

THE PILOT

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ON THE FENCE

With the \$30,000 bond election still very much in the discussion stage, we hope that these columns will be used by those who are interested, both to ask questions and to expound views. We will try to get the questions answered by informed people and we will gladly give our readers the benefit of reading the views.

Meantime we must confess to being still on the ballpark fence. Mr. Weaver's replies to some of our questions, before the Rotary last week, have not shaken us loose. At least not on his side; if it is his side. In fact, they tend to make us leap a bit in the other direction.

To take the least important point first; It appears from his words, that the towns who have projects similar to the one contemplated here and which have been studied as examples on which to base our calculations, are all much bigger towns than Southern Pines. Hamlet, Asheville, Wadesboro, and Albemarle are surely all much larger than this town.

Mr. Weaver spoke of the "few who now attend the games," contrasting them with the larger crowds to be anticipated at night games. Well, if he is talking about the Wednesday afternoon games we would like to challenge him, one of these Wednesdays, to go round town and see how many people he could dig up. If they aren't at the game they must be home in bed, which is probably where they'd be at night, too. Oh, there are just a few places not closed, but precious few.

But those things are comparatively unimportant. However, one point much discussed at the Rotary meeting, is far from unimportant; that is, who is to run the ballpark, maintain the lights, collect gate receipts and so forth. Mr. Weaver said: the school, and here we must admit we started to fall off on the other side of the fence.

If lights are installed at the field, it will, according to supporters of the plan, greatly increase the number of games to be held there. College teams might be attracted here, as well as many more school and country teams. This is a strong talking point for the project. All right. Then: if all that extra amount of athletics is going to take place here, the field must become not a school field, but a town ballpark. If the town is to finance the building of it, it must be run by a town committee or man especially appointed for the job.

This is no proper project for our overworked school people to take on. Granted they could do it and do it well: they are experienced and might well handle it better than anyone else. It still remains, in our estimation, outside their proper duties.

We are proud of our school and we want to remain so. It is being enlarged, so that soon, from a physical standpoint, it should be one of the best schools of its size in the state. Our aim should be to make it actually the best. We believe that this is a full time job for those in charge.

Let's look at a few of the items that are "musts" to every good school man: Teacher selection, constant teacher supervision, consultations with teachers and with pupils over individual difficulties, consultation with parents. Maintenance of the buildings and grounds, involving not only the actual house-keeping with its constant fuss about cleanliness, but the continuous process of repair that goes on around any such public building. Medical inspections, sanitary inspections, fire drills. Then down to the actual school life: the planning of courses, helping with extra-curriculum activities, and the all-important assembly programs that must be held weekly or daily, even, and must have some originality, either through student sources or outside speakers and talent. Added to all this are the reports: on students, on teachers, to the Board of Education, the financial reports, educational reports, reports to the school board, all the never-ending home work of the busy and

efficient school man. Our school people could probably add a hundred more items to the list of what the good school man must know and do. But if the list is longer it must be even clearer that this school job is full time and how, as the children would say! Whoever else it must do it and nothing else.

Certainly such a project as this town ballpark, with its maintenance problem, its public relations, its prime necessity that gate receipts shall be accounted for and shall be as high as the tariff will bear in order to pay back the indebtedness the town will assume to put it across . . . all this adds up, in our estimation, to another full time job. Surely, to attempt to combine the two would be ill-advised.

As a matter of fact, we are under the strong impression that in order to raise a bond issue for the ballpark, the land would have to be owned by the town and could no longer remain school property.

CHRISTMAS SEALS

Governor Cherry this week urged all residents of North Carolina to cooperate in the Annual Christmas Seal Sale which begins November 24th and continues until Christmas. It is in true American spirit that we, the citizens of the United States and North Carolina, band together to fight a common enemy. This enemy is tuberculosis, a deadly killer. This dreaded disease took the lives of 1,274 persons in North Carolina during the past year 1946.

It is quite natural that we want to secure for our children the right to grow up in a healthy environment which is free from communicable diseases. It is an ever-present enemy that may be defeated if the proper weapons are utilized. If we allow our people to go on instilled with ignorance, fear, and complacency about this disease, we will give the killer the victory. On the other hand, we may educate the public about tuberculosis and thereby help rid ourselves of this dreaded disease.

