

# THE PILOT

"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 State Budget

Governor Jim Hunt has described his new budget as "austere," and compared with some years in the past that may be true.

But it should be pointed out that even with this "hold the line" in spending the state budget continues to grow, and there are no programs which are being eliminated.

In fact, the Governor is proposing an expansion in the field of early childhood health programs and in day care centers for working mothers. Increased spending is also called for in the public school reading and remedial programs. There are few who would deny that these expanded programs are worthwhile.

The Governor, quite properly, is concerned about adding more employees to the state payroll. After all, that is where the greatest expenditures take place, and with more emphasis on efficiency there is no reason why the same level of services cannot be provided by the same number of people.

Some public education officials feel that they are getting a smaller share of the state revenue dollars and contend that any increases in spending should come their way instead of, for instance, going for higher education. Without knowing the details of the budgets for either, it is still safe to say that Governor Hunt and the Legislature should be counted upon to strike the proper balance.

This state's commitment to quality education in the public schools should not slacken, but the taxpayers are raising questions of why spending should greatly increase in the face of declining

enrollments. The truth is that the opportunity is present for doing many things in public education which the state said it could not afford in years past.

We have no major quarrel with the Governor's budget message. We think the economy is strong enough so that more funds can be allocated in certain areas, and believe that this will become apparent as the legislative session progresses.

The minor tax reforms proposed should be approved. Certainly raising the dependent deductions from \$700 to \$1,000 is long overdue, and we agree with Governor Hunt that if the state takes in more than it spends it has an obligation to return unspent funds to the people.

There is one reform in the state income tax laws which we have long advocated but which never gets any consideration. Under federal law state income taxes paid can be deducted, but not so with North Carolina taxes. The state should allow a deduction for federal income taxes. As it is now North Carolinians pay a tax on a tax, on money which they never see or receive. This is unfair and should be corrected.

Most legislators who have commented thus far on the Governor's budget message have endorsed the proposal to increase the dependent's deductions, but are cool or outright opposed to the proposed tax rebates. It may well be that there will not be enough surplus funds to allow for the rebates which the Governor proposed—but as a matter of principle it is a sound idea.

The Governor's budget message was in tune with the times. It was cautious, but progressive.

## Tax Rate Is Key

From all indications Moore County's property valuation will be at least double what it is now under the revaluation program now being completed.

This means that taxable property will climb from the present \$570,000,000 to more than a billion dollars.

Many people are concerned and some are protesting the increased valuation, but the key to their concerns is the tax rate.

The present tax rate is 75 cents per \$100 valuation, and the commitment of county commissioners is to hold county revenues to the present level. Even with some necessary increases to meet the demands of inflation that means the tax rate can be set at close to one-half what it is now, probably at 40 cents per \$100 valuation.

Which means further that even though property values may more than double the amount of taxes paid will be approximately the same for a vast majority of the

taxpayers.

There is no doubt that property values have increased in the eight years since the last revaluation. State law requires that property be valued at 100 percent of its market value, and we have confidence in the firm which has been doing the revaluation and believe that in most instances they have followed the law's requirements.

Moore County is fortunate to be in a growing economy. There are assurances that needed public services can be provided without an undue burden on the taxpayers.

It's worth pointing out that North Carolinians as a whole are in the bottom five of all the states in total amount of taxes paid, including municipal, county and state. On top of that it is one of the leading states in the amount of services provided by government.

## 'Executive' Sessions

There has been a flurry of "executive" sessions of the county commissioners in recent weeks, and the people should wonder why and what their officials find it necessary to hide from the public.

An "executive" session is a secret meeting.

Under the state's open meetings law county commissioners can meet in "executive" sessions for the discussion of personnel matters, the acquisition of property, or where an attorney-client relationship is involved. They can meet in private to talk about such matters, but all

actions must be taken in public.

Even when an "executive" session is called there are procedures which must be followed beforehand. Such meetings can be held only with a majority vote taken in public.

Last week an "executive" session was called, ostensibly for discussion of "personnel" matters. But if any action was taken it was not reported.

Frankly, we seriously question the exemptions now allowed under the open meetings law. We are not sure that anyone is better served—the personnel, the officials or the public—when secret meetings are held.

