

# 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. Wherever 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.

## The South Has Not Quit Trying

A native-born Southerner returning from a trip North tells us that while up there he found himself, somewhat to his own amazement, arguing on behalf of racial tolerance and understanding with a Yankee who, also to the Southerner's amazement, was vituperatively and blindly bitter when discussing racial relations.

Racial prejudice, he discovered, was indeed not confined to areas south of the Mason-Dixon line.

Beyond that, he discovered this element about his own thinking and what distinguished his thinking from the Yankee's: the Northerner said that he ignored the Negro, contemptuously and completely. To him, the problem was thereby solved. What the Southerner then realized, he said, was that the South simply cannot ignore the Negro. We are all living here, white and Negro together, with our economic and political lives—if not our social lives—inextricably entwined.

## Intangible Tax: Let's Abolish It

It is well known around the capitol at Raleigh that legislation sending back a portion of tax receipts or other money to the counties and towns of the state is usually well received by the assembled legislators who know that it will likewise be well received by the home folks, including those important municipal and county officials who are not uninfluential in the election or defeat of candidates for the House or Senate.

So it looks like a hard pull to repeal the state's intangible property tax—that "nuisance levy" which was so eloquently lambasted by the knowledgeable George Ross, former veteran state official, before the county commissioners recently.

We agree with Mr. Ross that the tax is keeping a lot of people out of North Carolina who would make valuable citizens—literally and otherwise. Because these people do not want to pay this tax on their investments and bank accounts, the state loses their income and inheritance taxes and also, in many instances the ad valorem taxes on houses and personal property they might otherwise own in this state.

Because we all MUST live together, therefore, we MUST find a solution—whatever the solution may be, that will enable us to live in mutual tolerance, even if not yet attaining the goal that morality and Christianity forbid us eventually to evade: mutual respect.

What the Southerner discovered was that he had not quit trying or hoping. However faulty or misguided may be some of our efforts in the South, he realized, we have not closed the book.

This is true. And we all, white and Negro, know it in our hearts. Somehow, some way, agreement must be reached on the terms of our life here in the South together.

Of course, there are people in the South who have closed their minds, who have quit trying, just like the Southerner's Yankee acquaintance. But most of the people in the South have not, because they know as plainly as the sun will rise that they cannot.

Therein, no matter how painfully and slowly it may develop, lies the South's salvation.

stances the ad valorem taxes on houses and personal property they might otherwise own in this state.

Mr. Ross's proposal that counties like Moore, which admittedly could get along without the intangible taxes that are returned to it by the state, work out some way, in a state bill, not to levy the intangible tax here or to credit it on county and town ad valorem taxes, is appealing, but we fear would turn out to be too complicated for reasonable administration.

Killing the whole tax would be best—but, for poorer counties, we're told, that would be throwing out a valued nest egg.

Sometimes we wonder if such counties couldn't get along all right, even though stirring up a hornet's nest among the taxpayers, by having an impartial, professional revaluation of real estate within each county. In most cases, it's our guess, they'd then be able to collect enough more to let the intangible tax refunds go and not miss them.

That would be a far healthier tax situation.

## Legislation To Limit Auto Power?

We agree with Thomas B. Watkins, president of the N. C. State Automobile Association, that auto sales campaigns based on speed and horsepower may be effective in selling cars but are hardly in the public interest.

Mr. Watkins cited newspaper ads that boasted of cars with speeds up to 147 miles per hour and "the blazing action of 227 horses."

The basic factor, as Mr. Watson points out, is not the advertising but the fact that automobile manufacturers are engaged in a "horsepower race" to produce cars capable of faster and faster speeds.

The car makers say that more power is what the public wants and demands. But the public, especially the families of the victims, did not want or demand the 40,200 U. S. traffic deaths last year nor the million-plus injuries nor the multi-billion dollar loss from automobile accidents.

It is acknowledged that speed was a major factor in a large proportion of those fatalities, injuries and costly wrecks.

Federal regulatory legislation limiting the horsepower of automobiles is what the NCAA president suggests. There is a precedent in the regulatory powers now exercised in the field of aviation.

A public faced with a choice of increasing death and destruction or decreasing power will choose the latter. Wise car manufacturers should take note and change the trend in automobile design, while they can still do it voluntarily.

Such a change, like nothing that could be said or done by public or private sources would focus needed attention on highway safety.

## Lodging For Old Folks: A National Shame

This winter's series of nursing home fires over the nation highlights another aspect of one of the growing problems of 20th century life in the United States: the increase in numbers and consequently in problems of the aging and aged.