Christmas Seals have been sold in this country since 1907. Since that time remarkable progress has been made in the control of tuberculosis.

The activities of the North Carolina Tuberculosis Association and its 131 affiliated associations and committees derive their sole support from the sale of Christmas Seals. These associations work in close cooperation with your State Board of Health and its local affiliates.

When we buy Christmas Seals we express our desire that this campaign against tuberculosis shall be continued and strengthened. When you buy Christmas Seals, you give yourself a gift in health.

THE MEYER SCANDAL

It appears that for the first time in our history there are 100 appointments open to the Military Academy at West Point, and no takers.

It would be a mild comfort, perhaps, to be able to think this pointed to an anti-war and pro-peace sentiment among our youth. Maybe it does in some measure. There has always been a slight falling off in army recruitment after every war. But, in this case, this unprecedented lack of enthusiasm for the army springs, without doubt, not from anti-war, but from anti-officer, feeling.

The present exposure of the General Meyer scandal will doubtless cause a few more West Point appointments to go begging. It is, in its sordid details, in the braggadocio, vulgar, money-mad character of this general officer, one of the most disgusting and disgraceful stories ever to appear in our country's record. It is also, unfortunately, impossible not to believe that much of this man's misdoing was known or at least guessed at by his superiors. Such flagrant misbehaviour could not have failed to catch the eye of more than the unknown officer who wrote in the anonymous letter, warning his superiors of what was going on. This letter, we recall, was termed that of a "crackpot," and tossed aside. Actually it was as carefully worded, as reasonably and quietly phrased as such an accusation could possibly be. That it was not the signal for an immediate investigation is hard to credit.

The men over General Meyers are guilty of gross negligence in not exercising more judgment in such a matter, and one is led to the firm belief that it was Meyer's rank that saved him. It is the "officer cult" again, against which so many of our civilian army men are so bitter. It is found, of course, equally firmly entrenched in the Navy. For example: in the incident in Japan when an officer and an enlisted man were accused of abusing fellow-prisoners; the man was tried publicly and found guilty, but the officer, an Annapolis school board, all the never-ending home work of the busy and

and exonerated.

This is the sort of thing that is helping to keep our young men out of the armed services. Until it is stopped, the recruiting campaigns with their poster pleas to join the Army or the Navy are so much waste effort.

But that is not the worst thing about it. With the breaking of the Meyer case, public confidence in the top command has been seriously shaken.

We have, now, as our secretary of state a former chief of staff; one of his assistants in the state department, Robert Lovett, was secretary for air, the branch of the service in which Meyers served. There is not the least suggestion that either of these men is tainted with this scandal of their top procurement officer, but in close touch with Meyers as they must have been, it is difficult to imagine that they were not aware of the type of man he was and that they did not close their eyes to much because of his ability to do the job. Given the terrific pressure under which they labored we cannot blame them too much; it would not be the first time that efficiency was more highly valued than honesty. All the same, their vigilance and their judgment is under fire.

The public, disheartened by this revelation of corruption in high places, must be grateful to Senator Homer Ferguson and his committee for their unrelenting investigation. The sequel will be awaited with impatience.

TEACHERS ARE PEOPLE

One of the saddest things about the Fritz business, is that it gives much fuel to the group that has held from the start that teachers should stay out of politics. They said that teachers resembled the clergy or the medical profession in that they were a group apart. Their duty, the education of our youth, was a high one, an absorbing one; they would lose their standing if they meddled in politics, like the rest of the folks.

Though we have some sympathy for this view, we have never subscribed to it, any more than we do for those in the other professions mentioned. Teachers are people, and they are going to teach other people. They can do so far better by living the same kinds of lives that other people live.

The fact remains, however, that they must live those lives under a different set of rules, or, rather, the rules, for them, must be followed with stern self-discipline. If a teacher loses the respect of his pupils, if he does not set and hold to a high standard of behaviour and character, he had better stop teaching right then.

