

THE PILOT

Southern Pines

North Carolina

"In taking over The Pilot no changes are contemplated. We will try to keep this a good paper. We will try to make a little money for all concerned. Where there seems to be an occasion to use our influence for the public good we will try to do it. And we will treat everybody alike."—James Boyd, May 23, 1941.

Pearsall Plan: Lacking In Vision And Leadership

When the Pearsall plan was being considered by the General Assembly during its recent session at Raleigh, one observant newsman pointed out that legislators were receiving very few expressions of opinion on the proposals from their constituents.

Considering that the matter before the Assembly was so momentous, affecting the entire school system and, moreover, a matter to which most people react with no little emotion, why the state-wide silence? Did it mean, this observer speculated, that the people were quietly pleased with the Pearsall plan and assumed without further involvement that the Assembly was doing what needed to be done? Or did it mean doubt, puzzlement and lack of understanding about what was happening?

The news correspondent compared the calm silence with that which is said to exist in the eye of a hurricane—possibly presaging more disturbances yet to come.

Whatever the silence was or why, it seemed to worry this astute observer of the North Carolina scene; and, we gathered from what he said, it caused some worry among the assembled legislators.

The September 8 voting on the enabling constitutional amendment that would, if approved, put the Pearsall legislation into effect, will give some indication of what the people of the state think—not only in the outcome of the referendum, that is, the numbers for or against the amendment, but in the numbers voting. If the people care as much about the schools as they are said to, the vote will be heavy.

The Pilot urges every registered voter to express an opinion on the Pearsall amendment. We have been critical of the school closing and private schools "expense grant" provisions of this plan and even more critical of the method in which it was presented to the people of the state as the way to "Save Our Schools"—as though no other method were possible. But we think it would be a calamity if, at a major turning point in the history of the state's schools, the people did not bother to go to the polls and express their opinions, whatever those opinions might be.

Along with others who have criticized the Pearsall proposals or who have rejected them as futile and misleading, we intend to vote against the amendment. Along with these others, we believe that there is a sizeable group of people of good will in this state who feel that some compliance with the Supreme Court school segregation decision is inevitable and that therefore the Pearsall legislation, which is designed to evade that ruling and delay compliance, is so much lost motion.

Perhaps it is worse than lost, because the climate of opinion it creates is negative and obstructionist. By placing its seal of wholehearted approval on a process of evasion, the State of North Carolina and its top officials serve to confirm racial attitudes and strengthen prejudices that will some day nevertheless have to be modified if the South is to fulfill, along with the rest of the nation, the destiny toward which Christian and democratic concepts, by their very nature, point.

Why not then, this group of people say, get on with the job now instead of struggling through the 10 or 15 years it could take to prove the unconstitutionality and the ineffectiveness of the Pearsall plan?

There is another, and smaller, group of people who will vote against the Pearsall plan amendment because they think it does not go far enough in preserving segregation and because they think the General Assembly should be given power to close the schools on a state-wide level. Even the piece-meal whittling away of the public school system authorized by the Pearsall plan is not enough for this group. They would, rather than see any segregation barriers fall in the schools, strike the schools a majestic blow and do away with them—like setting fire to and blowing up a fort that can no longer be held against the enemy.

However, the segregationist Patriots of North Carolina have now endorsed the Pearsall plan and it is doubtful if any extensive opposition will be given it from the extreme segregationist position.

Therefore, what opposition shows up for the plan in the September 8 voting will largely reflect the opinions of those who feel that the plan is:

1. Unconstitutional—as expounded by Dr. Douglas Maggs, professor of law at Duke University, at one of the General Assembly's public hearings during the special session, who called the plan a means of "subterfuge and coercion."

2. Morally inadequate—as outlined by Paul Green, Pulitzer Prize-winning Tar Heel playwright, who said that the Assembly "devised ways and means of escaping our bounden duty as citizens in direct contradiction to our democratic faith" and said, "It is only by a patient and dedicated devotion to the principles on which our government is built—and which the United States has recently reminded us of—that our character as a people shall develop

and our future be filled with joyful promise—a promise not only for ourselves but for the emerging peoples of Africa, of the Middle East and of Asia."

