

The Franklin Press

and

The Highlands Maconian

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OCTOBER 25, 1956

Bomb Tests and Fatalism

Next to self-pity, the worst thing that can befall a man or a nation is to fall victim to fatalism; the feeling that things are going to happen, that they are beyond control, and that, therefore, there is nothing anybody can do about them.

How far the United States has gone along that road is illustrated by the attitude of most of our government leaders about continued A and H bomb tests.

There is only one point of disagreement about the dangers of such tests — there is disagreement about how dangerous they are. Everybody admits there is danger, from "fall-out" — danger not merely to those living today, but to unborn generations. And for all anybody knows for sure, the danger is terrible.

Yet most of us — laymen as well as leaders — take it for granted we have no choice but to continue to multiply that danger.

It's A Big Thing

So "Uncle John" Justice, when he held open house the other day, served refreshments after all! It was inevitable. In Macon County, it just couldn't have failed to happen.

"Uncle John", at 86, lives alone. He does his own cooking. And so, when he announced plans for a birthday open house ("Anybody that comes by and wants to holler 'Hello, Uncle John', will be welcome"), he explained he wouldn't attempt to serve refreshments. (How keen his sense of humor still is is illustrated by the confidential explanation he gave The Press: "I get along all right eating my own cooking—but the dog died!")

The announcement about the Sunday open house appeared in The Press on a Thursday. Came Sunday, and some of the women of the Holly Springs community showed up a little ahead of time; they were early, so they could spread out the refreshments for "Uncle John's" party, refreshments that, of course, included a birthday cake.

"A nice gesture", someone may say. "But why an editorial about so little a thing?"

It is not a little thing! It's a big thing! It's the kind of thing that makes Macon County different from many spots in these United States. It's the kind of thing that prompted a Macon County native, here recently for a visit after half a century's absence, to remark:

"I hope you can keep your hospitality, your neighborliness and friendliness, your willingness to do a favor without thought of reward. . . . You don't find those things many places any more."

In many places, those things have gone out as "progress" came in.

Does it have to be that way? We don't think so.

And we'd add that the "progress" that takes such a toll is no progress at all.

A Phoney

This newspaper is not strongly partisan in politics. It seeks, instead, to praise what seems to be good and condemn what seems to be bad, without reference to which party is responsible.

The editor of The Press rarely has voted a straight ticket; and in 1952, he came very close to voting for Eisenhower. He changed his mind only when Mr. Eisenhower embraced, both literally and

figuratively, certain McCarthy-like Republican senators.

But even if we were so partisan as to believe all virtue resides in one party, all error in the other, it is not our job to tell the people of Macon County how they should vote in the November 6 general election. The decision is one for each voter to make for himself.

It is our job, though, to point out, in politics as in other fields, what seems to be hypocritical, or phoney, or illogical.

Well, we think the platform the Republican national administration is running on falls under one or more of those.

It does, first of all, because it's just a little too simple: "Peace, prosperity, progress". Very few things, these days, are all that simple.

It does, in the second place, because the phrase betrays a cynical low-rating of the motives of American voters. It suggests that the majority of Americans want peace — at any price; that the majority of Americans have as their chief interest the making of money — rather than the spiritual values President Eisenhower so often discusses; and that the American people are so unintelligent as to confuse preservation of the status quo with progress.

It does, finally, because the phrase just isn't quite true.

Is what we have today peace, or merely an armed truce? Has the United States, in the past four years, really done anything constructive toward a long-range solution of international problems? Even so honest and objective an authority as Walter Lippmann says that the President's chief contribution to peace has been his success in persuading the American people to accept, one after another, the accomplished facts brought about through the initiative and ruthlessness of the Communists — a divided Korea, a divided Viet Nam, a bottled-up Nationalist China, a nose-thumbing from Egypt's Nasser. Maybe this is the wise course, maybe it isn't appeasement. But it is not peace.

And prosperity? True, a lot of the indices are encouraging. But is a prosperity genuine when such important segments of the economy are in trouble as the farmer and the small business man. Not only is the gap between what the farmer pays and what he gets constantly being widened; the small farmer is being as inevitably driven from the land in this country as he was in Russia. And Dun and Bradstreet reports failures among small businesses is at the highest point since 1940—11,000 last year, and 8,600 the first eight months of 1956.

And progress? It is quite possible that a "middle of the road" course was exactly what was needed the past four years. It is possible, following the New and Fair Deals, that it was time to halt for a while. Maybe that was what we needed. But maintaining the status quo is not moving forward.