The group who said the teachers should stay out of politics are feeling themselves justified now, in this distressing accusation and trial of the man the teachers elected to be their president. They said teachers should stay out of politics and that they would get into a muddle if they didn't. They consider this shows they were right.

It will be up to the teachers, now, to prove that they aren't; to show, by their manner of taking this setback, that they are capable of handling their affairs and that, if they did make a false move in electing a man incapable of maintaining the high position of such an office, they can accept their mistake and go to work to rectify it. If, on the other hand, they have faith in the justice of Fritz's defense it will be up to them to back their judgment and stick by him.

Whichever course they elect, we still have confidence that their decision will be made with thought and care, both as to justice and the dignity of their calling.

THEY MAKE THE HEADLINES

Writing headlines is a terrible chore most of the time, but every now and then things happen that you can have fun with. Last week was one of those times and a certain head writer on New York's Herald-Tribune took full advantage of it to have a little quiet fooling with himself and his readers.

It was all about the poultry-less or non-poultryless Thursdays and this man wrote: "U. S. To Buy Up Indolent Hens To Go Into Deep Freeze".

What a picture! There are the hens lazing about in the barnyard. In and among them stalks the big red rooster: "Come on, now, you women," he cries, "Get busy! Back to your nests!" They shrug feathery shoulders: "Oh go chase yourself!" they reply, and yawn and settle back for a nice long snooze in the sun.

And then, the fatal shape appears: Uncle Sam in a strange role, out to capture these indolent dames. But indolence still has them in its thrall. They roll a heedless, shiftless eye at him: "Kaput!" they croak: "Selah!" or hen language to that effect. "Off we go!" At least there won't be any more roosters, or egg-laying,

But what a terrible picture of the foolish lazy ones collapsing happily into the perpetual indolence of the deep freeze.

That story in the Herald Tribune had a jinx. It went haywire; or perhaps we don't know our poultry lingo. Farther down the page, it said: "the national egg-laying flomk (sic) will be 400,000,000." Flomk! Now, what the dickens . . .! Is the type pied or is that a chicken man's quaint barnyard talk?

We remember long ago hearing Lawrence Stallings tell about the great days on the New York World when he and Heywood Brown and other star reporters used to vie with each other writing headlines. Stallings liked best one he wrote for a freak-of-nature story about the love affair of a skunk and a cat. His headline was: "Skunk Sweet To Pussy."

How the lines hit the nail on the head sometimes: as this from the Times: "Taft Would Ration Rest Of World First." He would. It's hardly worth writing it out. Sometimes the second line of a head seems to write itself: like this one: "Coast Guard . . . To The Rescue."

Perhaps it was inevitable that the head writers should hail with gleeful lines the news that Philip Mountbatten was to be given a raise of pay on his wedding day. They made the most of it, and so it was especially heart-warming to see the wedding stories that came through. The hard-boiled newsmen broke down. Gone were smartness and wisecracks and cynicism. They just acted like the rest of the folks.

They said the wedding was beautiful, dignified, reverent; they told about the king and queen racing along by the going-away carriage, throwing confetti like any other pair of happy parents. They brought the whole thing over here to us as it was, with simple words of human feeling. A good job.

TOBACCO PRESSURE ON THE MARSHALL PLAN

The Pilot has maintained from the start that the tobacco people, including the Grange leadership in North Carolina, is wrong to try to buck the European ban on tobacco sales.

Here is a perfectly definite case of one group trying to obtain special privilege for itself. In the present economic state of the world it is clear that businesses which trade in luxuries as opposed to necessities are going to suffer; there is no possible way of getting around it honestly. We do not minimize the hardship involved to the tobacco growers, the buyers, the manufacturers, but that should not make any difference.

We read that tobacco state solons are meeting to plan strategy to have tobacco included as a basic incentive commodity, along with food, fuel and fertilizer to be sent abroad. This pressure group, actuated by purely selfish motives, is trying to break down the plans for sending necessities to Europe right at the start of Congressional consideration of the present Marshall plan. If the tobacco men can put this thing across, that smoking is as necessary as eating, then all the other luxuries will be right in there behind them. It will be the opening wedge to break the Marshall plan.

