

The Franklin Press
and
The Highlands Maconian
Swallowing Poison?

Nine thousand scientists from many nations have presented a petition to the United Nations, urging East and West to discontinue nuclear bomb tests, as endangering the life and health not only of the world's population today, but of generations yet unborn.

They doubt it is possible to create a "clean" bomb—that is, one without danger from radioactivity.

While some eminent scientists disagree with that view, in general the official U. S. attitude seems to be a defeatist one—whatever the danger from the bomb tests, we cannot afford to stop them.

That is a little like a man taking a dose of poison because someone, pointing a gun at him, orders him to commit suicide.

Mirrors Our Growth

How Macon County is growing! Drive along any highway or county road, and you see neat, modern homes around every turn.

And last week that visual evidence of the growth and development of this county was confirmed by some dollars-and-cents figures that came from the Macon County Building and Loan Association.

At the end of 1956, that organization's assets were just over the million dollar mark. Last year saw them increase by more than a quarter of a million dollars—an increase of a fourth in 12 months. During 1957, the number of stockholders grew from 703 to 805.

And 182 loans, totaling close to half a million dollars, were made during the year.

Those figures are significant to the entire Macon County community. Because the assets of the Building and Loan represent the savings of people here; and the money is loaned on Macon County property—chiefly homes.

No organization, perhaps, is more "part and parcel" of Macon County, and so its growth mirrors the growth and development of this county.

Cheese And Music

Most tastes are cultivated. If we aren't accustomed to a thing, the chances are we won't like it, right at first. But if we keep trying it, we soon find it's good.

The perfect example is cheese. Almost anybody, the first time he takes a bite of the "high-powered" cheese, is likely to make a face; the stuff, he'll tell you, almost takes your breath away. But if he keeps nibbling on these strong cheeses, he soon finds he likes them. He finds, too, that the milder kinds he's been eating seem insipid by comparison.

Much the same thing is true of good music. Good music, incidentally, is not necessarily either heavy or dull; it may be light and tuneful. For good music is simply the music that lasts—music that continues, over the years, to bring pleasure to the hearer; as contrasted with the tune that is here today, forgotten tomorrow.

Most of the people who say they don't like good music really don't know. They are like the fellow who held his nose the first time he tasted a strong cheese—and never would try it again. It's all a question of what we are accustomed to.

The Franklin Music Study Club and Station WFSC, therefore, are doing a public service by presenting an hour of good music each Sunday evening from 9 to 10. They are giving the public an opportunity to learn something they probably will like immensely, once they get used to it.

Unlike the mild cheese, popular music will continue popular— heaven forbid that it should be lost! But when people learn to enjoy two kinds of music, instead of just one, they have thereby added to their capacity for enjoyment.

Our Best Bow

Quiet, demure, lady-like.

That was what the girl of yesterday tried to be.

Both that period and the old-fashioned girl it produced are gone. If you doubt it, just have a look at today's girl on a basketball court. Just have a look, in particular, at Franklin High School's champion girls' squad.

And so what? Should we bewail the passing of the virtues of another age? We don't think so. For, while we think today's girl might learn some worthwhile things from her grandmother, we'd be the last to go back to the "good old days" for, in our opinion, today's girl is miles ahead of her grandmother at the same age. She's intelligent, she's poised, and she's able to take care of herself in a tough world.

And so, whatever her faults—and she has them—we take our hat off to the modern girl—and to Franklin's basketball winners in particular.

"I'll String Along With You"



Strictly Personal WEIMAR JONES

At last Thursday night's Rotary Club ladies' night program, Franklin Rotarians and their Rotary Anns had the pleasure of seeing the Smoky Mountain Cloggers, Macon County's prize square dance team, in action.

After watching them, it was easy to understand why the group has been selected to appear on the Ed Sullivan television program March 2.

The reason is revealed even more by their faces than by their feet. For these youngsters not only can square dance; they show that they dance for the love of it.

There is a remarkable absence of professionalism, no straining effort at effect. While they no doubt were pleased by the big hand they got from their Rotary audience, it was obvious that,

primarily, they were dancing for fun.

That, undoubtedly, is what appealed to the talent scouts, and it will be that that will strike the TV audience as something refreshingly different.

We here in Macon County don't know how fortunate we are.

We are fortunate in many ways, even our weather.

Because while this week we have shivered in the cold and been inconvenienced by snow and icy highways, there has been little real hardship. Compare that with conditions elsewhere, notably Florida.