Secrecy breeds suspicion, and that can be more damaging than talk done in the open and with everybody knowing what is said and done.

The public is entitled to know the public's business, and we hope the county commissioners will be mindful of that fact.

## Dilemma

Senator Robert Morgan, speaking to a group of friends at a breakfast in Pinehurst Friday morning, pointed out one of the dilemmas a Congressman has when he is trying to support the President in trimming the federal budget.

At the last session, he said, the President's budget called for reducing spending in a variety of fields, one of which was in soil conservation.

As soon as word got out that a budget cut was in the works for soil conservation he was quickly getting the word about how it would affect not only North Carolina but his own home district.

"It would mean the loss of 15 or 20 jobs in that one conservation district," Senator Morgan said, "not counting the conservation projects themselves."

There are pressures to cut spending, but there are also pressures to spend.



## That Curtain Lecture

BY THAD STEM JR.

Many men who assume curtain lecture is something that pertains to the theater are the recipients of curtain lectures regularly.

A curtain lecture, although scathing, is a private scolding from a wife, and by extension any fault-finding, nagging or caviling talk is classified also as a curtain lecture. The phrase is from the days of canopied beds that were surrounded by curtains.

The original curtain lecture was a verbal scolding of a man by his wife after they had gone to bed and had drawn the curtains around the bed.

In his famous dictionary, Dr. Samuel Johnson defined curtain lecture as "a reproof given by a wife to her husband in bed." In "Rip Van Winkle," Washington Irving wrote: "A curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering."

But the phrase was proverbial as early as the 17th century. "A Curtain Lecture: As It Is Read By a Country Farmer's Wife to

Her Good Man" is the title of the book published in London in 1638, and the anonymous author's writing is not much better than his clumsy title with its erratic spelling.

Occasionally "cauld lecture" was used as a synonym. This usage dates from 1846 when Douglas Jerold (1803-1857), English author, alleged humorist, and dramatist published his "Curtain Lectures" in the famous magazine "Punch." In these papers, Jerold represents Job Caudle as the patient and long-suffering victim of lectures given him by his querulous and nagging wife, Margaret Caudle. The lectures always occur after Job and Margaret have gone to bed and have drawn the curtains.

The so-called hen-pecked husband has been a favorite American form since Rip Van Winkle, and it endures each day in the comic strip form of Dagwood Bumstead. Perhaps, men are innate masochists who

get their kicks from a certain amount of verbal abuse from their spouses.

While every man thinks he suffers more from wifely bombast than anyone else, there are some classic cases. Mark Twain's wife was not a nagger, but she failed to understand she had married an original genius and her chief ambition was to help Mark Twain become a reliable candidate for gentility. As is generally known, Mrs. Abraham Lincoln talked to old Abe as if he were a recalcitrant child.

The late Deems Taylor, musician, composer, and critic was granted an interview with Richard Straus. Taylor was so excited at the thought of sitting in the same room with his idol he could hardly light a cigarette. Straus did him the extreme honor of meeting him at the waystation. The two chatted with marvelous animation to Straus's home. But once they had entered the home, Mrs. Straus grabbed the great composer by the ear as she sent him and young Taylor outside to wipe their shoes.

## It Says Here

"If you can be bought for a meal, there isn't much to you."

This remark by Rep. George Hux, Democrat of Halifax, was in defense of the social whirl in Raleigh-breakfasts, receptions, cocktail parties and dinners—given by lobbyists.

"You can get a free dinner in Raleigh every night and a free breakfast just about every morning," Rep. Howard Coble told Brent Hackney of the Greensboro Daily News.

Several legislators say they feel obligated to go to some of the parties where their constituents may be, and they don't have the bite put on them.

"I have never had anybody come up to me at one of these affairs and try to buttonhole me. They seem to just want you to know they're around, and it gives them a chance to size you up a little."

Sen. Jack Childers, Democrat of Davidson thinks the parties "are kind of an ego builder for the freshmen legislators, but they'll get weary of it toward the end of the session."

"I just love them," enthused

Rep. Bertha Holt, Democrat of Alamance to Hackney.

