

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.

Christmas Is A Long Time Ahead

Many must have been shocked to read last week about the poor family near Troy who were living in such dire poverty. The fact that there was a good deal of confusion in the account by Reporter Charles Manning of the Greensboro Daily News, and that, far from having been overlooked, the family, as revealed in a subsequent issue, had apparently received a big load of Christmas cheer, does not in any way change the basic picture. The community and county agencies had been aware of the need of this family, and that was good to know. But there is no denying that dire need existed.

Perhaps some who read about this family have wondered whether there were people living in such conditions nearer than Troy. It must be stated frankly that many of the facts in this news story could be repeated right here in Moore County. Anyone familiar with the welfare program knows of such families and a day's ride through the sandy backwoods roads of the county or in the outskirts of the towns will reveal such conditions. It is not even necessary for a Southern Pines resident to go outside the town limits, on both sides of the tracks, to come upon unmistakable signs of poverty and squalor.

Among the needy who are visited by the Girl Scouts and other civic groups at Christmastime are always some of these families, often with many children, living on the bare edge of starvation: mental and spiritual starvation, as well as physical. Several such were among the families visited this year; in one especially poor family with many children, living in a wretched, flimsy, leaky house, the father had been out of work for more than three months.

The fact that these conditions exist so near the comfortable living and prosperous resorts of this county heightens significance of the picture. The bearers of Christmas cheer return from their errands of mercy filled with dismay, with

concern, and with a deep sense of shame. They think: "It isn't right; something ought to be done!" Even when the Christmas baskets have been distributed, a doubt remains: what about the families who aren't visited, who aren't on any list? And what, after all, about those who are on the lists, some of whose names inevitably crop up year after year? What happens to them till Christmas comes again?

In his New Year message, Governor Sanford spoke with apparent pride of the fact that North Carolina ranks third from the bottom in amount of money spent on state services; these would presumably include the departments of health and welfare. When we think of this ghastly poverty uncovered right at our back doors, the question must arise: is this record the Governor has mentioned really something to be proud of? Isn't it, in fact, time that we spent a little more?

However, in this respect, a large share of responsibility must rest on the county. There is a spirit of indifference here, of "getting by," that acts as a brake to action and is, undoubtedly, a chief factor in the Moore County picture. The so-called "economy" stranglehold on the Health and Welfare departments results in too-small staffs, and low salaries which hamper recruitment of the efficient and experienced personnel needed to carry out the thorough, vital program the problems call for.

Here is where the public comes in. Given human frailty, ignorance, ill-health, and the accidents of living, there will probably always be poverty, but there need not be so much and it need not be so bad. Not if the public wakes up. Only when the general ignorance is disbelled, when the facts are faced, intelligently and boldly, and the present attitude of indifference—except, of course, at Christmas-time—is changed to active concern will this evil be reduced and perhaps someday eradicated.

Citizen Interest Vital to Government

Is citizen interest in municipal government decreasing in Southern Pines? The question is brought to mind by an article in a recent issue of Public Management, the journal of the International City Managers' Association, which describes methods by which citizens can actively participate in municipal planning and other activities.

Citizen attendance at town council meetings is certainly lower than several years ago. This may not mean lack of interest but only that the council is concerned more now with routine business than in the years when major ordinances affecting everyone's property or pocketbook were being considered. It was gratifying, a few months ago, to see a large citizen delegation turn out to protest a proposed zoning change, at a public hearing. Whether their contentions were "right" or "wrong" is beside the point. It was the interest expressed by this large group of citizens that pleased us.

Citizens have served and are serving on advisory boards and commissions in Southern Pines—some appointed for special purposes, others continuing and now in existence as part of the machinery of town government, such as the Parks and Parkways Beautification Committee, the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Advertising Committee.

The Only Adequate Solution

The Administration's proposal to finance health care for the aged through the Social Security program (estimated to cost each worker covered by Social Security 25 cents per week during his working years) is well advocated by Senator McNamara in an article appearing on this page.

With Congress reconvening soon and the medical care proposal appearing, in the Senator's words as "one of the major items of unfinished business," The Pilot renews its endorsement of this health care program.

According to the "Democrat," a national publication of the Democratic Party, the American Medical Association spent more than twice as much money in lobbying in Washington in the first six months of 1961 as any other organization or group—and these expenditures were almost exclusively devoted to opposing President Kennedy's proposal for medical care for the aged through Social Security.

The expenditures listed (\$146,894.40) are only those directly involving contact with members of Congress. What the AMA is spending on its overall propaganda campaign against the proposal has not been divulged.

The AMA has every right to present its opposition to the medical care plan to Congress and to the public throughout the nation but we think the AMA has no

right to interpret the President's proposal as "nationalized medical care" or "an attack on free medicine." As Senator McNamara points out, there is nothing in the proposal that involves government employment of doctors or government ownership of medical facilities.