Not only are there vastly more older people living now than formerly—in proportion to the total population—but, because of smaller houses and increased cost of living, families are less able, perhaps also less willing, to care for old folks in their own homes.

The principal answer to this problem has been the nursing or convalescent home. Everywhere, these institutions have sprung up, established for the most part in old structures that have been pressed into use for the purpose because, to be coldly honest about it, they are worthless for any other purpose—acceptable neither as private residence nor place of business.

The expanded problem of the aging is so new that most of us have not been aware of its extent nor of what has been happening.

While we have been providing the best of modern structures for private homes, places of business and public buildings such as schools, we, as a nation, have done little to provide suitable dwelling places for the aged and infirm.

Having read these hair-raising news stories of nursing home fires, there is only one conclusion: whether through private or public effort or a combination of financing, these helpless and voiceless people must be provided safe, decent and comfortable places to live.

The problem is nation-wide. Millions of families are seeking unsuccessfully for a place where their old people can live with confidence and dignity at a reasonable cost. There are such places—a few of them—but their space is at a premium.

Nearly everybody else is living better than they have ever lived before. But a lot of old people this winter have died horribly—and thousands of others are existing unhappily and uncomfortably in inadequate nursing homes—because we as a nation have not included them in our enjoyment of peace and prosperity.

## A Worthy Investment

Last week's report of a Youth Study Commission to the General Assembly, proposing family courts handling domestic and juvenile cases, offers North Carolina a chance to pioneer in an important field of public welfare and administration of justice.

The Pilot has long been interested in the establishment of domestic and juvenile courts that could give more time and deeper insight into the legal and social problems of such cases. But we have realized the financial problem that such courts pose for counties that would not long be able to employ the skilled personnel to man them.

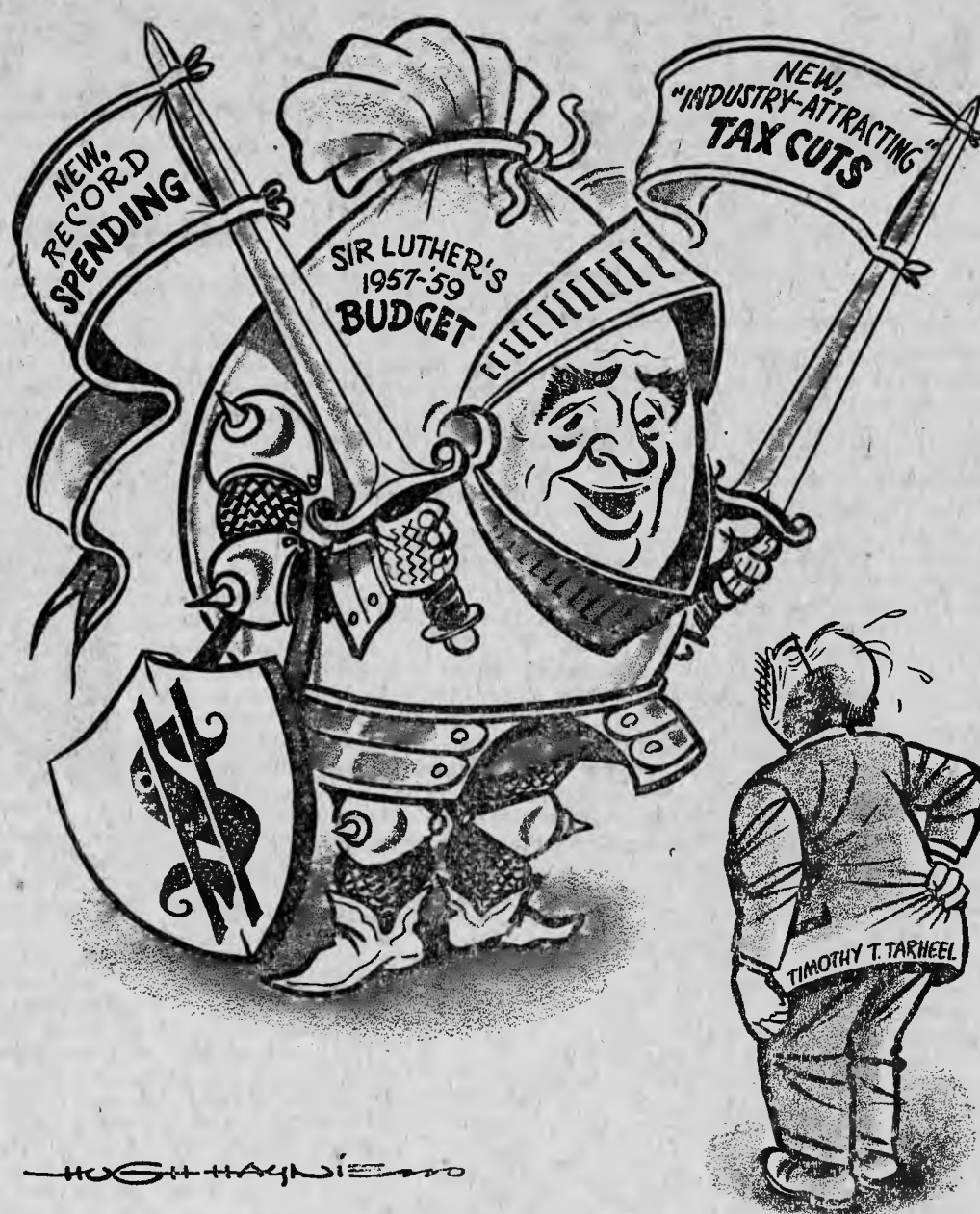
The Youth Commission's suggestion of 18 districts that would combine groups of counties as the service area for a single court offers the best plan yet proposed to make the courts practical.

