

# The Franklin Press and The Highlands Maconian

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APRIL 21, 1955

## A Good Start

When Representative G. L. Houk ignored the expressed wishes of voters in the primary and appointed a county board of education of his own choosing, this newspaper questioned the means he employed to attain an end. We still do.

We did not question Mr. Houk's motives or the character or qualifications of his appointees. Those who did, it seems to us, have their answer in the board's unanimous reelection of Mr. Holland McSwain as county superintendent.

The board is to be congratulated on that action. It was demanded by both wisdom and fairness.

Wisdom, because Mr. McSwain has done a good job. When he came to Macon County four years ago, he stepped into a situation made almost hopeless by community disharmony and disunity. And during his second term, there has been disharmony and disunity within the board itself. In spite of all that, the schools have run smoothly; there has been a notable lack of friction within the schools or between the schools and their communities. Mr. McSwain's achievement along that line was far more difficult and is far more important than any of the tangible accomplishments of the past four years, many and important as they have been.

And fairness demanded his reelection because he deserves the opportunity to show what he can do under favorable circumstances. Until now, he has had no such an opportunity.

The new board has made an auspicious beginning. It deserves public support.

The board members themselves, we are sure, would not expect or want the public to go so far as to suspend critical examination of the board's actions. But this new board should be given the benefit of the doubt; and it should be judged by its actions — not on a basis of personalities.

## Segregation Sidelights

It is the duty of the good citizen to observe the law. That applies, of course, to the law on segregation.

That duty, though, does not carry with it the obligation to accept, without question or criticism, either acts of Congress or decrees of the Supreme Court. Quite the reverse is true. Because the men who make up Congress and the Supreme Court are human — and therefore fallible.

In that connection, two interesting developments came out of last week's arguments before the Supreme Court on segregation.

The first was the argument of I. Beverly Lake, North Carolina assistant attorney general. Mr. Lake's penetrating analysis of the Southern attitude is perhaps the most intelligent thing that has been said on the subject of segregation since the famous court ruling of last May.

There is "genuine, friendly neighborliness" between members of the two races in North Carolina, Mr. Lake told the court; but that doesn't make the mixing of the races easy. For there is deep-seated "race consciousness", and so the children of the two races cannot be treated as "mere black and white pins to be shifted here and there as a master of equity may think desirable".

Then he added a truth that many persons cannot or will not see:

"This race consciousness is not race prejudice. It is not race arrogance. It is not intolerance, and it is not to be confused with racial injustice.

"It is a deeply ingrained awareness of a birthright held in trust for posterity. Every group has had, and still has, members who, despising their birthright, have been faithless to their trust.

"So it has been and is in North Carolina, but the overwhelming majority of North Carolinians have been taught how it came about that Israel became a great nation while Edom faded into oblivion, and they agreed with the great

Disraeli, who said: 'No man will treat with indifference the principle of race, for it is the key to history.'

"The distinction between race pride and race hatred is well known to North Carolinians of both races. Every day there is a demonstration in North Carolina of the truth that two races are fundamentally different as the Anglo-Saxon and the Negro can live side by side in freedom, peace, security, and mutual respect. If our State Department will only use it, this demonstration will prove a far more effective answer to Communism at home and abroad than will a decree . . ."

The second development was a suggestion by the attorney general of Arkansas. It is a suggestion that is so obvious it seems strange nobody had made it before. He suggested that the Supreme Court "might well leave some of the problems of integration to Congress".

Under the American system of government, that is where those problems belong — all of them. Under a system of a division of powers — which is the outstanding characteristic of our form of government — it is the job of the Supreme Court to say what is and what is not in accord with the Constitution; it is the job of Congress to make the laws.

When the court attempts to say how and when its ruling shall be put into effect, it is legislating. The argument that there is precedent for such an action in nowise changes the fact: Saying how and when the Constitution shall be applied is law-making.

And the right or wrong of segregation has nothing to do with that important fact.

## Place To Begin

If Franklin is to observe its 100th birthday with a clean rather than a dirty face, wouldn't a good place to start be the uptown streets?