She frankly admits that she thoroughly enjoys chatting over a table laden with roast beef, shrimp, and cream-cheese and olive sandwiches.

Rep. Holt, who attends most of the gatherings and describes herself as a "two-drink woman" said she "loves people, good food, dancing and good music, and besides, it saves me money on food."

She told Hackney that sometimes her fellow lawmakers have a tendency to overdo it at the bar.

"And sometimes you'll see these people who say they've quit drinking. They come to the parties and instead of putting down mixed drinks, they get loaded on wine."

Following the Democratic Party Gala, the following groups entertained the legislators:

The League of Women Voters, the N.C. Motor Carriers' Association, the Credit Unions of North Carolina, the State Forestry Association, and the North Carolina Bar Association.

This week, they will be wined or dined by the Society of Accountants, the Cooperative Council of North Carolina, the Alcohol Research Authority and the Academy of Trial Lawyers.

"And there is virtually no end in sight," says the Greensboro news story. "A perusal of House Speaker Carl Stewart's social calendar shows there is not an open Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday until late April, and it is not certain that the General Assembly will still be in session then."

"It is safe to assume that lobbying groups collectively spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on this kind of entertainment."

But one freshman representative thinks it's work.

Rep. Douglas Clark, Democrat from Duplin, says he doesn't even drink wine at the parties, because of he got careless in what he said and did, he could "severely damage my colleagues opinion of me."

"I work 16-hour days, and I'm including the parties in the 16 hours," he said.—MUR

## The Public Speaking

### County Spending

To the Editor:

Will Rogers used to say that all he knew was just what he read in the papers. On March the 6th, 1978 I made a few unnecessary remarks about the way Aberdeen fired Cousin Jerome Whipple because he decided to run for sheriff on the Republican ticket.

Part of what I did say was this, "from what people say Cousin Jerome Whipple is a mighty fine man and it could be that the over-anxious Democrats have committed ambush on themselves."

Brother Whipple is making a very fine sheriff even if the courthouse crowd did try to "steal" the communications system.

But I am not exactly thinking about this. I am thinking that if this new re-appraisal crowd had filed their report before the election, all the Democrats would have been wiped out, even including my long time friend Cousin Charles McLeod. When you go to bed at night, just as a reasonably poor man and then get a report in the morning that you are high on a millionaire, there is bound to be a "dead cat" on the line. Some of the commissioners came down with the apprehensive neurosis and

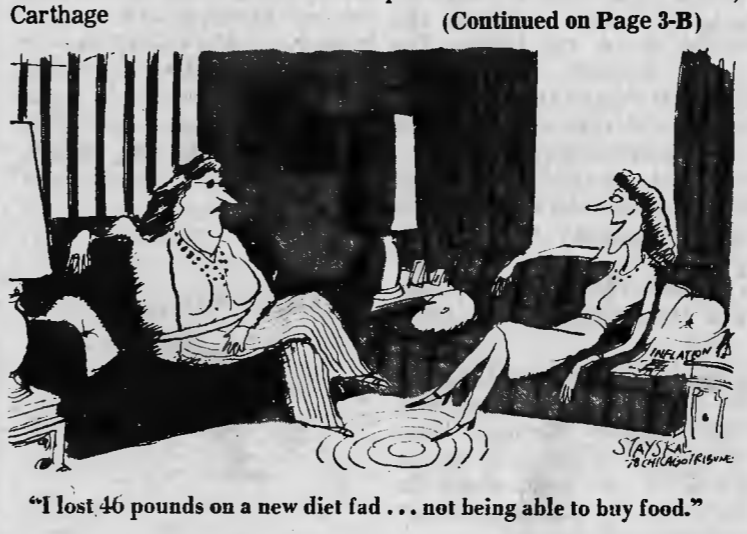
### Before and After

To the Editor:

With reference to Chub Seawell's letter criticizing the Town of Southern Pines and the "rough element in the churches" that rose up and demanded liberal recognition and voted in liquor by the drink.

It is much easier to put your neck on the line after the fact than to take a public stand, pro or con, on a controversial issue.

If there is a printed public record of Mr. Seawell's opposition to liquor by the drink prior to the election for same,



The Provost at the University of Cincinnati has declared war on "dirty" words at that institution and is drawing up a list.

