

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.

School Consolidation Proposal

From a discussion of high school consolidation, at Monday night's Parent-Teacher Association meeting, it is apparent that merger of the high schools of the Southern Pines, Pinehurst and Aberdeen districts would be expensive, legally complicated and subject to a number of unknown factors on which the success of the project would depend.

This consolidation proposal is one made from time to time by Sandhills residents interested in education. The reasoning is that a large school could offer a wider range of subjects and more adequate facilities, such as laboratories, than can any of the schools alone. And now this viewpoint is backed up in the preliminary report on Dr. Conant's nationwide survey which states that no high school graduating less than 100 pupils can provide the best of which a high school is capable.

Happily, we in the Sandhills are not faced with a crisis in education: there is no immediate pressure to decide this question of consolidation. The three districts all have supplementary school taxes (30 cents on \$100 of

property valuation in Pinehurst and Aberdeen; 50 cents in Southern Pines), enabling all three districts to raise the quality of teaching, employ extra teachers and otherwise lift the schools above the average.

Not the least of the "unknown factors" mentioned above—although there is no "on the record" public discussion of it by school administrators—is the course to be taken by the drive for racial de-segregation in the schools, a drive that has, apparently to the satisfaction of all concerned, not yet had an impact in this area. Were the consolidation project launched, the alternatives obviously would be to construct an equally adequate consolidated Negro high school or to accept a fully integrated institution.

While we are content to let the consolidation proposal remain for the present in an exploratory, wait-and-see state, we hope that investigations in this field will not be abandoned by the school officials involved. Logically, at least, it would be the most effective answer to problems of both space and quality in education for the three communities.

The Town, The State And The Future

Edwin Gill, speaking at the dedication of the new Southern Pines municipal center (we were pleased to hear him call the structure the "town hall" which is our favored name for it), made his listeners thankful they lived in a small town and in North Carolina as well.

The State Treasurer, eloquent as always, pointed out that the next 10 or 15 years would be critical ones for the cities and towns of America. Many of them, he said, have grown rapidly without plan or purpose and today are faced with growing pains because they were not well planned in the beginning and are now the victims of overcrowding and congestion. This applies especially, he noted, to the municipalities of the East "where it would take millions of dollars to correct the mistakes of the last 50 years."

"In my opinion," said Mr. Gill, "within the next ten years, the face of urban America will be literally rebuilt in order to give the people in cities more air to breathe, better places to work, and more suitable homes in which to live."

North Carolina, which has preserved more of its rural, small-town flavor than any state in the union, according to Mr. Gill, is therefore in an "infinitely better position to plan for the future." We have fewer slums to be removed and many cities even have within their corporate limits open areas that can be used for shopping and civic centers or housing projects.

Mr. Gill then urged Southern Pines and all Tar Heel cities and towns to "take inventory of your unique assets—natural, cultural and spiritual—and do what you can to preserve them. Do not try to make your community a carbon copy of others," he said, "but strive to give expression to your unique inheritance."

For many years this newspaper has tried to define what is unique in this community—not simply what is seen by looking backward but how our civic inheritance here can and should guide development in the present and future.

We thank Mr. Gill for so forcefully expressing the points of view that should influence our town, area and State.

Parents Must Do Their Part

We are pleased to see professional agreement with our contention that the best way to get children to read more is for parents to read more themselves.

The director of the reading clinic at Appalachian State Teachers College, whose name is Umberto Price, advises via an education feature column that teachers know this is true but sometimes hesitate to say so for fear of offending parents.

"Make reading the most convenient thing for Junior to do," advises the educator. He says parents should have plenty of magazines, newspapers and books all over the house. (They seem to all end up in the middle of the living room floor just before guests are to arrive for dinner, but we won't go into that problem here.)

Some other advice from Mr. Price: Make a big deal out of going to the public library—make it appear a special treat and favor to the child.

Buy him books of his own, ones in which he can write his name.

If a word stumps Junior, just pronounce it for him. Don't insist on his spelling it and trying to figure it out for himself. That squelches incentive if overdone. Discuss a

story after reading, but don't "critically quiz," the expert advises.

Then comes some advice that seems like very good sense to us, but is not often heard in this connection: "Stop family fussing and other unpleasantness at home. Most reading problems stem from emotional troubles. Smooth things out at home and they'll go smoother at school for Junior."

Teachers vouch for the truth of this statement—but it's even harder to discuss this point with parents than it is to suggest that parents set a better example along the reading line.

Wouldn't it be well for parents to try out these suggestions, consistently and patiently over a period of time, before blaming all reading troubles on the schools? Maybe the test would show that there is teaching trouble, too. But it's up to parents, first, to do their part.

Finally, we'd recommend more frankness between parents and teachers—and it's up to parents to break the ice there, to ask teachers to tell them, not only about reading but about any other flaws, failures or personality traits on the part of the child, so that parent and teacher can work better together for the child's accomplishment and welfare.

People Want Their Newspapers

The recent period in which there were no newspapers published in New York City re-emphasized a fact that has been proven in other such strikes in the past: people miss their newspapers when they can't get them.

