

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.

Second Thoughts On Pennsylvania Avenue

In an editorial on this page last week, we back-handedly approved, or seemed to approve, the destruction of those trees which are said to stand in the way of widening Pennsylvania Avenue from Bennett Street to the new thruway.

Convinced last week that the street must be widened if it is to carry satisfactorily the thruway traffic entering town, we perhaps gave to readers the impression that The Pilot, ever a staunch defender of the trees and natural beauty for which Southern Pines is famous, was acquiescing entirely too amiably in plans that will remove, according to town hall, "most of the trees" on this stretch of street.

Again let us say: the town should save every tree it can on Pennsylvania Avenue. This may mean building sidewalks around some trees or even—and we can think of worse things to do—making a somewhat narrower street than is contemplated.

Present plans call for a street as wide as Pennsylvania Avenue is between Bennett and Broad St., a total of 80 feet, including parkways and sidewalks. In this block, the width amply allows diagonal parking on each side with two lanes of traffic in the center. If parallel parking were used along the proposed wider street from Bennett to the thruway, could not the street itself be narrowed a few feet to save some of the trees? If such narrowing would actually save some of the trees, we think it should be considered.

As a matter of fact, until there is extensive business development along this street, is it necessary to provide parking space at all? Couldn't parking on the street be eliminated,

allowing a width of 40 feet of roadway space, thus permitting two free lanes of traffic moving in each direction? If business developments come later, off-street parking could be provided.

Then, even with 10 feet on each side for parkway and sidewalk, the entire street would be cut from 80 to 60 feet in width. While we realize that grading operations will cause the loss of some trees, it would seem that an additional 10 feet on each side would permit others to be saved.

The argument used by town hall to justify the widening and tree cutting—that this will be the main entrance to town from the thruway—is exactly the reason the street should be kept as attractive as possible.

Newly planted trees might be impressive in 20 or even 10 years, but how Southern Pines will look to those entering it in the next 10 years is also important, for practical business reasons as well as general esthetic considerations.

The Pennsylvania Avenue interchange area at the thruway offers a particularly dreary and ugly landscape to the traveler. It would redeem this unfortunate situation somewhat if motorists could turn in from this to a Pennsylvania Avenue that is not shorn of all large trees.

We are well aware that grading, curb and gutter, storm sewers and sidewalks for the heavy pedestrian traffic to West Southern Pines must necessarily spell doom for some of the trees. But more than a casual effort must be made to save other trees that apparently, with some adjustment of the plan, could be saved.

Pearsall Plan Approved — Now What?

For better or worse, the Pearsall Plan—which this newspaper opposed—is written into state law: approved by a majority of the voters of North Carolina.

And, as in Hugh Haynie's cartoon on this page today, the racial segregation problem in the public schools still presents itself, as it did before Saturday's referendum on the enabling constitutional amendment, in the form of a question mark.

Will the Pearsall Plan "save our schools," as the slogan of its proponents proclaimed, or will it inflict a patchwork of disrupted, inadequate or, at worst, non-existent public education over the state?

Will its pattern of complicated evasiveness discourage Negroes from attempting to enter white schools or will it provoke, through the hostility that Negroes see in the Plan, even more attempts at integration than would otherwise have been the case?

Will the people, on edge and uneasy about school integration, strike down all attempts of Negroes to enter the schools or will they, when faced with the choice of some integration or loss of their schools, accept a measure of integration, as they can choose to do at any step in the Pearsall Plan's blueprint for procedure by school boards or in the courts?

Will the Plan, as its more liberal supporters averred, deter the more rabid segregationists in the General Assembly from attempting to enact legislation that is even more restricting and more "unacceptable to Negroes? Or will the

extreme segregationists, encouraged at the state's favorable response to legislation that is basically hostile to Negroes, attempt to amend it into an even more powerful weapon against integration?

Will the Plan, as Governor Hodges believes, be found constitutional upon testing in the courts or will it eventually have to be scrapped, forcing the people of the state to adjust themselves to another and, we would suspect, more tolerant course of action?

One constant factor remains, in North Carolina and everywhere, in dealing with the school segregation problem: there must be a continuing effort toward racial understanding on the part of both white and Negro persons.

To the extent the Pearsall Plan leads white people to believe they have assured eternal or even long-abiding segregation in the schools, they are being deluded. The Supreme Court decision stands. The aspirations of Negroes for public recognition of their equal rights under law in public matters are not diminishing.

It now behooves all of us—school officials and patrons and all citizens—of both races, to question and examine critically our notions about each other, to strive to find points of agreement rather than points of conflict, to renew our devotion to public education, to resolve to keep our schools open even at the cost of some compromise with rigid convictions, to eschew violence of any kind and to strive for the wisdom, tolerance and understanding without which human beings can never live in harmony and mutual respect.

Encouraging Outlook For Prison Changes

Proposals put before the Advisory Budget Commission last week by the North Carolina Prisons Department assume a coming separation of the Department from the Highway Commission. There was talk, too, of gradually decreasing the number of prisoners working on the roads and increasing their employment in forestry, farm and other projects. All this is encouraging.