State financing at a cost of over two and a half million dollars would assure that the courts really are set up state-wide.

While this appears to be a poor time to take on large new state expenses, we are faced here with the same basic problem as in better pay for teachers: the program would nurture and preserve the human resources of the state—its most important resources in the long run.

We commend to the attention of readers the article on this page that tells more about the court proposal.

## "This May Be Confusing Now—But You'll Get It In The End"



## FOR DOMESTIC, JUVENILE CASES

## 'Family Court' System Proposed

(See editorial, "A Worthy Investment," on this page.)

A system of family and juvenile courts has been proposed to the General Assembly with recommended legislation that would place them in operation to serve the entire state.

The need for the new courts has been determined and recommended by the Governor's Youth Service Commission, created by the 1955 Legislature and appointed by Governor Luther Hodges in August of that year.

Other information relating to the establishment of the court system was compiled by the National Probation and Paroles Association of Austin, Tex.

Enactment of legislation extending the juvenile court age in North Carolina through the seventeenth year also has been recommended by the Commission.

### A 'Lost' Group

North Carolina is one of a group of states not extending protection to this age, it was pointed out, and a Commission member added that "the children in the 16 to 18 group are to some degree a 'lost' group of children from the standpoint of State and community resources."

As for the family court system, if the Tar Heel State adopts it, it will be the first State in the union to have such a system, it was said. County domestic courts in the few counties where they exist, would be abolished, as such, and absorbed by the State-wide system.

The plan would create a new system that would be a separate, autonomous division at the level of, and a part of, the Superior

Court system.

The conclusion of the study emphasized in the report was that half the youngsters committed to institutions in 1955 and "perhaps as high as 70 per cent" should not, and would not, have been committed had there been an adequate system of courts, probation workers and detention facilities.

### One of Five

North Carolina, according to the survey, is one of five states where the juvenile court age stops at the 16th birthday. The commission recommends raising the juvenile court age to include 16 and 17 year olds.

The court would have jurisdiction of all types of cases involving the troubles of families and children and would, to a large degree, substitute diagnosis and therapy for the philosophy of guilt and punishment.

Each member of the Commission feels the operation of such a court system would decrease the number of commitments of children to State correctional institutions and of youthful offenders to the prison system of the State.

According to reports which the Commission had received from

the director of the State prison system, the prison population of North Carolina is now growing percentage wise faster than the total population and the number of commitments of young persons under the age of 18 is "alarmingly" large.

In its preliminary report to the Governor, the present State juvenile court system was found to be "weak and outmoded."

Other findings: In 92 of the 100 counties the clerk of the Superior Court is the judge of the juvenile court. The responsibility is extraneous to his regular duties. He's often overworked, and his office is insufficiently staffed.

### Many Can't Afford

Many counties cannot afford specially selected and trained judges and trained personnel because there is not sufficient volume of work in rural areas and less densely populated areas to justify the expense.

The present system does not assure equal protection and services to children in all counties.

Many persons are being sent to State correctional schools who could remain in the county of their residence, if adequate resources were available.

