

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.

Trees Are Top Municipal Asset

The preservation of trees was listed as an important municipal responsibility when a State College School of Design architect, Edward Waugh, spoke during the recent second annual conference on planning at the Institute of Government in Chapel Hill. We are pleased to note his remarks about trees, according to an Associated Press story about the meeting, "struck a responsive chord among those present."

The many representatives of North Carolina communities attending the conference heard the architect tell how to make their cities more attractive. "A continuing battle against those who seem determined to cut down trees" was high on the architect's list of ways to make Tarheel towns more beautiful.

This is a tune that is well known to Pilot readers—for many years we have been urging care and respect for the fine trees in Southern Pines, both along the streets, on public property, and on private grounds. This town's reputation for attractiveness is in large part due to its trees.

It was brought out at the conference that a municipality's trees are usually cut in the name of progress, to widen streets or to locate utilities such as power wires or water lines. While this is undoubtedly sometimes inevitable, it is usually a poor trade. And we have found, too, that with the exercise of a little imagination in planning, the destruction of trees in the name of progress is often not as inevitable or unavoidable as it is thought to be.

Southern Pines is fortunate in having had, for many years, a considerable group of people who were interested in making the town attractive and keeping it so. Some of these people who are still with us can remember back a half century or more when, if we can judge by old photographs, the town was bare and barren to an extent that we can now hardly imagine.

We urge younger generations to hold fast to this tradition of municipal beautification, to preserve the trees we now have and to keep on planting trees for the pleasure of generations to come.

No Substitute For Personal Generosity

There is no substitute for personal interest and generosity in soothing the wounds caused by the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

Though our complicated social system can no longer function efficiently without departments of public welfare and other tax-supported methods to give help of various kinds to those who need it, help beyond minimum needs must—and often does—come from private sources, inspired by a great American tradition of sympathy with and generosity to the unfortunate.

This way of doing things comes down from a frontier life in which neighbors had to help each other or perish—no one man could do it alone. It has developed through the years into our great charitable foundations for medical assistance and research, disaster relief and other functions. And every American commu-

nity, no matter how small, could cite unnumbered acts of personal kindness that often are not even generally known by the inhabitants.

An extraordinary illustration of the fact that this spirit is alive and active in the Sandhills was the recent fish fry at Aberdeen where more than \$1,000 was raised to build a special room for a paraplegic who is paralyzed from the chest down and who, unless this room could be built as an addition to his home at Aberdeen, would be unable to leave the veterans hospital where he has been a patient as a result of a crippling accident. He will now be able to join his wife and four children at home.

Led by the Veterans of Foreign Wars post in Southern Pines, many other organizations, firms and individuals cooperated in making the fund-raising effort possible. It was a very heart-warming demonstration and a tribute to the conscience of the Sandhills community.

Mississippi And 'Outside' Comment

"Outside" criticism of Mississippi's handling of the Mack Parker lynching case seems to drive editors in that state into a lather of fury. One editorial from a Mississippi paper, which came to our attention recently, took off in a vitriolic rebuttal featuring the unmitigated evil of New York City, a metropolis which the editorial said should be towed out into the Atlantic ocean and dropped there (the mechanics of this are puzzling) into "the hot boiling bowels of hell."

If one were to judge by these editorials, the people of Mississippi are so violently resentful of all "outside" discussion of their odd conception of justice that it is a wonder that all of them do not fall over in a stroke as did a 32-year-old suspect after being questioned by the FBI about the lynching. Common sense, however, tells us that there must be some reaction other than the unrelieved hysteria of the editor we quoted.

Common sense also tells us that in a world

of rapid communication and racial tension, it is folly indeed for the State of Mississippi to blandly defer grand jury consideration of the FBI's collection of evidence until November, while the Communist propaganda mills grind out brochures on capitalist injustice and American racial intolerance—not to mention, of course, truthful reports of the situation appearing in the press of all countries of the world. The truth, indeed, is damaging enough as it is.

Can there be any other answer to such situations than federal lynching legislation that would enable FBI investigation without State invitation, quick indictments if sufficient evidence were found and trial in a federal court?

How can a state where a jailer—custodian of a prisoner in a community that is ripe for mob violence—walks out and leaves the cell keys lying on his desk, plead state's rights and bitterly resent "outside" comment on its glaring failures to keep its house in order?