3. Hasty, short-sighted and ill-considered—as eloquently explained by Irving Carlyle, Winston-Salem attorney, who said: "Even though a majority of the people is opposed to integration, about which there can be no question, still it does not follow that a majority favors the abandonment of our public school system rather than its preservation through a gradual compliance with the decisions of the Supreme Court. . . . In the long run, which is just another term for perspective, the solution of our educational problems must take into account a few fundamental principles, as well as prevailing customs and prejudices. . . . Sweeping throughout the world. . . is a belief in the dignity of man and the worth of every individual. . . . That system of government, and only that system of government, will long endure which guarantees under law to every man the right to achieve human dignity and individual worth through his own efforts, and education and religion and democracy are the chief means to that end. . . . Time and not hasty action will bring the right answer and. . . the answer. . . will be shaped by the conscience of man and will be in keeping with his moral concept of justice under law to all men."

4. Dangerous and extremist—as seen by R. Mayne Albright, Raleigh attorney and a former candidate for Governor, who said, "Let us not destroy our public schools by removing the time-honored constitutional safeguards for a statewide system," and who believes the "safety valve" of local option on school closings could become a "time bomb" to destroy the schools.

Those, then, are four points of view, four attitudes that, we believe, are shared in whole or in part by more people in North Carolina than the Pearsall Plan advocates would have us believe. September 8 will tell us how many they are.

While endorsing all these statements or attitudes of opposition, The Pilot would add another which has not been so widely stressed, although it has been pointed out before in these columns: the fact that the plan from the beginning was concocted without the participation of Negro advisers and, for this reason and other reasons, has earned the hostility of Negroes who constitute some 25 per cent of the state's population and school enrollment.

Whatever may be the answer to the problems posed by the Supreme Court decision, it seems absurdly futile to seek an answer in a method that does not, from start to finish, recognize the aspirations of Negroes and attempt to work out a solution in a spirit of mutual cooperation and respect.

The Pearsall plan, in its whole tone and approach, as well as in its specific legislative details, assigns to the Negro the role of an attacker—a creator of "intolerable" situations—and to the white man the role of rescuer who, on September 8, is asked to "Save Our Schools."

An individual has a right to such an opinion. But it is unworthy of the State of North Carolina—which is, after all, the Negroes' State as well as the white man's State—to ask its citizens to endorse, by altering their constitution, such a shabby and limited view of human relationships.

North Carolina, the South, the nation and the world stand at a moral and intellectual frontier in the matter of racial relationships. At this point, it seems to us, a governmental unit—no less the State than the United States—must assume the progressive role of leader and peacemaker rather than that of a preserver of the status quo and an endorser of existing hostilities. No frontier, geographical or moral, was ever opened, no diversely thinking groups of people were ever united by rejecting aspiration, vision and leadership to stand pat on things as they are—especially if the status quo is a time of unhappiness, uncertainty and conflict such as we in North Carolina and the South are now undergoing.

Can the Pearsall plan do anything but preserve or even increase the unhappiness, uncertainty and conflict that now prevail in racial relationships over the state? Aside from all other considerations, common sense alone leads us to reject such a proposal by voting against the plan on September 8. Then we should bring together the boldest and best minds of both races, on local and state levels, to work out the school segregation problem in an atmosphere of dignity, respect, and cooperation.

The people, both white and Negroes, need vision and leadership—the kind of leadership that creates unity from diversity, that compromises but goes forward, that creates new attitudes, new understanding.

The unhappy stalemate of racial relations as they are must be resolved. And the Pearsall plan, a retrogressive glorification of the status quo, can't even begin to do what has to be done.

"That's Nice—I've Had Quite A Little Party, Too"



From The Bertie Ledger-Advance

Nickel Has Fallen To Low Estate

Somebody once said that what this country needs is a good five cent cigar. Now the paraphrase would be "What this country needs is a nickel that will buy something."

If you had just one nickel and could spend it for just one article what article would you choose? Silly question? Maybe not. If you really set out to see what your nickel would buy you'd be very much surprised.

Everyone knows that the penny as we know it today is good only for paying sales tax or for being put into parking meters, which is in itself a sort of tax, but how many have thought of the plight of the lowly nickel? How many have considered how its value has sunk?