Mr. Eisenhower may be a great man. He undoubtedly is a good man. And we do not question his personal motives. But we think the platform he's running on is a phoney.

Bouquet

Our best bow to Mr. Preston J. Henn for something that appeared in his Franklin Drive-In Theatre advertisement in last week's Press.

Beneath the Hollywood-produced illustration and text ballyhooing the picture, "The Bad Seed", Mr. Henn wrote the explanation that the picture was "recommended for adults only because of the subject matter". Then he added something he was under no obligation to add: "This is not a sex picture".

We like such honesty and decency. And we admire the faith in people and the courage that led him thus to repudiate the commonly accepted theory that the one thing all Americans are most interested in is sex.

"This is not a sex picture". In that sentence, Mr. Henn paid the adults of Macon County the compliment of assuming they really are adult.

Others' Opinions

(Opinions expressed in this space are not necessarily those of The Press. Editorials selected for reprinting here, in fact, are chosen with a view to presenting a variety of viewpoints. They are, that is, just what the caption says — OTHERS' Opinions.)

Horsepower Vs. Horse Sense

(Philadelphia Bulletin)

Emphasis placed on horsepower in automobile advertising was defended by car manufacturers at hearings this week before a congressional group studying automobile and highway safety. The defense was an attempt to answer the stream of critical comment which had come to the group, urging that safety rather than power and speed be stressed.

The increased horsepower of a car, according to the manu-

facturers, makes it safer to drive by providing faster acceleration. But speed has not gone up at a rate comparable to horsepower. The horsepower rating is obtained with an engine stripped of accessories, and much of the "200," "300" or "400" never gets to the rear wheels.

This defense, however, does not answer the criticism about the emphasis which is placed on speed, particularly in some TV commercials. Speed needs no emphasis, for the difficulty with most drivers today is their inability to hold a car down to what is safe and reasonable. The rattles and shakes which told a driver years ago when he was going at a high rate are no longer present, and the smooth riding of the present car puts the speedometer above 50 almost before the driver knows it.

Emphasis on the correction of poor driving habits and on safety would be far more in keeping with the needs of the time.

Of Press Photography

(Greensboro Daily News)

There is a great deal to be said on both sides of this argument over the freedom of press photography.

Currently the argument is boiling over a Pennsylvania decision in which the Keystone State Supreme Court upheld conviction of seven newspapermen for contempt and declared that a court's dignity and orderly administration of justice take precedence over freedom of the press.

That last declaration is not what the Bill of Rights says. It offers another illustration to emphasize that the Constitution, generally written in clear, simple and understanding language, is no more than what the judiciary says it is.

We agree that the dignity of the courts must be maintained and that judges have a right and a reason to act upon what happens in their presence. But court business is still public business; and the public has a right to see as well as to hear and read what is going on. There must be, however, a limitation to the courts' arbitrariness. The right of an individual to privacy and protection when he is in the custody of the state is also recognized. Public respect for the courts, upon which administration of justice ultimately rests, is hardly heightened by judicial clamping on of the lid.

In the Pennsylvania case at point we shall not argue strenuously about the court's right to ban pictures in the courtroom. An accused person, whose innocence is assumed until conviction, is due greater protection than a prisoner who has been convicted. Taking and printing of the latter's picture is no more than he should expect; it may be a deterrent to crime by others. There is a vast difference, however, between taking pictures in the courtroom itself, as one of the Pennsylvania justices pointed out in a dissenting opinion, and in courthouse corridors. Yet it was in a corridor that the pictures of a convicted slayer which brought on a contempt citation were taken.

Surely there ought to be a reasonable middle ground in which both the dignity of the court and the rights of press photographers and the public are recognized. The Daily News frankly admits that press photographers in its opinion at times overstep their rights and disregard decency and personal rights in their overzealousness or on orders from city desks which after all have the authority of assignment and the responsibility to pass upon every picture which is taken. The worst example we have seen of such indefensible action occurred within the past fortnight right here in North Carolina. Some photographer had the effrontery and indecency to push forward and take a closeup of the Sampson County grieving woman, whose six children had been slain by a father who then committed suicide, as she was helped by two mortuary attendants to the funeral car which was transporting her to the cemetery. For that sort of photography we have no stomach whatever; yet it was moved on a press-association telephoto wire and at least one North Carolina paper front-paged it.

The courts indeed have their limitations upon banning photographers. But so do the newspapers, and they'll be in better position to criticize the courts when they meet them. So far as we are concerned, personal grief or suffering falls in the indefensible category.

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

In little newspaper offices and back shops, from one end of North Carolina to the other, there is sadness.