The same thing has cropped up in the non-daily field. Small town newspapers that have had to miss publication because of a fire, flood or other disaster (we've never heard of a non-daily being closed down by a strike and hope that we never will) have reported a flood of complaints. This kind of complaint, of course, is music to an editor's ears.

Again, when a small town newspaper fails financially or closes for some business reason, it is not unusual for business people of the town to take the initiative in either getting the newspaper on its feet or financing a new publication. A newspaper seems to provide something that a town doesn't want to lose, both in advertising and news columns.

Ralph McGill, distinguished editor of the Atlanta Constitution, noting the situation in New York, commented after the strike:

"The fact was, and is, that while radio and television do a splendid job, and have earned a place for themselves which they sometimes fill magnificently, they serve as supplementary agents in the field of communication. They have not replaced the printed word

which, for all its gossamer qualities, is tangible. It can be reread and passed along to others for perusal. It can be mailed, copied and pasted into scrapbooks."

This realization leads Mr. McGill to ask what is the purpose of a newspaper, and he writes:

"There are many well-known ones. One which, for all its glib facetiousness, comes close to the truth, is that one saying, 'A news paper should comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.'"

Then he quotes this paragraph from the New York Times on its resumption of publication after the long strike:

"We are happy to be back. As we watch the folded newspapers coming off the machines we rededicate ourselves to the cause of public information, discussion and debate."

Until a better statement of purpose comes along, Mr. McGill comments, that one will serve.

So, at the beginning of a new year, The Pilot also rededicates itself to "the cause of public information, discussion and debate." We are thankful that the loyalty of our readers need not be tested by a cessation of publication. And we are proud to be a small unit in the great American newspaper business—a business that apparently the American people can't do without.

The Challenge



HOW DOES THE U. S. COMPARE?

Study Of Language Takes Time

"Better Schools," the publication of the National Citizens Council for Better Schools, was quoted on this page last week as to why foreign language study has reached "its present deplorable state" in this country. And it was noted in the same article that there is a new interest over the nation in these studies, particularly in elementary schools.

A program of exposing children in elementary grades to the use of foreign languages was begun in the Southern Pines school this year.

In another article, "Better Schools" attributes the skill of many Europeans in foreign languages to the longer time children in Europe spend learning them, as compared with the study of languages in the United States. This article follows:

Americans often say, rather lamely, that "Europeans have a natural ability for languages," or "their countries are so close together they have to learn more than one language."

Changed Picture

The second point is undoubtedly true. What has changed the picture for Americans, what has made verbal isolationism as obsolete as any other isolationism, is the fact that, in today's world,

we live as close to any other country as Europeans of a generation ago did to each other.

The truth seems to be that the main reason Europeans can out-talk us in several languages is that they spend more time learning them. They start earlier and stay at it longer.

Minimum

In a report prepared for the State Department in 1954 ("The National Interest and Foreign Languages") William Parker said: "The minimum (length of study) tolerated in nearly all civilized nations is four years."

Some examples cited: "In Western Germany . . . about ten per cent of the children prepare for university work, and all of them (from age ten or 11) study their first foreign language (English or French) for nine years (five or six times a week, 40-50 minutes at a time); their second, begun two years later, for seven years."

"In France," Parker continues, "where approximately nine per cent of the children finish secondary school, foreign languages are begun at age 11 and the minimum requirement is English or German five hours weekly for the first two years, then three hours weekly for four years, then one and a half hours weekly for a

final (seventh) year. Most students in secondary school, however, take additional language study; English or German three hours weekly for six years and one and a half hours weekly for one year, plus (a) Latin for the same seven years, or (b) Italian or Spanish, begun two years later (at age 13), for three hours weekly for four years."

Such examples could be continued for some 16 countries, but these suffice to show that it is not necessarily the average European who excels in foreign languages, but probably a select group. This group, however, does acquire real fluency in two or more foreign tongues, not because of any innate genius, but because the student begins early and continues his knowledge long enough to make his knowledge really useful.

Same Trend

Russia follows the same trend (all schools begin foreign languages in the fifth grade) and American schools are moving in that direction. The U. S. Office of Education recently recommended—on the basis of the 1957 conference previously cited—that American schools should provide a ten-year program, beginning with third grade and extending through high school.

HERE'S HOW TO MAKE IT, IF YOU WANT TO TRY

There's Not Much Demand For Lye Soap Now

(From The Greensboro Daily News)

Homemade lye soap was to us, growing up in depression days, another sign of being poor.

People with money bought their kitchen soap; people without money made lye soap in the back yard. People with money also had new furniture—not uncomfortable old sofas and straight back chairs. (How were we to know these antiques had graced plantation houses for two or three generations, and that one day we'd spend hundreds of dollars and infinite time trying to buy pieces like them?)

Disappearing

Our thoughts began running in this direction the other day upon seeing an article in the Baltimore Sunday Sun Magazine about the fast-disappearing art of soapmaking. A Mrs. Harriet Showman, who lives 10 miles south of Hagerstown, Md., is one of the few rugged individualists who still prefers her own to the scented manufactured product.