Those who have expressed dissatisfaction with the State's prison system, particularly the use of vast numbers of all sorts of prisoners for highway work, should now enlist widespread public support for the proposed changes. Because, of course, there will be no changes unless they are authorized by the 1957 General Assembly.

Having side-stepped the prisons issue in 1955, despite well presented pleas for action, the Assembly can hardly ignore the matter at its next session. Last week's presentation to the Advisory Budget Commission of a plan that assumes the long-discussed separation shows that there is considerable confidence in favorable action by the legislators.

A point made last week by Prisons Director William F. Bailey puts the separation proposal in a light that should inspire wide backing. He referred to "the inequity of requiring one segment of our population (taxpayers who support the road program) to carry the tax responsibilities for a government function which should be borne by all segments of our taxpaying citizens."

This is a valid appeal, affecting millions of

the state's citizens, and is a point of view that should enlist the support of many to whom the previously stressed arguments—rehabilitation and efficiency—may not have seemed important.

The plan discussed by Mr. Bailey, it should be noted, does not contemplate taking prisoners off the roads at once. In fact, it was stated that as many prisoners would likely be worked on the highways in the biennium, after separation, as were before. However, an official of the Prisons Advisory Board, who was present for the hearing, said he anticipates that the number working on the roads will decrease gradually. Development of income from prison farms and forestry and industrial operations would more than offset, he estimated, the loss of income from the Highway Commission.

More than a year ago, the prisons director told editors at a state-wide press meeting that building roads with prison labor is not good economy. Unskilled hand labor takes longer than skilled work with machines. Prisoners, generally speaking, don't do as good a job as free persons.

The aim of the proposed change in the prisons system is not simply to use general fund money instead of highway money, but, ultimately, to cut down the very high percentage of repeaters in the North Carolina prison population. Working prisoners on the roads precludes to a great extent any effective rehabilitation program.

We urge our readers to get behind the separation proposal.

"Well, Here's The Milestone—Now What?"



STATUS OF TEACHER CHANGED

Parent Used To Hold Hat In Hand

Some months ago, in his nationally circulated and admired publication, "The Carolina Israelite," Harry Golden heaped scorn on the "letting them do what they want" trend in education and had a few kind words for old-fashioned discipline and curriculum in school. The Pilot reprinted that stimulating article. Recently, in the same publication—a 16 page newspaper that he writes in its entirety and publishes once every two months—Mr. Golden followed up with a piece headed: "Once The Parents Were Afraid of Teachers. Now The Teachers Are Afraid of Parents." Here it is:

Every few months the teachers around the country are annoyed with organized visits by all sorts of groups of "parents" and "civic leaders." On such occasions teachers are brought together and told what to wear and how to conduct themselves in front of the guests.

Part of System

This is part of the story of our present-day education, the four-year high school course which qualifies the kid to enter the state college where he promptly starts on a new two-year course of what they call "remedial English"—learning to read and write. It is part of the system of "letting them do what they want."

I cannot reconcile these high-school courses in "cherry pie-making" with the principles of John Dewey, the education philosopher. In a fine pamphlet by Lois Meridith French of Newark (N. J.), State Teachers College, "Where We Went Wrong in Mental Hygiene," Dr. French says that "John Dewey himself in the later years of his life made various attempts to explain that he never meant his progressive education to turn out undisciplined children."

I do not believe that the idea in education of learning by doing, that it will harm my psyche to suppress any emotion, was ever a part of the philosophy of John Dewey. I think it would be better if we went back to the old system when the teacher sent for a parent and he stood in the hallway with his hat in his hand waiting to be interviewed, and maybe a little scared about the whole thing, too.

A Special Status

This is all of one piece with the fact that the teachers are so badly underpaid. The people of the commercial society are no fools. They understand perfectly well that there are a few people, who because of their careers, have no frontiers in the social structure. These are the teachers of course, and the creative people. The fellow in the commercial society understands this very well. The first thing he does when he makes a lot of money is to sponsor something which has in its title the word, "Education," "Institute," or "Cultural." He feels that no matter how little the teacher gets, he, the teacher, has

acquired a special status, so why give him financial security too. Since the teacher is paid out of tax funds there is no way this can be resisted, except to be on special good behavior when the groups come a-visitng. Luckily we still have Free Enterprise so that many creative people can remain privately employed or self-employed, and keep their doors closed to intruders. If all creative people were paid out of taxes you would have a "Parents-Writers Association," a "Parents-Composers Association," and a "Parents-Artists Association." Now wouldn't that be ducky—and how they'd love it.

It is not only that teachers are underpaid, but also they are interfered with by the "outside" that forces them into becoming quasi-politicians, and smother the desire in them to learn to communicate. The academy is gone, even though the British remain encouraging. We had it once but lost it. The day is gone when a teacher was proud of his profession through an inner sense of accomplishment. On the one side we have teachers who know less than the pupils and on the other side we have good teachers who are being driven to other fields to escape the intruders and to earn a living.