For the non-daily newspaper group has lost its most distinguished member.

Not by death—Miss Beatrice Cobb is very much alive; but by growth. The almost inevitable has happened — Miss Cobb's twice-a-week Morganton News-Herald has grown up into a daily.

The non-daily folks are happy, of course, that Miss Cobb's field has so grown as to demand a daily; they are proud (though not surprised) that Miss Cobb and her associates were ready, when the time came to expand; and they are glad for Miss Cobb, and the state, that her newspaper's usefulness is to be expanded.

But, somehow, it won't seem quite right, when non-daily folks get together at press meetings, for Miss Cobb to be at the other end of the corridor, with the publishers of

Her example, though — not in going daily, but during all the years she was in the weekly, and then the semi-weekly, field — surely will be accepted by us on the little newspapers as a challenge.

Because Miss Cobb has proved a lot of things for us. She has proved that there need be no "a" in the term "weekly" newspaper. She has proved that the size of the paper or of the town has no relation to the bigness of the person on the little paper and in the little town; for she is known in almost every corner of the world, and wherever she is known she is respected—and if she's known well enough, is loved. Finally, they'll remember, as they sigh in regret, then go back to their beats and their typewriters, that Miss Cobb never has, and will not now, confuse mere quantity with quality.

And so, as "Miss Bea" moves into her new and expanded field, we on North Carolina's little newspapers say heartily, albeit a little sadly, a word that means a lot more than just good-bye — fare well.

VIEWES

By

BOB SLOAN



Regardless of what Mr. Eisenhower thinks or says, Adlai Stevenson was right when he told the American public that "the dust or fallout from the hydrogen bomb cannot be swept under the rug".

Failure of the President to acknowledge the seriousness of this problem, because it was brought to the attention of the public by a political opponent rather than by him, or a member of his administration, is a sign of littleness.

Also, both Mr. Eisenhower's and Mr. Nixon's cries that the plan proposed by Mr. Stevenson would weaken our defense are pure political talk.

For the present, we would not reduce our present supply of H bombs nor stop making them.

Incidentally, our supply of these terrible weapons is much more adequate than our potential to deliver them.

The net result of Mr. Stevenson's proposal is that the United States, and Great Britain and Russia, we hope, would cease to place in the air a poison so new and so deadly that its full effects to mankind are not yet known. Fully cognizant of the fact that Russia might violate her agreement, Mr. Stevenson pointed out that we could resume tests if other nations did. And both Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Eisenhower have acknowledged that an H-bomb cannot be exploded anywhere in the world without detection.

Proof of the seriousness of this grave problem, is the fact that scientists from all over the country have endorsed Mr. Stevenson's program.

Perhaps it is pure coincidence, but the same paper which carried an account of Mr. Stevenson's proposal carried the announcement of the death of a prominent scientist caused by EXPOSURE TO ATOMIC RADIATION EIGHT OR TEN YEARS AGO.

Every Macon County citizen has special reason to come out and vote in the election this November. For the second time in history Macon County has a native son on the state ticket. The widely respected, popular, and able, George Patton is a candidate for Attorney-General of North Carolina. I feel that Republicans should join the Democrats to give Judge Patton the greatest vote from Macon County ever received by any state candidate. C. E. Hyde is the man opposing Judge Patton. Who from Macon County thinks this man is more able and capable than Judge Patton?

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

W. R. Roland writes from Verden, Okla.: "This is beautiful country, with fine lands. The lands make from 45 to 60 bushels of corn to the acre. Corn is worth 31 cts., flour 50 cents per quarter sack, and all groceries are cheap enough, but dry goods are high."

R. L. Bryson, the shoe drummer of Sylva, was here yesterday trying to induce our merchants to buy before the winter snows come.

A crowd of Franklin young people enjoyed a "tacky party" at Mr. W. J. Zachary's Friday evening.

25 YEARS AGO

Franklin high school's athletic field, the donation of Mrs. H. O. Cozad, was graded and drained this week to make the ground suitable for outdoor athletic purposes, including a football field.

R. D. Sisk, Franklin attorney, made his third hole-in-one Sunday afternoon on the Franklin golf links. Only one other player, C. S. Brown, manager of the Scott Griffin Hotel, has been lucky enough to get a hole-in-one on the local course this year.

10 YEARS AGO

Two British war brides of Macon County men have arrived here to join their husbands. They are Mrs. Woodrow Zimmerman and Mrs. Marshall Jones.

The Franklin Red Panthers, after three straight wins, lost to Andrews, 14-7, in a hard-fought contest Friday night.