The situation there is described by J. Landon Hickson, of Homestead, who spends his summers at his home on Lakey Creek Road, just off the Bryson City highway.

In a letter, dated February 10, to Ted Reber, he writes:

"No doubt, you have heard of the freeze we had here last week. It surely is discouraging to see the crops and trees that are ruined. A lot of the groves and trees will take at least five years to get back where they were.

"I suppose the freeze here hurt us as much as the one upstate in December. Bread lines in Homestead and other farming towns around "the Lake", jobs hard to find.

"They expect 250,000 head of cattle to die of starvation upstate because all the grass was killed, and no hay. Tourist season less than half of normal."

Billy Arthur's piece on this page about the vanishing spittoon re-

calls one of the many stories about Walt Scruggs.

In his day, Walt probably was the most widely quoted Negro Macon ever produced—possibly the most widely quoted Maconian of any race. For he had his own inimitable way of expressing himself, and no matter how unusual his expression, or how badly he misused a word, nobody ever had any doubt about exactly what he meant.

He gardened for many Franklin families, and each family had its own pet Walt Scruggs, quotation. This one was told by the late Mrs. Alice Robinson, who lived in "Dixie Hall," the big Main Street home just west of the courthouse.

Walt took care of Mrs. Robinson's flowers, and one day he knocked at the back door to inquire:

"While I'm here, Miss Alice, did you want me to hoe out them spittoonias?"

In a restaurant here the other day, several men were joshing, over their coffee, about good and bad family providers. Each claimed to be a first-rate provider, but expressed doubt about the others in the group.

And, characteristic of such fun-poking sessions in the mountains, there was never a trace of a smile.

To one man's boast about how good he was to his family, someone retorted:

"Aw, I bet your wife don't even have firewood for the kitchen stove."

"Well, you're wrong. It's right there in the yard." Then, with the merest hint of a twinkle in his eye: "All she has to do is chop it up and carry it in."

THE CHANGING SCENE

Vanishing Spittoon Now Barred From Post Office Lobbies

Billy Arthur in Elkin Tribune

The trouble is, most of us are inclined to use many words . . . to say little or nothing. You know people like that. They wander on and on; their tongues are never idle. Either they go all around a subject without ever getting down to the heart of the matter, or they leap from topic to topic so fast they leave us dizzy.

Anybody can do that. But to say something, and say it in a few words, takes thought. Woodrow Wilson once illustrated that. He said he could deliver an hour's speech, impromptu; to make a 30-minute speech, he'd have to have a little notice; but if he were to talk only 15 minutes, he'd need a month to prepare it.

You're already thinking to yourself: If a man has nothing to say, he'd do well to keep his mouth shut. That's right, of course. But doesn't all this suggest something positive, too? For if we are to be good company, we should have something to say, and be able to say it in a few words—that is, say it well. To do that, we need to keep our minds open and active; to think things through, so we can say what we have to say in a few words.

For others feel toward you and me just as we do toward them: They don't care how much we talk, if we only say it in a few words.

What's come over the Post Office Department in the last decade?

First, it did away with the penny postal, so that it now costs two cents to write "having fine time; wish you were here."

Then, it threw out the scratchy steel pens and dry ink wells and substituted therof ball pointers, so that jokers now have to look to the State Department for their gags.

Next, it said that any patron with a glowering dog would get no home delivered mail, so that pet fanciers now have to go to the post office for their month-end bills.

And finally, it has turned against tobacco chewers. The post office—an institution which has always taken tobacco chewers into consideration when furnishing its buildings—now has directed that use of cuspidors be discontinued.

So, the last stronghold of the tobacco chewer is going by the wayside. It's sad.

When paved streets and sidewalks came along, one couldn't scratch a line in the dirt with the toe of his shoes, then back up and square off with the rest of the fellows and see who could spit closest to the line.

Then central heating plants

took the pot bellied stove from the middle of the general store, and no longer could the fellows sit back and hold contests on who could hit the open door bull's eye the most times.

The post office lobbies were about the last refuge of the jaw chawers. However, instead of putting up signs asking people to hit the cuspidors, please, the Post Office Department has said through them away.

Elders of Front Street Methodist Church in Wilmington were not that harsh in 1860. They merely posted signs on the back of the pews requesting the men not to chew tobacco in church.