## GOAL OF A NEW GENERATION

## Wanting To Be 'Well-Rounded'

One of the alarming tendencies in American civilization today is that everybody wants to be "well-rounded," and nobody is willing to stick his neck out and be "different," points out The

Smithfield Herald. The Herald's editorial, with which The Pilot agrees, continues: Like Willy Loman, the sad hero of the play, "Death of a Salesman," we all want not only to be liked, but even to be "well-liked." The old American idea of the rugged individualist who worked hard, said what he thought and did what he wanted has given way to the quiet, well-mannered man who tries to do only what other people expect and want him to do.

### Security First

In a provocative essay entitled "What Has Succeeded Success?" Russell Lynes, managing editor of Harper's Magazine, expresses his concern over what is happening to the young people of America, who are more interested in security than in success. From a series of questionnaires sent by Mademoiselle Magazine to college girl graduates, he discovered that what they wanted most of all was "to be well-rounded."

Says Mr. Lynes: "A great many well-rounded young women summons up for me a large bunch of hothouse grapes—lovely to look at, plump, smooth, carefully protected from the crankiness of weather, and tasteless.

Pebbles in a stream are also well-rounded."

As for the young men, Time Magazine interviewed Princeton seniors; and they, too, were more interested in a well-rounded life, living securely on a plateau rather than reaching for the peaks.

### What About Genius?

If everybody becomes "well-rounded," what happens to the American genius for discovery, for invention, for individual achievement? If Christopher Columbus had been primarily interested in security, would he have discovered America? If Thomas Jefferson had wanted to please everybody, would he have written the Declaration of Independence? If Einstein had been satisfied to be "well-rounded," would he have continued his research that made possible the splitting of the atom?

Without the spark of genius that comes from a dedicated individual, can America retain its leadership of the free world, maintain peace in a troubled universe, and harness the atom for constructive purposes rather than destructive war? The "well-rounded" political leader is afraid to stick his neck out with an imaginative plan for peace, but is willing to blunder his way from one Suez crisis to another, always fearful of offending someone by injecting a new idea into a tired old world.

## Grains of Sand

And Just A Snip of Lemon

See where somebody was in the news last week being acclaimed as "Ginner of The Year." Wonder what his slogan was, "Make mine dry, and cold?"

### Something New?

It seems the state Republicans have decided to put their best feet forward from now on.

Moore County folks thought they always had.

Local inhabitants are ready to rise as a man in defense of their favorite ex-Republican candidate.

### Squirrel Magician

Squirrels are absolutely incredible.

After trying everything recommended to prevent them from getting into the birds' territory and eating up all the sunflower seeds in the feeder, we tried something different.

We put seeds on a big wide tray and then balanced this on top of a tall thin pot. The idea was that it would hold the birds but was too teetery for the squirrels. The first one to hop up on it, or down from above, would tip it over. We hoped that might scare him enough so he'd go away and leave us and the birds alone.

Ha! The next time we looked out, at the newly patented tray, the biggest fattest squirrel of the whole lot was sitting in the middle of it.

And eating all the sunflower seeds.

AND spitting the husks over the edge.

This isn't acrobatics. It's magic. AND impudence.

### Dr. Dawson's Daring Dogs

Southern Pines' Distinguished Dr. D. (or Amiable AC, if you like that better—we do) wants to start a dog act. But no circus involved. Not yet. (No telling, of course, when they'll all take to the ring, if we give 'em a chance.)

What to do about dogs who join in the free-for-all that takes place at recess every day on the school playgrounds? And join in a trifle too seriously?

This is what prompted the Distinguished Doctor's dog act appeal to the Town Council last week.

Seriousness, on the parts of their masters, takes the form of whacks and maybe kicks at other participants in the fray, but the dogs, unable to whack or kick: bite.

They leap to the sides of their masters or mistresses, with bared teeth—and that isn't so good. It is hard—so far, impossible—to explain to the dogs that it is all right to whack or kick people but not all right to bite them.

Then the bites have occurred in some cases, when the masters or mistresses have sprung to the aid of their pets being beat up, or et up, by someone else's pet.

All in all, several children have been bitten, though none seriously. Luckily.

What to do?

"The dogs often follow the children to school," the harassed school superintendent told the Town Council last week.

"Talk to the parents," said a council-member. "Tell 'em to shut up the dogs."

"Have," said Dr. D., "Dozens of times."

"We could make it a misdemeanor for dogs to go on the school grounds," suggested another member, looking towards Legal Counsel.

Legal Counsel, studiously: "Trouble is: few dogs can read." Anonymous Joker: "You could always explain the hard words, Lamont."

But then they got down to business and no more jokes for something that is certainly not a joking matter.

## The PILOT

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