

The Franklin Press

and

The Highlands Maconian

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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

JANUARY 6, 1955

Deserves Support

The State Constitution provides that the lieutenant governor shall succeed to the governorship, in case of the governor's death. And the people of North Carolina elected Luther H. Hodges as their lieutenant governor.

But they did not do so with the thought that he would become governor — and probably the man who is most conscious of that is Luther Hodges himself. He is in the hard position of having had the responsibility thrust upon him, but without having been given a direct mandate from the people.

With becoming modesty, Mr. Hodges has done the only thing he properly could do under the circumstances. He has urged the General Assembly to go forward with the program of the man who was given a mandate, the late Governor Umstead.

In his excellent message to the legislators, Governor Hodges did not say this in words. But he pointed out that the budget and tax legislation he proposes were virtually completed before Mr. Umstead's death; and he recommended adoption of the proposals of one commission after another, all appointed by Mr. Umstead.

In thought and style, the message was his own. Furthermore, Mr. Hodges offers dynamic leadership, and it is apparent he will not, if the occasion warrants, hesitate to interpret general policies in the light of changing conditions. But what he proposes, during the next two years, is essentially a continuation of the program of the man the people elected to be their governor from 1953 to 1956. Toward that end, he pledges "my best efforts to assist in making this a greater, finer commonwealth".

His efforts to that end deserve the unstinted support of both legislators and the people of the state.

It's State-wide Issue

The question of what is a correct and just tax evaluation of the local properties of the Western Carolina Telephone Company is much more important than the amount of local taxes involved would indicate.

Its importance extends to other counties; really, it is a state-wide issue.

A communication recently received by the Town of Franklin from the State Board of Assessment announced a re-determination — at a lower figure — of the taxable value of the company's Franklin properties in 1953. Then it remarked:

"We regret that a number of the affected counties, cities, and towns will have to make tax adjustments to correspond with this report." In other words, make a refund on 1953 taxes.

That communication, however, was not addressed to the Town of Franklin, but to "all counties, cities and towns". In other words, the company's property is being re-evaluated, downward, in other counties than Macon; and some, at least, of those counties and towns are called upon to make a 1953 tax refund to the telephone concern.

More, much more, is at stake, though, than just the tax bill, in a few counties, of the Western Carolina Telephone Company.

The State Board of Assessment is the agency charged with the responsibility of determining the taxable value of the properties of all public service corporations doing business in this state. That board has come up with three different evaluations, for a single year, on the Western Carolina Telephone Company's properties in Franklin; and its form letter indicates it is revising evaluations in "other counties, cities, and towns".

In Franklin, it has set three different figures for 1954. At its third try, it also announced a revised figure for 1953, explaining that the original evaluation for that year was wrong.

Since the evaluations for both 1952 and 1951 were

higher than the new figures for both 1953 and 1954, it would appear that the board's figures for 1952 and 1951 also were wrong.

The conclusion is inescapable: The State Board of Assessment does not now know, and hasn't known for several years, what is the taxable value of the Western Carolina Telephone Company's properties in Franklin.

And if it doesn't know for the Western Carolina Telephone Company, is there any reason to believe it knows the value of the properties of the Southern Bell Telephone Company, the Duke Power Company, or any of the other public service corporations doing business in North Carolina?

Tolls On The Parkway

There is nothing very complicated about the question of whether the National Park Service should charge a toll, as it proposes to do, for use of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The issues involved are quite simple. There really are only two basic questions:

1. Is it right, in principle, to build exceptionally fine highways with public funds, and then to charge a toll for their use?

We think the answer is, No. It is true there are publicly-owned toll roads in the United States, but their existence does not prove the rightness of the principle. To charge a toll on an exceptionally fine highway, when other roads are free, is a form of discrimination — it discriminates against the taxpayer who isn't able to pay the toll. It would make equally good sense to build a few exceptionally fine public schools, but to bar from them those pupils unable to pay tuition.

2. Even if the principle of a toll on publicly-owned highways were not open to question, does the Blue Ridge Parkway fall into a different category?

We think it does, and for two reasons:

First, much of the right-of-way for the Parkway was donated, with the understanding that the road should be free. To change the policy now is like changing the rules in the middle of a game.