The AMA contends that voluntary insurance programs, the federal Kerr-Mills Law and the charitable work done by doctors can solve the problem of medical care for the aged.

It is obvious that old people with extremely limited incomes can no more afford to pay for expensive health insurance than they can for the medical care itself. The Kerr-Mills Law, adopted in 1960, was functioning in only 17 states at the end of 1961, and, where functioning, requires a humiliating "means test" (essentially the equivalent of a "pauper's oath") to make it applicable to an individual. The charitable work of physicians, while praiseworthy, must necessarily be limited and cannot possibly be advanced as even a partial solution to so vast and complicated a problem as medical care for the aged.

We commend Senator McNamara's article to readers for careful study and urge that if they accept the Social Security proposal, they inform their representatives and Senators in Congress to that effect.

"Sorry, Sir, But The Patient Will Probably Live!"



Editor's Note: This cartoon, drawn by Bill Sanders after last year's White House Conference on Aging, in which strong support was expressed for medical care for the aged through the Social Security system, is equally applicable now, with Congress due to reconvene January

10, having the medical care proposal as one of its major items of business in the coming session—and with the American Medical Association renewing its campaign of opposition to the plan.

THROUGH SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

Health Care for Aged Advocated

By Senator Pat McNamara (Democrat-Michigan)
Chairman, Senate Special Committee on Aging

One of the major items of unfinished business facing the 87th Congress when it returns to Washington on January 10, is the enactment of an adequate program of medical care for the aged. This health problem reaches into every community in the United States.

President Kennedy and the Democratic Party are clearly committed to the Social Security approach. When it became apparent that there would be no action in the first session of the 87th Congress to provide medical care for the aged, I expressed concern over this development to President Kennedy. I was heartened by his response that he intends to recommend that this matter be given "the highest priority" when Congress returns.

The Senate Special Committee on Aging, of which I am chairman, assembled a wealth of statistical data on income and health problems of the 16½ million Americans who are 65 years of age or older.

These facts completely refute the arguments of those who oppose medical care on the grounds that, (a) it isn't needed, (b) private health insurance can do the job, and (c) existing Federal programs are adequate.

The committee report proves conclusively that private health insurance plans discriminate against persons 65 and over by generally forcing them to pay higher premiums and offering fewer benefits in return than are available to younger persons. It further relates that of those aged persons without insurance, 50 per cent would like to get it but cannot, either because they cannot afford it, or because they have been refused as "bad risks."

In addition, only 42 per cent of retired persons 65 and over have some degree of medical insurance—compared with 67 per cent of the general population.

The study demonstrates another important facet of the problem, namely, the lower the income of the elderly, the more likely they are to be afflicted with chronic disease, and the less likely they are to have medical insurance.

As for the adequacy of the existing systems, it is worth noting that as of late 1961 only 17 states, plus Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, had taken advantage of the limited Medical Assistance for the Aged program adopted by the Congress in 1960.

Vulnerable
This report pin-points the naked vulnerability of elderly people to the financial impact of

illness, because they are in fact living on inadequate incomes. Few of them have a substantial backlog of savings.

Also it shows that 29 per cent of all families headed by persons 65 or over have no liquid savings at all, 17 per cent had from \$100 to \$500 and 21 per cent had from \$500 to \$2,000, while 33 per cent had \$2,000 or more.

Additionally, some 50 per cent of families headed by persons 65 or over had an annual income of less than \$2,830, while 25 per cent of the total received less than \$1,620 a year.

These figures so impressively document the need for Federal medical care for the aged that the opposition—the American Medical Association and private insurance companies—are, by their continuous misrepresentation of facts, in opposing this much-needed health program, committing a grave disservice to persons over 65 years of age who are, or will be, in need of medical attention that they cannot afford.

Scare Propaganda
The AMA's scare propaganda of "socialized medicine" has been

discredited time after time. There is absolutely no basis that this legislation would be a step toward socialized medicine. The program would be made part of the Social Security system.

There is nothing in this proposal which in any way involves Government employment of doctors, nor for Government ownership of medical facilities. Under the Social Security approach, patients choose their own doctors and hospitals and there is no Government control or supervision over the matter in which medical service is exercised. This problem of high medical expenses of older citizens concerns not only the people involved—who must finance these costs on small retirement incomes, but also younger people who are often called upon to help parents or older relatives faced with heavy medical expenses.

Will Win
The need for medical care for the aged is so obvious and the system so practical that I am convinced medical care for the aged through Social Security will win out if the people speak out.

Grandma Moses: Link with the Land

(From The Chapel Hill Weekly)

Webster defines "primitive" as "characteristic or imitative of the earliest ages; crude; simple; rough; uncivilized."