Whenever have they really been cleaned? They're so dirty now, nothing short of scrub brushes and soap will clean them. And they ought literally to shine for the Centennial.

## Yalta -- And Today

All the circumstances suggest that the "expose" of the Yalta agreements was so timed as to discount any praise that might be accorded Franklin Roosevelt on the tenth anniversary of his death.

How damaging to his reputation the "revelations" are is a matter of opinion.

But whatever Mr. Roosevelt's mistakes, there is one thing his severest critic cannot charge to him: He did not leave American prisoners of war to rot in Communist jails.

## One Guess

Why is it, wonders The Asheville Citizen, in an editorial reprinted on this page, that so large a proportion of the students at Woman's College who "make" Phi Beta Kappa come from the country? Why, particularly, since city children are generally considered to have the advantage of better schools?

Well now, it could be a matter of what constitutes "better schools".

A more accurate guess, though, might be that living in the country gives children a truer sense of values.

In the name of tolerance, the majority shouts "hypocrite" at all who oppose complete racial integration, forthwith. But is there any form of bigotry worse than intolerance of the views of others?

## Letters

### '... GOOD FOR OUR SOULS'

Dear Mr. Jones:

You stated the issue well in your editorial, "Let's Try It", in the April 14 issue of The Press.

I am a Southerner and proud of it. I think that I understand some of the feelings that the segregation ruling of the Supreme Court has aroused. However, the thing that distresses me is that our actions and statements on this issue here in the South are expressions of feelings rather than moral and democratic principles.

We are faced now with the alternative of respecting the decision of our highest court, or declaring that we do not respect law. That is a serious thing. It seems the only honorable thing we can do is to give the program a trial. We probably will not like the idea. That is not the issue. Right and wrong are not primarily matters of what we like, or dislike. Sometimes the things we think we can't do and dislike the most prove to be the best for everyone.

It would seem that we have no honorable choice except to respect the law of our land. That could be hard on our dispositions and at the same time good for our souls.

Sincerely,

Franklin.

S. B. MOSS.



## News Making As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

Random thoughts on things transpiring on local, state and national level.

There is no doubt that we live in the best country in the world and that by and large our government does a better job of looking after the general welfare of the people living here than other countries do. However, we sure do pay for what we get. Can't you tell this was written on April 15, the day used to be March 15.

I still think that the Income Tax is one of the fairest of all taxes, but I believe that the basic allowance for each person or his or her dependents should be raised in keeping with the rise in the cost of living. Such a measure was proposed by Senator Walter George last year but rejected by the Republican administration. They felt that it was more important to lower the tax on money earned by clipping coupons rather than that earned by labor.



Sloan

When such outstanding men as Dr. Clarence Poe and Major L. P. McLendon are dropped from the Board of Trustees of the Greater University of North Carolina because of unreasonable racial prejudice it is time that the people of North Carolina took steps to prevent such demagogic action.

This Spring a short course was held for County Agents on the campus of North Carolina State College. The Board of Trustees of The Greater University voted to allow Negro agents to attend. In re-electing the trustees some members of the General Assembly allowed this to be a deciding factor and voted against the approval of many trustees who had served well and faithfully. Among those besides the two mentioned above were Percy Ferebee, of Andrews, and George Stephens, of Asheville. Not only is this an action on the part of our legislators which should cause every North Carolinian to hang his head in shame because of its bigotry, but it is rank injustice that there will be no member on the Board of Trustees of our principal university system from any county west of Rutherford.

With the completion of The Franklin Motel, we are acquiring the name of being a town that has a large number of first class tourist motels. Just as the improvement in the retail stores in Franklin gave us the name of a first class trading center and helped business for everyone concerned so will the tourist business improve.

## Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

### 50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

The following parties left here Thursday for the Great West in search of homes and fortunes: Vivian Hill and wife, to Bozeman, Mont.; Jud Bradley and George Shuler, to Idaho; Bob Hall and Frank Myers, to Washington; Turner Siler, to Douglas, Wyo. The Press wishes them all good fortune in their venture.