We must realize that the tobacco interests have reaped a harvest for many years. They have had government subsidies and control of tobacco acreage in endeavors to keep the price up where they wanted it. This has helped the whole industry. But if the present plan goes through it will hit the manufacturers and buyers, far more than the growers. The latter can and should plant other crops, the crops which are desperately needed in the world food crisis. In other words, the hardship will fall where it will do the least harm. There will be grief, we admit it without reservation, but it will be felt most by the big companies who must, to judge by their high dividend payments, be able to take it for some time without undue hardship.

The congressmen, who are trying so hard to defeat the purpose of the aid to Europe plan in order to favor special interests in their state, should stop and think. The big tobacco companies have great power, but the people of our state are not entirely helpless. They understand the situation very well indeed. The men who will stand up for what is right are going to win the approval of the vast majority of voters.

HOMAGE TO THE MUSES

Our state of North Carolina has some rather unusual things about it: one is its attitude towards the arts.

For instance: the North Carolina Symphony orchestra is the only state-supported symphony orchestra in the country. While contributions from individuals and from the members of the

Symphony society supply substantial amounts for the running of this orchestra, the state has voted a yearly subsidy for its support.

For instance again: On the 4th and 6th of December societies representing music, literature, fine arts, historical research will meet in the capitol. The meetings will be semi-official in character, attended by many of the state's most influential figures, and will be addressed by the governor. Their accomplishments will be given official commendation and encouragement.

To those who do not know this state, all this will be very surprising. How does it happen, they will ask, that no one objects to such expenditures and such pre-occupations on the part of busy legislators? Think of the fuss that would go up in Washington if someone introduced a bill to sponsor a national orchestra! How is it that no one from there starts howling about the arts not being any affair of government, about "long-haired musicians" and "Red writers," and so forth? Those who never look at anything but the poor side of a picture will find it hard to understand how a state that has too many underpaid workers and too many share-croppers, too little running water and too few hospital beds, can go in for this arty stuff.

But to North Carolinians there is nothing surprising about it. It may be the Scottish heritage to feel that things of the spirit are as important as or even more important than those of the body; that a book means more than a washing machine, and that, for governmental officials to take time from consideration of taxes and spend it on consideration of a subsidy to the state orchestra or "The Lost Colony" is a pretty good idea.

The Scots have a combination of practicality and mysticism that has been handed down to their descendants here. It accounts for the vital eagerness one feels in North Carolinians, which gives the state almost a pioneer feel to it: so much to be done, so many people pushing ahead to do it. And it accounts for the fact that North Carolinians will push for some things that others might let alone till the so-called necessities had been acquired.

But then no North Carolina Scot would agree that books and music were not necessities.

The Public Speaking

Editor, The Pilot. Bad habits, ignorance and carelessness—three important subjects, concerning which many articles, pamphlets and books have been written and published, public speeches made and good sermons preached.

Bad habits, ignorance and carelessness have destroyed and killed more people than all the wars and rumors of wars this country has ever experienced. "If you drink, don't drive; if you drive, don't intoxicate." It costs more money to control and punish criminals, maintain insane asylums, courthouses, road camps, jails and penitentiaries than it does to finance all the churches, pay the preachers and spread the Gospel.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect a greater day of salvation"—and fail to read, study and think.

George W. McNeill Carthage. ENJOYED YOUR RESORT ISSUE IMMENSELY. THE PILOT IS DEFINITELY A GREAT ASSET TO OUR LOVELY LITTLE COMMUNITY. WISHING YOU CONTINUED SUCCESS. THE REEDS BELVEDERE HOTEL

Citizens Anonymous

Editor, The Pilot. Southern Pines is a unique town. Strangers say there is no other town like it in the United States. It seems to me it would be a mistake to change its very character by bringing the Philadelphia Athletics here for spring training.

April is our prettiest month and it would be better to make our advertising appeal to the people coming up from the south to make this their spring stopping place. A drawback, too, for the people who would be drawn here to see the Philadelphia Athletics at work would find it difficult to get sufficient places to eat.

Our greatest need at the present time is an auditorium. Things of cultural entertainment have to be turned away now or else through the kindness of Mr. Picquet use the Pinehurst theater. "C. A."

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