'To Discover, Speak And Teach Truth'

The University of North Carolina could, in the terms of Herblock's cartoon at the top of this page, most assuredly be listed as one of the U. S. institutions of higher learning where "people don't show any respect for a witch doctorate any more."

The academic freedom policy statement adopted recently by the University trustees spells out in the most vigorous way the rights of faculty members in this realm that has been discussed so much but that, we feel, is not very well understood by the general public.

There is a great tradition of academic freedom at the University—a tradition which Dr. Frank Graham, the president for many years, fostered and nourished. Then, during the war came a loyalty oath (now abolished) for the faculty. Later, an atmosphere of hesitation and caution influenced faculty members during the hysteria of the McCarthy years. It is gratifying now to find the University, by declaration of official policy, back on the solid, straight road.

What is academic freedom? We quote from the University's new code:

"Academic freedom is the right of a faculty member to be responsibly engaged in efforts to discover, speak and teach truth. It is the policy of the University to maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, discourse, teaching, research, and publication and to protect any member of the academic staff against influences, from within or without the University, which would restrict him in the exercise of these freedoms in

his area of scholarly interest.

"The University recognizes that in his role as citizen, as to matters outside the area of his scholarly interest, the faculty member has the right to enjoy the same freedoms as other citizens, without institutional censorship, or discipline, though he should avoid abuse of these freedoms. He should recognize that accuracy, forthrightness, and dignity benefit his association with the University and his position as a man of learning. He should not represent himself as a spokesman for the University."

All this is not remote from the world outside the University. The spirit of the new code is the spirit in which all persons of inquiring mind and responsible intelligence expect to be judged in a society that honors democracy and the Bill of Rights. Moreover, through its students and graduates, its extension courses and other avenues of influence, the University has a tremendous influence on the thinking—the "tone" of the intellectual outlook—of the whole state.

The best test of our concern with academic freedom is to ask in what atmosphere we would prefer our young people to be taught. And this leads at once to the realization that a faculty operating in the atmosphere of the new code would almost certainly be better teachers: more relaxed, more provoking, more inspiring.

That this same renewed concern with academic freedom, including definite accomplishments toward that goal, is a nationwide trend, is something for which we can be thankful.

PARENTS CAUGHT IN MIDDLE OF DEBATE

Long-Range School Problems Unsolved

"Better Schools," the publication of the National Citizens Council for Better Schools, recently reviewed the controversies and accomplishments of the past decade in education. Following is an excerpt from this report:

The parent or other citizen was caught in the middle. He knew there was some basis for the criticism of America's schools—as a student he had seen some of the defects with his own eyes. But when he looked for an informed interpretation and evaluation of the criticism he was disappointed.

Educators, almost without exception, attacked the critical books—or more often their authors—vigorously. They found numerous petty faults and some factual errors; they questioned the motives of the writers; but they gave far too little attention to the important arguments.

When the critical books were reviewed in the popular press, and by non-professionals, the evaluation was much more favorable. Often the reviewer shared the biases of the critic and gave him enthusiastic endorsement without a careful analysis of the charges made and without pointing out that the generalizations made were far too sweeping to provide a sound basis for community action.

Over 2,000 Books

More than two thousand books on education, other than textbooks, were published during the decade, and many were critical of the status quo in education.

Educators cynically remarked that any writer could get rich by writing a book critical of the schools and of educators, and they attacked the authors as "write for pay" boys. But the fact was that the great majority of these two thousand books got little attention, sold few copies, and lost money for their publishers. Probably not more than 25 or 30 had a respectable sale or received widespread critical attention. Only two reached the best seller lists.

One of these was Rudolph Flesch's "Why Johnny Can't Read," which was the publishing sensation of the decade so far as books on education are concerned.

Flesch charged that American children were not learning to read and that the fault lay almost entirely in the neglect of the teaching of phonics. His book was vigorously attacked in nearly all professional journals but was roundly praised in the popular press. It became the best seller on the Harper's list for 1955.

Vital Subject

Its success was all the more remarkable because it did not deal with education in a broad sense but only with one method of teaching one subject. But the subject was the vital one of reading and the popularity of the book made it clear that there was widespread dissatisfaction with the way reading was being taught.