Second, the Parkway is different from an ordinary highway, in that its chief purpose is not to enable people to get from one point to another, but to give the largest possible number an opportunity to enjoy some of the scenic beauties of Nature. Did the government of the United States create the beauty it now proposes to charge its citizens to see?

The Proof

The night air was cold. But the people in the long line that stretched out toward the street, and then up the sidewalk, waited patiently to buy tickets. Word passed down the line that every seat already was taken. But the queue remained. "We'll buy our tickets now, and come to the next show", people said. And long before time for the 9 o'clock showing, these same people, tickets in hand, had queued up again — determined to be early enough to get a seat in the theatre.

And this was the second day's showings, at the Macon Theatre here, of the motion picture, "The Robe"! Since the theatre seats well over 500, and since there were five showings, it's reasonable to assume that more than 2,000 persons saw this remarkable picture.

The incident refutes, once and for all, the often-made charge that Macon County people won't pay for high class entertainment. It is proof, if proof were needed, that it is just plain good business to bring first rate pictures here.

He Is, He Ain't, He Is . . .

A man named Wolf Ladejinsky worked for years for the U. S. State Department in Japan. He passed all the strict security checks of the State Department.

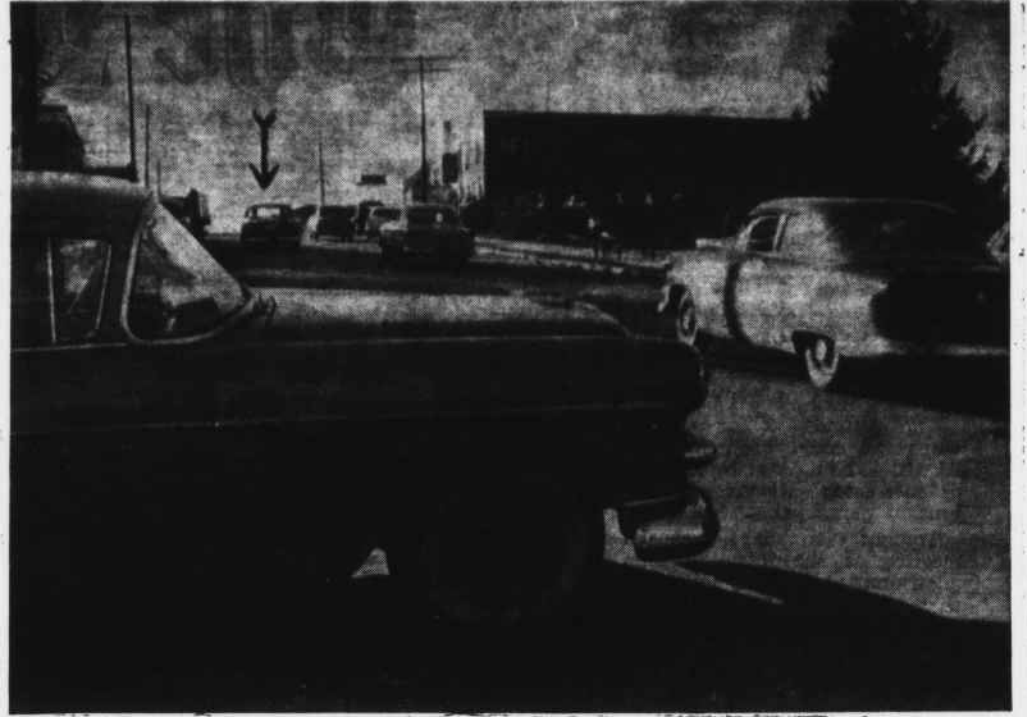
Last year Ladejinsky's job, dealing with land, was transferred by Congress from the State to the Agriculture Department, and last month Agriculture Secretary Benson fired him as a bad security risk.

But last week another government agency, Foreign Operations Administration, hired Ladejinsky for a job in Viet Nam.

The State Department says he's a good security risk; the Agriculture Department says he isn't; and now FOA (apparently at the suggestion of President Eisenhower) says he is. All this in the same administration!

How silly can we get?

This Needs Changing . . .



—Staff Photo by J. P. Brady

This photo, looking up Town Hill (post office in extreme left background), graphically shows the present serious traffic hazard at East Main and Derby streets.