This seems to fit Anna Mary Robertson (Grandma) Moses nicely. Her paintings of American landscapes were certainly characteristic of an earlier age, when holiday brick had not been invented and Americans were living in clapboard houses, when country people had enough to do getting stones out of the fields and using them to build stone walls without worrying about how the trees and bushes were arranged in the front yard.

But though the death of Grandma Moses recently (a death as

peaceful as one of her artfully artless paintings of countryside) leaves a gap in the "primitive" school, her departure has another, subtler effect. It cuts another cord between us and the land.

How many people are there nowadays who have forgotten the feel of crusty bark? To whom the sound of wind through hay (the "grass harp") is foreign? Who are lucky if the smell of wet pine woods is only a submerged, forgotten childhood experience? Too many. Insidious cities have dragged our senses and dulled our nerves. Urbanization has made men like potted plants, standing helplessly coddled behind insulated walls, growing peacefully and sometimes productively but lacking something.

Grandma Moses didn't pay much attention to perspective and her attention to detail was accurate almost to the point of grotesque, ness ("crude; simple; rough"). But her houses were free of the impeccability of modern architecture; like rocks, they had rough imperfections. There's a feeling of natural tactility about Grandma Moses' paintings; they were not conceived and executed, they just grew. Fortunately, her paintings remain behind, almost a good reminder as she herself that men need not be concerned with their things to the exclusion of their origins.

The Public Speaking

'Abominable and Ridiculous'

To the Editor:
I wish to add my name to the list of those dog owners who have communicated with you in support of your excellent editorial last week about the new abominable and ridiculous "dog law" passed by our town council.

McKEE DUNN SMITH
570 E. Indiana Ave.

Grains of Sand

For The Old Year
"Is not old wine wholesomest, old pippins toothsome, old wood burns brightest, old linen whitest?"

"Old soldiers, sweetheart, are surest and old lovers are soundest."

—J. Webster
And it's generally the old, OLD years that seem the best, isn't it?

Wrong One Way

A fellow driving in from the country hailed a man he spied on the street corner to ask the way.

"I'm late getting to this party," he explained, "Which way do I go to get there the quickest?"

The man told him and then watched with some dismay as the car turned off going the wrong way on a busy one-way street.

He hung around to see if anything happened and in a short time here came the fellow out the same street and driving back. As he came past the man on the curb he slowed down and leaned out.

"Guess I was too late," he called. "All the folks seemed to be driving back already so I turned around and came on."

Who It Was Was Spooner

Who knows what a "spoonerism" is?

Probably not many Americans, but most English people would know. That's because the poor guy who accidentally invented them was English. His name was Spooner: the Reverend W. A. Spooner, and he was Warden of New College, Oxford.

How he came to invent the spoonerism was due to the fact that when he lectured to the undergraduates, it seemed his mind ran along faster than his speaking apparatus and he'd put the first letter of the second word that was coming up onto the first word, ad vice versa.

Like his: once during the war a BBC announcer, all excited by a Brit'n naval victory, spoke of a "pocket bottleship," instead of a pocket battleship.

"Sponeerism" is defined in the big dictionary as "accidental or facetious transposition of the initial letters or syllables of words."

A few prize spoonerisms: A sbemaker was given a pair of shes with the request that they be holed and sealed.

I ar looking for a table about the six of this heat.

A flow who rode a bicycle a lot ad kept his bike in good shape but whose friend took poor care f his, advised him always to keep a well-boiled icicle."

Mustat Personal

Ita from Burke Davis's column in the GDN: TAR HEEL

NOTEBOOK:

All his friends in the Moore County swamps say that old barded Glen Rounds, the athor-illustrator of some gat books for children (aybody else, too) has got to largehead after his award cring Kultur Week, and is adom seen speaking to his d acquaintances among the ushrats.

icidentally: Is Burke going to ste in that Northern mountain of coeit FOREVER? He is mightly-linnsed in these parts. Even by the mshrats.

Dmma

rom a plug advertising a new rit-wing, Birch-type magazine: "I you like the America of Washington and Jefferson, Madison and Lincoln, Goldwater and Tarmond, (stet) . . . this is the nazine for you."

Well, we like the America of t first four but not of the last to, so obviously this magazine isNOT for us.

Our advice to the editor, hich he must be aching to get) Make up your mind. You just n't have it for all those six to-ther.

The PILOT

Published Every Thursday by THE PILOT, Incorporated Southern Pines, North Carolina

1941—JAMES BOYD—1944

Katharine Boyd Editor
C. Benedict Associate Editor
Dan S. Ray Gen. Mgr.
C. G. Council Advertising
Mary Scott Newton Business
Mary Evelyn de Nissoff Society
Composing Room
Dixie B. Ray, Michael Valen,
Thomas Matlocks and James E. Pate.

Subscription Rates

Moore County
One Year \$4.00
Outside Moore County
One Year \$5.00

Second-class Postage paid at Southern Pines, N. C.

Member National Editorial Assn and N. C. Press Assn.