Most self-respecting coin-operated Coke boxes won't even take him any more unless he is accompanied by a penny. Few eating places will accept him for a cup of coffee.

Movies For Dime

Time was when two nickels would amount to show fare on a Saturday afternoon and a fellow could ride the range through a double feature and, if he could wheedle another nickel from some unsuspecting adult, stop at the corner store and after much deliberation pick out enough candy to last him through the whole episode.

Two nickels wouldn't get a youngster to the ticket taker to day and all the candies he could buy with one nickel would be lost in his hollow tooth before he got a real taste of it.

A nickel candy bar looks much the same today as it used to. The difference is in the packaging. Time was when there was a little paper wrapped around a lot of chewy candy. Today there is a lot of paper wrapped around a thin piece of cardboard which is twice as long as the candy bar itself. A diligent search will turn up the candy bar, though.

All Not Lost

However, all is not lost. There are always stores in your town that specialize in small items, such as the five and ten cent stores. They have nickel items, some amusing and some utilitarian, but few would be the things we can't do without.

As most men do, let's consider milady first. She can do nothing toward making herself lovely with the aid of just one nickel. Her choice in the line of cosmetics is absolutely nil.

But, let's begin and see just how far we can take this beautification thing. She can purchase a comb with which to comb her locks, clamps for curling them, hair clasps and bobby pins for keeping them in place, but no shampoo for washing them. What a mess!

She can buy a manicure stick for making her fingernails cleaner, but no polish to add color.

Believe it or not, that is the extent of the beautifiers she can get, and there's a lot more to be beautified.

For Nickel, Who Cares?

Children, as usual, are well taken care of, especially in the line of school supplies and these are items they wish they had never seen. Such things as notepads, protractors, pencils, pencil clips, erasers, pencil sharpeners, and loose-leaf paper can all be had for a nickel each. They are not high quality merchandise, mind you, but for a nickel who cares. For that matter, to a child who cares anyway.

Most grownups won't believe it but there are even toys on the market to be had for one nickel. You couldn't put a nickel present over on your child for his birthday, but here's proof that some can be found. One can find tiny plastic cars, balloons, a toy badge, a small bag of marbles, caps for shooting in a cap pistol, and the ever-present BB shot. Not a very imposing list, but cheap!

Couldn't Match Eve

Next to cosmetics, the closest thing to milady's heart is clothes. Now just what could she buy with one nickel that she would be seen with in public?

You couldn't match Eve for clothing if you depended on the nickel. A little ribbon maybe, or a very small and very thin handkerchief from an odd lot would be about all unless you had rather try toe plates, heel taps, shoe laces or a few buttons.

There are some useful items to be had for a nickel, such things as: cookie cutters, glass coasters, salt shakers, paper plates, straight pins, pyrex cups, ash trays, nails, brackets, door hooks and very small wooden knobs. Certainly not the most glamorous list you ever saw, but useful.

Ever get hungry? Candy is your best bet if a nickel is all you have. Candy bars, loose candy in very small amount, Life-Savers, chewing gum and tiny candy hearts make up the list of edibles.

Who Wants That!

Getting older? Feel yourself slipping? For one nickel you can get a rubber crutch tip to stop your skidding.

Are you the practical joker type? Here's a dandy little item: one plastic egg to be placed in the hen's nest to make the old biddy think she is about to become a mother, while all the time you are devouring her outfit along with bacon and coffee. Some joke!

In one of the stores we did find two items that seemed to come together every time we thought of this subject of the nickel and its value—a shot glass, and a half bottle of after shave lotion (the cap had come unscrewed and half had spilled

out). We know you can do better, but not nearly so cheaply.

Squeeze the nickel all you want. We don't think the buffalo will hollow. He hasn't the strength!

Grains of Sand

Statistic HERE'S a statistic to end all statistics: New Yorkers, all 8,200,000 of them, we are informed by the Sunday New York Times, live in the shade of 2,282,000 trees.

It is assumed, but merely assumed, mind you, that Mr. Moses, the good and kind boss of everything beautiful in New York, was responsible for the count, though the Times gives credit to the Park Department.

