious: Under our system, it is up to the public to protect itself. It can control the kind of movies it gets, the kind of radio and television programs it gets, the kind of newspapers

it gets, by patronizing them or withholding patronage from them.

That is a terrific responsibility for the public. But it is one, in a democracy, the public must shoulder—and for a good reason:

With every freedom there goes a responsibility, and the freedom soon is lost if the responsibility is not assumed; can have the freedom of speech and press only if we are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with those freedoms.

Besides, what independent American is willing to permit some state agency or some expert or even some church organization or official to determine what movies he shall see, what radio and television programs he shall enjoy, what newspapers or books he shall read?

Same Predicament

The State of North Carolina this month found itself in an embarrassing situation.

On January 1 the state government put into effect the new motor vehicle safety responsibility act. But it seems it did not occur to state officials, until the new law had gone into effect, that the state itself is the owner of motor vehicles, thousands of school buses and state automobiles.

A quick estimate showed it would cost about a million dollars to buy liability insurance for all of these—and the state just didn't have the money.

A lot of individuals who have just had to buy liability insurance under the new law will feel a profound sympathy for the state in its predicament; a lot of them were in just that predicament quite recently.

Others' Opinions

NEITHER SNOW — NOR HARD WORDS

(New York Times)

Ervin F. Spratt, postmaster at Elkhart, Iowa, not far from Des Moines, does not make rounds, but if he did we trust that neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night would stay him from their swift completion.

Mr. Spratt was appointed postmaster at Elkhart (pop. 249) in 1944. He maintains the post office in what our dispatch describes as his "sundry shop." His wife assists him. Mr. Spratt, who does not claim the protection of the Fifth Amendment when asked whether or not he is a Democrat, has a modestly good thing in his postmastership.

But Mr. Spratt is a man of moral courage. In spite of the gathering mass of evidence that it is far better for a man in public employment to do practically no thinking and to talk about nothing at all except the weather, Mr. Spratt is said to have expressed doubts as to the ability of the Postmaster General. He is also accused of not liking President Eisenhower as much as the Post Office Department assumed that he would.

A postal inspector charges that he called the President a "blank, blank, blank, blank," and threatens to see that he (Mr. Spratt) is removed.

Mr. Spratt denies that he called President Eisenhower or Mr. Summerfield a "blank, blank, blank, blank." He refuses to resign.

We think that President Eisenhower and Postmaster General Summerfield might well ask not what Mr. Spratt's personal opinion of them is but whether or not Mr. Spratt is delivering letters or causing them to be delivered in the Elkhart neighborhood in spite of weather conditions or the time of day or night.

Membership in the Democratic party ought not to affect the fate of fourth-class postmasters, such as we assume Mr. Spratt to be. We hope that his and Mrs. Spratt's public employment will continue, that the mail of Elkhart, Iowa, will continue to be swiftly delivered, and that the Spratts will long be able to buy all the fat and all the lean that their respective appetites require.

SHIELD OF ALL MEN

Dissenting Opinion

Raleigh News and Observer

Jay Jenkins reports from Charlotte that when a gambler in the investigation of alleged police corruption there invoked the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, which provides that no person in America may be required to testify against himself, Superior Court Judge J. C. Rudisill upheld his Constitutional right but added:

"I don't agree with it but it's the law of the land."

Certainly when a North Carolina Superior Court judge questions the wisdom of this item in the American Bill of Rights, it may be time to look at it. A good many unjudicial people have been expressing irritation at this American right. Some of them think that no right should exist which interferes with the exposure of the disloyal. Their feeling is that the proof of treason should be made easy. The founding fathers did not agree with that either, holding that in dealing with so serious a crime as treason "no person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or on confession in open court."

Maybe the men who wrote the Constitution and the people who immediately added to it a Bill of Rights which set out the particulars of American liberties were both wrong. Maybe not

OUR DEMOCRACY—by Mat

NEVER AN "OFF YEAR"

BECAUSE THERE ARE NO NATIONAL OFFICES AT STAKE, THIS IS KNOWN AS AN "OFF YEAR" ELECTION. BUT THERE IS NO "OFF YEAR" IN THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOOD CITIZENSHIP.



ACROSS THE COUNTRY, MANY STATE AND LOCAL OFFICES WILL BE FILLED, MANY ISSUES WILL BE UP FOR DECISION. CITIZENS ALERT TO THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES WILL CAST THEIR BALLOTS, RECOGNIZING THAT THE RIGHT TO VOTE IS ONE OF THE GREAT PRIVILEGES OF OUR DEMOCRACY.

only in the case of both the disloyal and a little gambler in Charlotte old individual liberties should be dispensed with. Any doubts should be resolved in favor of the nation or society—or, as they say in too large a part of the world today, of the state.

That is a tenable doctrine. At least it is held by millions of people today in that vast area which we roughly describe as behind the Iron Curtain. It has been dramatized there in the purge trials. A noble cardinal of the Catholic Church was convicted and punished on the basis of testimony he gave against himself after he had been "convicted" by his persecutors. We have only recently had the news of the forced "confessions" of American prisoners in North Korea. Communist justice against those within its power has been effective against those who not only were denied any right to refuse to testify against themselves but were "encouraged" to do so.