The only book on education on the best-seller list today is James B. Conant's "The American High School Today." The fact that a book of this kind is enjoying wide popularity is indicative of the fact that the American people have grown weary of controversy and are looking for leadership which they feel they can trust.

Conant's approach is distinctly different from that found in the free-swinging critical attacks, and the counter-attacks defending the status quo, that have been characteristic of much of the educa-

tional writing of the decade.

Conant neither attacks nor defends. He merely describes the best comprehensive high schools which he has seen and makes specific recommendations to other schools regarding steps they should take. It may be that this effort to work within the realm of the immediately practicable, while avoiding controversy, will turn out to be the best kind of educational statesmanship. The popularity of "The American High School Today" seems to suggest that this is what readers are looking for at this moment in history.

But the long-range problems of American education still face us: the problems of purpose, goals, and priorities; the problem of articulating our confusing assort-

ment of educational levels and units into a workable whole through which the student can move at his own best rate; and the problem of deciding which responsibilities should be accepted by the school and which should be returned to the home or other social agencies.

Must Prepare

The child born today will spend nearly half of his life in the 21st century; this is the era for which our schools must prepare. The educational leader of the 1960's must look far into the future and plan an educational program consistent with a vastly expanded technology, an exploding population, and a tremendously increased availability of leisure time which our people have not yet learned to use wisely.

'It's Getting So That People Don't Show Any Respect For A Witch Doctorate Any More'



'Hants' Not Worrisome Now

Has been said that "all houses wherein men have lived and died are haunted houses". . . Which could well be, and which reminds that in the space age, the tales of hants and haunted houses have been forgotten. . . Fact is, a good hant tale was passed on by word of mouth for generations untold, to scare the wits out of the youngsters, and to provide some meat for entertaining the brats in the days when one was sure he could contain one of the grim stories without being scared come nightfall.

So somewhere along the way, those who were in the know about the hants and the houses they made untenable, have gone away without passing on the word. . . Used to be our colored friends, along with some of the white folks we knew, had tales galore of the hanted houses, where folks couldn't live without hearing the booming steps of the old master as he went about the place rattling a great chain, and mourning and groaning in his never-ending torment.

The youngsters today, so far as we know, are not ever afraid of a church at night, when all is quiet, can maybe pass a graveyard on foot in the dead hours without whistling loud and clear to keep up waning juvenile courage. . .

They have never heard our old colored friend, Aunt Addie Grimes, who still resides here, tell of the "old woman with horns on her head"; they missed Venie Grimes' tales of the goblins, and were never exposed to stories of the queer creatures who dwell under footbridges and spirited the youngsters away to make hants out of them.

A lad of today knows little of witches, and of the great hants of the abandoned houses and of the spots where folks had died in violence and of the bloody creature which carried its head under its arm. . . And they've never heard about the sheeted ghost which rises from a certain grave on moonlit nights. . . They said there was some doubt that the man was dead when they lowered the box. . . If they knew all these tales the kids would come home earlier, 'cause they'd be scared to stay out. . . And you can always tell a man who believes in the ghosts and the goblins—he never says "hant". . . Always hant. . . and he's the one who's heard all the choicest tales from the shadowy realms of the departed spirits.

—Rob Rivers in The Watauga Democrat

Aura Of Adventure

(Weimar Jones in The Franklin Press)