Grains of Sand

It Wasn't The Shock

When the constitutional amendments election returns were being compiled at the sheriff's office in the courthouse at Carthage Saturday night, Cliff Blue of Aberdeen—who is editor and publisher of The Sandhill Citizen as well as Moore County's representative in the General Assembly at Raleigh—called Magistrate Charlie MacLeod who as usual was presiding over the collection of returns at Carthage. Cliff wanted to get returns for his paper and for those who had gathered at the Citizen office to check up on how the voting was going.

Now it happens that one precinct, Spencerville (Westmore community of upper Moore County), cast a very heavy vote, 232-34, AGAINST the amendment that would provide expense and travel allowances for members of the General Assembly. It was the only precinct in the county to vote against this proposal which also met a favorable response over the state.

Magistrate MacLeod was reading the county returns over the telephone to Cliff. Immediately after he read the pay increase amendment returns from Spencerville, the phone went dead.

When connections were finally established, Charlie was relieved to hear the Moore representative's voice as strong as ever on the end of the line.

"Cliff," Charlie chided, "I thought you'd dropped dead when you heard how they voted in Spencerville."

Cliff's reply was not recorded. The reason the phone went dead, it was learned later, was that, just at that moment, somebody in the sheriff's office stepped on the phone cord in such a way as to break the connection.

Another Rejection

Spies precinct, also in upper Moore, distinguished itself by being the only precinct in this county to vote against the amendment that authorizes a married woman to execute a

power of attorney conferred by her husband.

The vote was 27 against the amendment and 21 for it.

"It looks like those fellows in Spies just don't trust their wives," was the comment of one courthouse observer.

Someone else speculated that the voting ran: 21 husbands against the amendment, 21 wives for it and six bachelors joining the other menfolk to defeat the proposition in that precinct.

OLD LEGENDS RECALLED

Neighbors Feud Over Rooster

By CARLTON MORRIS
In Gates County Index

From the time Peter denied Christ three times, the crowing of a rooster has had special significance to men. Over the years, many myths and legends have sprung up about this bird.

My own mother would disclaim any belief in superstition of any kind, but would invariably remark that company was coming, if the old red rooster came to the door and crowed. Funny thing about it was, company almost always showed up right after the old bird sounded forth his clarion call. As a youngster, I enjoyed visitors for I had none of the extra work connected with their visit and I loved to hear the old rooster.

Many are the tales told of hearing a rooster crowing at midnight. Sounding forth in the middle of the night, he is believed to be a harbinger of sadness and death, but he also crows at dawn which is emblematic of hope and life.

Once I saw two neighbors become enemies and refuse to speak to each other because of an old rooster. Both lived in the city and one had a puppy while the other had a rooster. The man who owned the puppy brought about the whole trouble. His little dog was sick and in the dog hospital for a number of days. He brought the puppy

'Silence Area' Between Races Hurting State

(The lack of frank and open communication between whites and Negroes, reflected in the fact that there was no Negro member of the State study commission that formulated the Pearsall Plan, has been frequently mentioned by The Pilot in the past year as one of the unfortunate developments since the Supreme Court school segregation decisions. In an editorial this week, The Sanford Herald reviews some of the background of this situation and calls it "among the bitterest fruits of the Supreme Court decision." The editorial follows.)

Governor Hodges revealed over the weekend that, at the time the 10-member Pearsall Commission was chosen, he attempted to organize a committee of Negroes to advise it. Earlier he had considered naming a Negro to the Pearsall Commission itself but had come to the conclusion this would be unwise.

Several months ago Mr. Hodges informally discussed at the North Carolina Editorial Writers Conference his inability to obtain candid advice on school matters from Negroes. His remarks at that time were amplified by Thomas J. Pearsall, chairman of the State's current advisory commission on education who also headed the 19-member study committee chosen by the late Governor Umstead.

The original committee included two Negroes—each the president of a State-supported college. Both, said Mr. Pearsall, were denounced frequently and brutally by other members of their race for cooperating with the whites. "He had no doubt, he solemnly added, that this abuse contributed to the death of Dr. F. D. Bluford, of A&T College, one of the two committeemen.

Mr. Pearsall disclosed also that he had sought the counsel of Negroes in the Rocky Mount area, where he has lived all his life, in the attempt to form a statewide parallel commission. He called a meeting of them on quick notice. Nevertheless, he asserted, by the time discussions began, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was in charge; no proposal was put forward that was not a part of the N.A.A.C.P. line. Other attempts at obtaining Negro cooperation, Mr. Pearsall said, came to ruin upon non-compromising minds.

We cannot interpret these experiences of Governor Hodges and Chairman Pearsall. We do not know whether the refusal of Negroes to confer freely with them and their associates was spontaneous or organized. We do not know whether the Negro people subscribe to a policy headed down from the N.A.A.C.P. headquarters or whether the N.A.A.C.P. reflects a determination that has its roots in a million shackles in segregated districts.

But we know this: that the breakdown of communications between the white and Negro people in North Carolina and throughout the South is among the bitterest fruits of the Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954. There can be no real peace in our region until the lines are restored.

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