From the point of view of the prosecutors such justice has been effective. It has not only rolled heads; it has quieted dissent. It has been the basis of a terror before which the free world is appalled—and against which it is arrayed. In such a struggle it can hardly be safely forgotten that what the free world opposes is the disregard of liberty. Indeed, if the free world has any superior characteristics, they are the freedoms which it is ready to defend—not disregard.

Maybe the founding fathers were old-fashioned. Maybe they lived in a safe and simple world. They did not think so. They had just emerged from one war with a great world power and in the lifetime of many of them that same power was to demonstrate that the Atlantic which was supposed to be wide and safe then could be crossed by a military force which would burn the capital of the United States. In their times there was revolution and terror in Europe. There was in the world a dictator who held as foothold in this hemisphere the whole interior of the United States. Treason was not unknown to men, many of whom had trusted Benedict Arnold. No one proposed relaxing the Constitutional guarantees at the treason trial of Aaron Burr.

There were fearful men then, of course. There were those who undertook to make it a criminal offense to criticize the government. And almost as important as the adoption of the Bill of Rights was the American rejection in places of power of the men who would have cut American liberties to the pattern of their fears. Not even those fearful men dared, however, propose the deletion of the Bill of Rights—or any one of the rights there listed—from the Constitution of the United States.

Maybe Judge Rudisill does not like the Fifth Amendment. Some others have expressed irritation about it. Some companies and colleges have held that a man who invokes his Constitutional right in the Fifth Amendment should be denied the right to a job even in private and non-security positions. Undoubtedly they meet a mood of our times in which our liberties seem less important than our fears. The fact, however, is that the only thing America has to fear is the loss of liberties.

Of course, it is too bad if a little gambler in Charlotte or even a Communist can hide his wrong-doing behind the Fifth Amendment. It still cannot be forgotten that it is the shield of all other men, too. It is the only defense in our law against requiring men to help convict themselves of the crimes of which their prosecutors would like to convict them. That means that it is the shield not only of evil men but of all men. It is the bar against the forced confession, the purge trial testimony, the brain washing techniques which shock us in the world.

The founding fathers were not fools. The one thing most essential to the continuance of America as the guardian of freedom is that it keeps its own faith in individual liberty. As long as we hold to the good sense of the founding fathers we shall be secure. When we lose that good sense not only crooks and Communists but judges and citizens, too, may be brain washed en masse and by ourselves here at home.

News Making

As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

The newspapers are at least 50 per cent wrong in their attitude about governmental bodies meeting in closed session, I think. Most of them take the position that no legislative or governmental group should ever meet in closed session for even discussion purposes. They proclaim that to allow these men to meet together even to discuss their problems of government is to fetter freedom. They would do well to consider that freedom as an absolute would eliminate government—government came about because of the need to restrict some of men's freedoms. We here think that Democracy, where a man may have his say and vote about which freedoms shall be regulated, is the best form of such government.

Do the newspapers believe this?

They must know that one of the foundations upon which a Democracy rests is confidence in fellow man—faith that a duly elected representative will to the best of his ability speak and vote for the welfare of his constituents. Persons not believing that had best advocate another form of government. Perhaps they do not realize that faith in fellow man brings forth better response, than over the shoulder or down the collar vigilance.

I would like to illustrate this in the following way:

In our shop we do not have a time clock to keep constant check on the hours and minutes that men work for us. We place complete confidence in our men to turn in their time. This example of our trust in them has repaid many times over in better work on their part. Furthermore we are not tempting men to develop ways to "beat the clock". This is not to say that through the years that there has not been a single employee who has failed to give his time correctly. But I still feel that trust is better than a time clock.

The part where the newspapers are right is that the actions taken by the group should be made known to the public. But to demand that the newspapers be allowed to pass judgment on all their discussions (and as long as they decide what is and what isn't news they are passing judgment) is to breathe down the legislator's neck. I do not believe that men of the highest calibre are inticed to work under such conditions.

Continued On Page Seven—

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Henry Cunningham was at home a few days of the past week. He has secured a place as flagman on the Murphy branch of the Southern Railway with headquarters at Asheville.

The Macon High School has enrolled 115 pupils. Prof. J. N. Bradley and brother and sister arrived last week. The music class has 20 pupils under Miss Ballard. An annex of 16 by 24 feet is being built to the academy.

Snow fell yesterday morning for about an hour commencing about daylight.

25 YEARS AGO

Woodrow Dowdle, eleven years of age, ought to make a pretty fair living showing his elders how to grow corn.

We hope someone will offer a reward of \$10 for a lost dog, in which case we will quit the newspaper game and go dog hunting.

Postmaster Green, of Waynesville, was visiting relatives in Macon County a day or two this week.

Mr. Joe Palmer left last Friday for Akron, Ohio, where he has gone to work.

10 YEARS AGO

The Rev. Carl W. Judy is visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Judy, of Charleston, W. Va., this week.

Mrs. John Davis and Miss Ed-dis Holden have returned to Winston-Salem after a visit to their parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Holden, of West's Mill.

Mrs. W. R. Potts, Miss Peggy Potts, and Miss Caroline Hall spent Sunday with their eighty-four-year-old aunt, Mrs. A. E. Taylor, in Speedwell.