### 10 YEARS AGO

Mrs. Ford Mann and daughters, Janice Reid and Becky, have returned to their home on Franklin, Route 2, after a visit with Mrs. Mann's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Goforth at Newton.

Miss Catherine Gray, who is employed by Western Union, Asheville, spent the week-end with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Gray, at their home on Franklin, Route 2.

Mrs. H. E. Freas, of Franklin, and sister, Miss Lucy Morgan, of Penland, left Saturday morning for Fort Valley, Ga., where they will spend a week teaching crafts in the Fort Valley college for Negroes.

Lieut. Marguerite Richert, of Atlanta and Fort McEllan nurses' division, spent the week-end here with her aunt, Mrs. G. D. Edwards, and family. — Highlands item.

## Others' Opinions

### WRONG WORD

(Chuck Hauser in Chapel Hill Weekly)

Senator Kerr Scott calls President Eisenhower a master architect of the confusion in Washington. This seems to be giving credit where credit is not due. The use of the term "architect" implies planning and direction; the confusion in Washington, conversely, seems to stem from a LACK of planning and direction, and a complete absence of executive leadership and/or consistency.

### SOLVES FEMALE PROBLEM

(Jacksonville, Fla., Journal)

When U. S. Ambassador to Italy Clare Boothe Luce was in Washington last summer, she complained about having to carry around a woman's handbag, with all the things in it that women carry in handbags.

When Mrs. Luce returned to Washington recently, it was observed that she carried no handbag to conferences. Instead, she carried all the things she used to carry in a handbag in her brief case. She had done away with the handbag she detested so much — by getting a bigger one.

### COUNTRY GIRLS

(Asheville Citizen)

Woman's College at Greensboro will initiate 21 junior and senior students into Phi Beta Kappa, the national honorary fraternity, on April 21. A "Phi Bete" key, the symbol of the organization, is recognized nearly everywhere as the highest of scholastic attainments.

Interestingly enough, seven of these young women give home addresses on rural routes (one in South Carolina) and two others come from towns of less than 1,000 population. Presumably, at least one-third graduated from rural high schools.

County schools in North Carolina have been compared individually with city schools, mostly from the standpoint of "academic standards" and "opportunity." True, there are a lot more of them — well over twice as many.

Accomplishment at Woman's College, however, seems to belie the popular impression that county school units are vastly inferior to city ones. True again, teacher attainment figures show that generally their teachers are not as well trained. But something must make up for this want. North Carolina evidently is well on the way to equalization between county and city.

### HOME RULE MAKES SENSE

(Chapel Hill News Leader)

The longer the present legislature stays in session, the more absurd and tedious appears the system by which affairs pertaining to home rule are controlled from Raleigh. Year by year there is less sense in such a system. Consider what the weekly legislative summary issued by the Institute of Government has to say about it:

"Much of the legislative time now spent considering perfunctory local legislation could be saved if two of Rep. Shreve's proposals become law. These bills would submit to the voters at the 1956 general election the question of amending the State Constitution to permit cities and counties to adopt home rule charters. A city or town adopting a home rule charter could exercise any power not denied by the General Assembly or charter, except that it could not change its boundaries or define and provide punishment for crime. Charter provisions concerning a city or county's executive legislative, and administrative organization, structure, personnel, and procedure would be superior to general and special laws on the subjects, except that the governing bodies must continue to be elected. Under the county bill, terms and compensation of elected officials, and public school and elections personnel would continue to be set by the General Assembly. Home rule cities and counties would be permitted to levy taxes and incur debts subject to constitutional limits, and as authorized by general or special law."

Perfunctory local legislation as carried out by the General Assembly is a waste of the State's money and a waste of the members' time.

The system meantime is hampering to municipal officers and clogging to efficient procedure. Representative Shreve's bills to remedy this situation ought to have the backing of all citizens.

The force of public opinion cannot be resisted, when permitted freely to be expressed. When ever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government.

—Thomas Jefferson.