But even Mrs. Showman doesn't stick to the strictly old-fashioned ways. She no longer has an ash hopper into which she put straw and cooled wood ashes from the kitchen cookstove, then, when full, poured boiling water in the top. What filtered out at the bottom was lye water—one of the two ingredients for soap. Now these ash hoppers are so rare as to be museum items and old-timers never leach their own lye any more but use the "store-bought" variety.

UMPIRE NEEDED

"At the head of the judicial system stands the Supreme Court of the United States, and the decisions of that Court must be accepted as to the meaning of the Constitution. You can't have even a baseball game without an umpire to interpret and apply the rules, and you can't have constitutional government without the authority somewhere to interpret and apply the Constitution.

"Final authority to do this is vested in the Supreme Court, whose duty it is to apply the great principles of Government which the Constitution embodies to the changing conditions of the times, with power on its part to overrule even its own decisions, when in the light of better understanding or changed conditions they are deemed by it to be erroneous."

—From a speech by the late Judge John J. Parker of North Carolina.

Frankly, we had forgotten—if we ever knew—exactly how to make country style soap, but Mrs. Showman demonstrated for a Baltimore Sun reporter. For the other ingredient, fat, she uses practically any lard from hog killing time, leftover grease from fried and roasted meat dishes, butter turned sour, bacon rinds, fatty ham scraps—kept in tightly covered lard stands. Here is her recipe, as reported in the Sunday Sun Magazine:

Six gallons of water in an iron kettle, brought to a boil.

Six 10-ounce cans of lye, poured into the water and stirred until dissolved.

Thirty pounds of fat, added to the boiling lye water gradually. (Most farm women use only five cans of lye to 30 pounds of fat, but Mrs. Showman likes her soap with a little more "bite" to it.)

Boil for an hour or so—until the lye has dissolved ("eaten up") all the fat solids, including the rinds.

The mixture at this stage will have thickened to a creamy, puddinglike consistency. Mrs. Showman then adds three pounds of table salt. The salt quickly separates it into three layers—lye water on the bottom, salt water in the middle, soap on top.

Cut Into Cakes
She then douses the fire and allows the kettle to cool overnight. Next morning the soap—a disk of it as big as the kettle and from six to eight inches thick—can be removed from the kettle and cut into cakes, ready to use.

The other day we saw a newspaper photograph of a mule-powered molasses mill. It belongs to a farmer in lower Anson County who says he can't begin to supply enough "sorghum" for his customers. There doesn't seem to be as much demand for homemade lye soap. More consumers are content with "store-bought" detergents than with manufactured molasses. Still, that Anson County mule, circling that molasses mill, is a lonely creature. There aren't many like him, and soon there won't be any.

Grains of Sand

No Picnic
Getting out this paper is no picnic.

If we print jokes people say we are silly.

If we don't, they say we are too serious.

If we stick close to the office all day, we ought to be around hunting material.

If we go out and try to hustle, we ought to be on the job in the office.

If we don't print contributions, we don't appreciate genius.

And if we do print them, the paper is full of junk.

If we edit the other fellow's stuff, we're too critical.

If we don't we're asleep.

If we clip things from other papers, we are too lazy to write them ourselves.

Now, like as not, some guy will say we copied this from some magazine.

We did. From our esteemed contemporary publication at Pinehurst, Golf World, which copied it from National Airlines Star Reporter, which copied it from Interstate Power News, which copied it from . . .

And Trees, Too

The interest of State Treasurer Edwin Gill in literature, art and things cultural was well known to us, but we were surprised and pleased to hear him—at last week's town hall dedication—indicate an unbounded enthusiasm for trees.

Noting that the new town hall was "in the midst of trees," Mr. Gill, in his dedicatory address, went on to say:

"I do not wish to get started on the subject of trees because, if I did, I am sure that would take all the time allotted to me, and more, to emphasize the importance of trees and other growing things to the well-ordered, healthy, well-balanced community."

"As long as I can remember, Southern Pines has been famous for her trees, and for an unrelenting program of protecting them and defending them from the depredations of so-called progress."

Amen, Brother Gill, amen. The Pilot is proud to have played some part in that "unrelenting program"—but we must in fairness say that the people of Southern Pines, by and large, have been remarkably foresighted in this matter of preserving our trees.

Prudent

People in trouble with the law sometimes come to newspapers to ask that their names be left out of the court news (we don't do it), but a letter received by The Pilot from one prudent man attempted to take care of this matter in advance:

"Please give me no write-up in your Pilot Paper on any court proceeding in which I might be involved within Moore County, N. C., near future, and oblige—"

There's a man who really tries to look after his own interests. No detail overlooked when planning an escapade.

Interesting and Illuminating

At a recent League of Women Voters meeting the subject was international relations. Lockie Parker was talking. She told how at the opening of the Bandung Conference in Asia, there had been a recitation of Longfellow's "Ride of Paul Revere."

Lockie, who has lived in the East a lot and whose brother Frank heads the work with Indian villagers under the ECA, said: "The principles of the American Revolution are astonishingly well known in Asia, especially in the small countries. These people have a great admiration for America and Americans. But for us THEN rather than now."

The PILOT

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