Bishop Thomas C. Darst of the Diocese of East Carolina used to enjoy telling of a parishioner who invariably had his "chaw" during services.

"Doesn't it make you sick to hold the tobacco in your mouth during service?" he was asked.

"No, bishop," the man replied. "I'm accustomed to it, been listening to you preach for two years now."

Sheriff R. B. Lane, of Craven County, said he once noticed a tobacco chewer ignoring the courtroom cuspidor. When a deputy would discreetly move it close to

Letters

De-emphasize Athletics

Editor, The Press:

The Better Schools Committee sounds good. At the risk of precipitating a family row, I wish to say I hope the functions of the athletic representative will be to de-emphasize athletics. (Nothing personal, Bob!)

Any high school that builds a modern gymnasium before first fully equipping a physics lab, a chemical lab, and hiring good, qualified teachers of the academic courses, is putting the cart before the horse.

As a college teacher, I cannot help but judge a high school poor if its graduates "flunk out" as college freshmen. It has been my unpleasant duty to be a participant in that sort of thing. I have noticed some high schools whose basketball records were very poor, never have graduates who "flunk out." We must blow off the "foam and bubbles", quit underestimating our students, and give them the rigorous foundation they deserve.

JACK CARPENTER.

Dahlonega, Ga.

*The author of this letter, who is head of the mathematics department at North Georgia College, Dahlonega, is a brother of Robert C. (Bob) Carpenter; and the latter is chairman of the committee on athletics of the recently formed Macon County Citizens Committee for Better Schools.—Editor.

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.)

So Often Disguised

(Grand Rapids Press)

Opportunities might be more easily recognized if they didn't so often come disguised as hard work.

Full Moon And Drunks

(Southern Pines Pilot)

The Rockingham Post-Dispatch, which last Friday celebrated its 40th anniversary under the editorship of Ike Landon, remains in a class by itself, one of the liveliest weekly papers we've ever seen—packed with dozens of big and little news items, along with comments and jokes originating from or appealing to its inimitable editor who was 72 years old this week.

We note that in connection with the full moon last week end, Mr. Landon again pointed out that there would probably be more drunks and law-violators in jail over the week end than usual. "It seems," he wrote succinctly, "the full moon affects the inclination to get drunk."

A typical Landon headline (front page) is over this story: "Will There Be More Drunks This Week?" We'll bet that very few persons who picked up the paper failed to read that story.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press
65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK
(1888)

The roads are in a terrible condition on account of mud. Mr. and Mrs. K. Elias entertained a select party of Franklin's elite at their residence last evening.

Dr. A. C. Brabson, of Smith's Bridge, was in town Monday cracking jokes with his friends.

25 YEARS AGO
(1933)

A formal petition for abandonment of the Tallulah Falls Railway, operating between Franklin and Cornelia, Ga., was filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission in Washington February 15.

John E. Rickman, postmaster, who has been in Hot Springs, Ark., for the past week taking treatment, returned to his home here last Saturday.

Misses Myrtle Wyatt, Edwina Dalrymple, and Elsie Adder and Richard Slagle attended the Fritz Kreisler concert in Asheville Monday night.

10 YEARS AGO

Several Franklin taxi drivers have offered their services in transporting persons living in Franklin and close vicinity, who lack transportation, to and from Franklin churches on Sunday mornings, free of charge.

The N. C. Little Symphony Orchestra will appear in concert in Franklin March 15.

"Your people here seem to possess the characteristic of 'live and let live' more than any place I know", Dr. Jay B. MacGregor, dean of Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa, who is here for a short time, said of this county.

The Reidsville Times offered to "subjoin a few cases: A man whose eye had been injured by a splinter and became so that he could not see through it, had tobacco applied for a single day, and the next day the eye was well. Another case is given where sore eyes were cured by two applications. Many instances are mentioned of prompt relief by application to sprains, bruises, swollen parts, inflamed portions of the body, and even bunions, felons and corns are removed by one trial. It is also strongly recommended for all species of sore throat, diphtheria, and similar diseases. Dropsy and hemorrhoids, too, and even hog cholera are said to yield to it. Give it a trial."

But where, we ask, today, are you going to get rid of it?

Housewives have ruled out cigars, because the smoke was too heavy, and cigarettes became popular. Then cancer scares caused lots of people to give them up and turn to chewing. Now cuspidors are being done away with.

Wonder where I put my corn cob pipe?