When a car is coming out of Derby (the short street running from Palmer into East Main just opposite Angel Clinic), it often has to pull all the way out into the lane of traffic in order to see if it is clear up the hill.

If the auto coming down the hill (arrow) hadn't had good brakes, it would have smashed into the car (left foreground) shown pulling out of Derby. With autos coming up the hill, in the other lane, the hazard is doubled.

The danger is created by cars parked on the south side of East Main, too close to its intersection with Derby.

Others' Opinions

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

(The State Magazine)

The Highlands area had three new housing developments open this past summer. Whiteside Estates, Broadview Acres, and Greenwood Forest Development. They will contain summer homes for some of the many people who return every year to this popular summer resort.

Letters

THE LIEN LAW

Dear Editor:

The old age went to the polls to vote in spite of the weather. Some on their sticks, some had to have help to get up to the polls. They voted with the expectation of this lien law being changed so they would not have to give a lien on their little shack and maybe leave their wife or husband without a home.

The old aged citizens who have paid taxes all their lives deserve consideration. Now many of them are old and not able to work, and a lot of them are under the care of a doctor, with nothing to pay the doctor or even buy the medicine they need.

Those who are for such unfair things as this may have to answer for it some day.

CAPTAIN O. SANDERS

Franklin, Route 2.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: As a matter of keeping the record straight, it is worth pointing out that the lien law specifically provides that a "wife or husband" shall not be left "without a home" because of the lien.

(The law sets forth that "as long as such property is occupied as a home site by the surviving spouse or any minor dependent child of such recipient" (of old age assistance) . . . there shall be "no action to enforce" the lien.

(The purpose of the law is to prevent children who fall or refuse to support their aged parents from inheriting the parents' property until the lien for the amount of old age assistance paid the parents has first been satisfied.)

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

Last week I tossed out a few Hatchett, director, and the men Christmas bouquets. This week, and women who gave of their like the man who is still writing talents and their time to make his Christmas thank-you letters possible the fine community at Easter. I find myself still talking about Christmas season good deeds.

The trouble is so many groups and individuals deserve bouquets! Nobody could begin to list them all. But here are a few more I can't resist mentioning — even if it is nearly the middle of January.

The Jaycees, for those beautiful pictures, spotlight at night, on the Square; the Lions for their dime board project — and all those who donated so generously to it; all the other groups, church and secular, who put into practice, at Christmas, the philosophy we all say we believe in the year around — that it is more blessed to give. And to the Rev. Bryan, make the size ample.

Every time I get out of town and pass through a city, I am struck with what to me is the horror of the way houses are built almost against each other. Often you could almost reach out of the window of one and touch the one next door.

In towns like Franklin, where there is plenty of room, there is no excuse for it. (Highlands usually proves the point that it isn't necessary.) I'd like to see the town board here adopt an ordinance forbidding the building of a home on a lot less than a certain size — and I'd like to see it make the size ample.

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 cut, 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 above appeared in this column approximately a year ago. After hearing President Eisenhower's second State of the Nation address, I think, the above applies even more closely than it did last year when it was first written.

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

The house in which Mrs. Susan Leach lives, owned by Mrs. W. H. Higdon, was discovered to be on fire last Thursday night. The fire caught below the hearth in Prof. Billings' room. When the smoke was found filling the rooms, it was some time before the fire was located. A few buckets of water extinguished the fire and saved the house.

The Franklin High School opened its Spring term Monday with 70 pupils.

25 YEARS AGO

Prof. O. F. Sumner and F. C. Hentz returned Sunday from Pomaria, S. C., where they spent the Christmas holidays. — Highlands item.

The young matrons' missionary society of the Methodist Church held its first meeting with Mrs. Tommie Angel January 6, with a good attendance.

10 YEARS AGO

Pvt. Richard C. Angel, attending Army Specialized Training program at North Carolina State College, Raleigh, visited his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Zeb Angel, at their home on Riverview Street last week.

Mrs. Harry F. Jordan, of Charleston, S. C., is here for a visit with her father, John O. Harrison, and sister, Miss Amy Harrison, at their home on Harrison Avenue.

Lewis Dendy, of the United States Navy, has been spending a few days here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Dendy. — Highlands item.