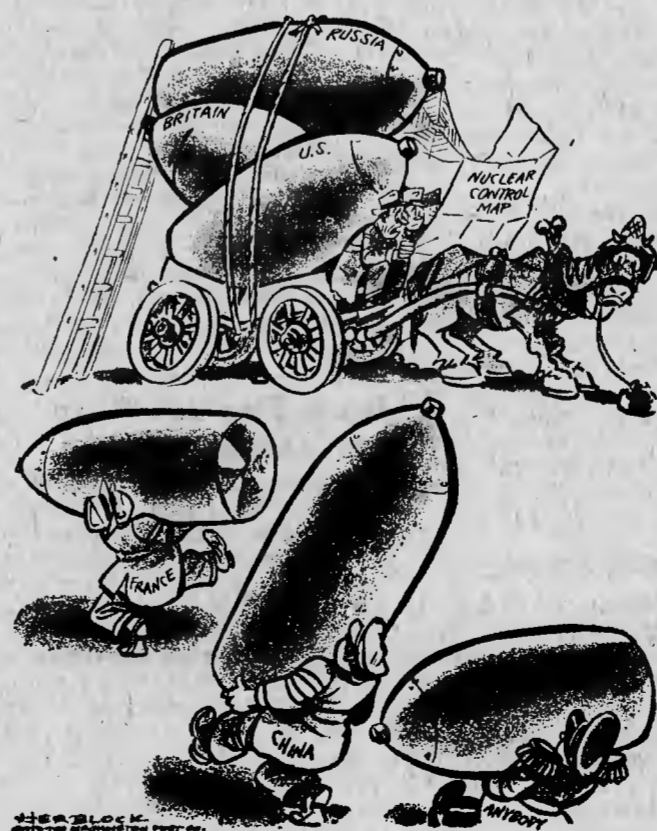
In this space some weeks ago, I mentioned that we are not getting our mail delivered at home, because I like to go to the post office for it. There's an aura of adventure about watching your mail box as the mail is being put up; at any instant, a letter may be put in the box. And that letter may contain anything.

Besides, and this is probably an even more compelling reason, from the time I was a boy in Franklin, the post office lobby has been a social gathering place, a sort of thoroughly democratic club, open to anybody.

Well, it seems I am not alone in that feeling. Since that place appeared, many persons have remarked that they, too, look forward to a trip to the post office. It was put most emphatically, though, the other day by Mrs. Frank L. Henry.

"When I go to the post office," she told me, "I never buy more than one or two stamps—so I'll have an excuse to go again, next time I have a letter to mail."

"Say, If We Don't Get Started Pretty Soon —"



Grains of Sand

Don't Mix

Comes a release in the mail beginning with this striking sentence: "Cotton candy and gospel singing do not mix."

Could you read that and not want to read further? At any rate, what follows, we thought, is obviously not a publicity handout from the sugar manufacturers.

What it turned out to be was an ingenious plug for the State Singing Convention to be held "in the Singing Grove in the heart of Benson" June 27 and 28. The event is known to its participants and admirers as "the sing."

Seems that in the past (this is the 39th annual "sing") cotton candy vendors have added what the directors of the event termed a "carnival atmosphere." So they turned thumbs down on spun sugar this year.

The publicity release also details another reason for the ban—a reason we suspect may have been more compelling than the question of atmosphere: ". . . They had in previous years received complaints from ladies who sat down on the paper cones used to hold the cotton candy and thereby stained their dresses. . ."

Makes sense. Imagine getting a new dress for the sing and then sitting on a discarded cotton candy cone. The Singing Grove would have no fury like a woman stained. . .

Litling Prose

What litling prose we in this newspaper business receive in the mail unsolicited and mostly from companies who hope to get a free word or two on behalf of their products in the news columns!

Here's another example—and how would you like this to be the first piece of mail you opened on Monday morning?

"The American bride sweeps down the aisle with all the self-satisfaction of a modern Diana returning from the hunt with a stag slung over her shoulder. . ."

This treat comes from the publishers of an encyclopedia, and the release goes on to detail the history of wedding customs as related, of course, in this particular encyclopedia.

The press release ends with a paragraph almost as dull and depressing as the opening paragraph was bright and bouncy:

"The practice of buying a wife left a girl with fewer bruises. But it didn't do much for her pride, especially when some African tribes thought she was worth one ox."

Terrible for us to be quoting such stuff in June, the month of brides, isn't it? As if the brides cared!

Here I Am

Local boy, one of a group that was going on a picnic at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, misunderstood the time and showed up at the house where the group was to meet, at 5 o'clock in the morning.

When he finally roused some one there, his greeting was: "This is a heck of a time to start on a picnic, but here I am."

The reply was not recorded.

Three Per Cent

Joke we like that's been going around town:

A young man who flunked a college mathematics course left school, apparently destined for business failure because of his complete inability to handle figures.

Some years later, getting out of his custom-built Cadillac in another city, the young man happened to meet his old math professor who asked his former pupil how he was doing.

"Fine, professor, fine," the ex-student replied. "I made \$250,000 last year. My company manufactures a plastic article that's needed in every kitchen in the nation. It costs \$1 to make and we sell it for \$4—and professor, let me tell you, it's wonderful how that three per cent mounts up!"

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