The trees—47,000 of them are sycamores—are causing no end of worry to the some 272 pruners the city hires to care for them. Just not enough time for the pruners to get around to look after each tree and give it the individual care that New Yorkers think is necessary.

To further complicate things—not statistically, although there's a bit (?) of a statistic here—the Park Department is thinking about hitting the taxpayers up for some \$800,000 to get rid of some of the older trees.

Shades of the Ginkgo! (that, we, and the Times, can inform you, is also a favorite tree in the Big City, best for coping with the gasoline and soot that New Yorkers live with and despise so much) maybe the Park Department should come to Southern Pines and take a look-see at the way we treat our trees. Must be more than two or three million in Southern Pines, counting the pesky "blackjacks."

WE don't need any 272 pruners. WE don't need \$800,000 to tear down any trees.

Anyone care to make a count . . . fairly accurate?

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The Public Speaking

An Open Letter to the Governor

To the Editor: Do you sincerely want to get North Carolina out of the position of 43rd of the 48 states? Are you willing to face up to the danger signals that we are slipping, in spite of publicity being ground out by the Department of Conservation and Development in all their sincerity?

Let's discard theory and examine facts. For several years, not a month has passed in which I did not receive or develop one to three inquiries or leads of manufacturers considering relocating or expanding plant facilities into North Carolina. I have been involved in the actual movement of a number of them in recent years.

The state still is getting a new industry here and there to be sure. Each one looms large, but in the aggregate the move is small, relatively. The trend is slowing down noticeably. It is becoming increasingly difficult to interest management to the point of actually coming to our state after preliminary studies.

They are finding out about the handicaps imposed by our personal property tax structure on inventory. Any plant with inventory on hand on a particular day, inventory in process, raw materials on hand for manufacture, any finished goods on hand not actually delivered to customers, is subject to tax. In the case of printing, stationery, office supplies, janitor supplies, maintenance materials, and the like, they will have paid a use tax on them and have to pay the additional personal property tax.

It is a great burden to business, a deterrent to expansion and a matter of practical harm to North Carolina.

Furthermore, this state possesses the potential for being one of the greatest distributing points in the east due to its geographical location. The city of Charlotte, for example, is a great commercial distributing point now, but could be a tremendous factor in the distribution of manufactured products on the way to markets throughout the east if it were not being held back by the personal property tax structure. Other cities such as Greensboro or Raleigh could become equally important.

North Carolina has played ostrich long enough. All the propaganda and advertising we can pour out will create interest only, to be round wasted after industrialists who go through the processes of sound investigation come face to face with the special tax hurdle. Our state government has claimed for years to be doing it can to help the people. The result of all that effort is the fact that we are 43rd of the 48. Is that success?

There is one sound, sure answer to the situation if you are genuine in your pronouncements and willing to face it. The State of North Carolina must be declared a Free Port, and the personal property tax eliminated.

As a free port, warehouses will spring up all over the state giving a big lift to employment. Merchandise in transit to ultimate markets and stored in such warehouses until actually sold or delivered would be free of that nuisance tax which costs more than it provides. North Carolina manufacturers could transfer finished products to such storage, also, free of the burden of taxation for the privilege of having produced it. Do you realize it costs almost as much in labor to take an inventory in process of a hosiery mill or furniture factory as the amount of the tax?

You heard the clarion call in the Chicago convention of "How long, America?" That call belongs right at home—How long North Carolina, must we wait to have this state throw out a petty tax structure in return for greater prosperity for its people? How long must we stay in 43rd place because of a lack of boldness and vision? How long, North Carolina, until we can tell the producers all over the United States that here is the place into which to ship finished products on the way to market as the best distributing point east of the Mississippi?

How long before a manufacturer can locate in North Carolina without that nuisance tax and the cost of taking the inventory, and instead can put that money into the employment of additional personnel?

Finally, how long North Carolina, before officialdom becomes interested in the knowledge and experience of those of its citizens who do not have political connections or aspirations? Let's make North Carolina a Free Port and let's get rid of that personal property tax knowing that the amount of tax money lost will be more than made up by the income tax from the greater employment which will result.

MARK JAY KING, Jr.
Southern Pines.