Dr. John McCall, who is also an English professor, has launched a language clean-up campaign, and the first words to get on his "dirty words" list are "input" and "feedback."

He has sent a memorandum to all departments warning that any vice president, dean or other administrator who is caught saying or writing the forbidden words will be fined 25 cents.

He said other words will be added to the list each month. "It's to help people recognize that some language is devoid of real meaning, and we need to get rid of some words to be conscious of what we are saying," Dr. McCall explained.

We hope the Provost gets better results than some other efforts, more lately in Washington, to clean up the language. When he took office President Jimmy Carter announced that efforts would be made to get rid of federalese and other gobbledygook. He also asked for more brevity in memorandums and reports. Some limited success in a few areas has been reported, but by and large his campaign in the Washington bureaucracy has been to no avail.

Reports are still long and tedious, and Carter is not the first to try to make them shorter. When Franklin D. Roosevelt was President he let it be known that he would not read any report or memorandum to him which was longer than one page. If they exceeded a page he threw them away or sent them back unread. It wasn't long before he was getting what he wanted.

The words "input" and "feedback" were not bad words to head off a "dirty" list. Have you noticed how frequently they crop up in conversations these days?

"Approaching Solstice" is by R.T. Smith:

Hardy could have walked here, and Wyeth would also recognize the season's dual allegiance—blonde and amber coppering deep in late sunlight's resin.

Severity is the rule now where what dwells must dwindle, but we find thistledown magical, white warm flakes releasing, rising wind's breath to survival.

Winter came late, its first assertion a white rim on the lake. We appreciate this landscape's gift—adversity—cold and mercy blending on a terraced field's transition.

The woods are a wasp nest hue. A beauty resides in brown grain. The sky's soft flint meets earth as stirred leaves rattle for speech over white bones of a steer.

A season of mud and thunder, ice asking us to clench, but we still believe we can catch a glimpse of heart on the edge of a passing blackbird's wing.

Now autumn's ghost gives up, but winter's a stage reminding us how the writing of life survives: the weeds hold quietly the form of our footprints for a while

and then they let them go.

One of the major published works of folklore, a monumental collection of seven volumes of more than 600 pages each, is "The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore," published over a period of years by the Duke University Press.

I don't know if the various books are still in print, but they are priceless, and any student of history or folklore will find the work fascinating.

Dr. Brown became interested in North Carolina folklore soon after he came to Trinity College (now Duke University) in Durham and in 1912 he started collecting material. In 1913 he founded the North Carolina Folklore Society, which is still going strong, with offices at Appalachian State University.

Through his classes in folklore, summer expeditions to the mountains and other parts of the state, through the Folklore Society and its members, Dr. Brown kept gathering material. Over 40 years of efforts resulted in a tremendous mass of notes and texts, recordings, and transcripts of talks with the people of the state.

When he died in 1943 the task of assembling and preparing the material Dr. Brown had gathered fell to Newman I. White, who labored over it until his death in 1948. Then Paul F. Baum was appointed to see the work through. Associate editors were selected for the various areas, and after the first stage there followed a second stage of comparative folklore, in which the North Carolina material was compared with that from other states.

The first volume was published in 1952. It was "Games and Rhymes, Beliefs and Customs, Riddles, Proverbs, Speech, Tales and Legends."

"Folk Ballads and Folk Songs From North Carolina" were published in separate volumes the same year. There followed volumes on "The Music of the Ballads" and "The Music of the Folk Songs," and Volumes VI and VII on "Popular Beliefs and Superstitions From North Carolina."

"Ashland 1960" is by Agnes McDonald of Raleigh:

It was standing, the shadow-slanting poor man's brick-covered repeat of houses we had seen in our roams on roads edged by woods and fenced by abandonment.

Neglect had reared it proud out of spring house and cistern mound it grew out of pity into tree nestles where squirrels in their scurriness bombed its tin roof with disdain. We took sides under blankets, under rain that ground its teeth

pointed into our black evenings starred and baying over ridges we saw only in moonlight. We stood in our simple bodies lighted by fires of our making

saw us in perilous lanterns lively and loving touching from distances of frost fields and fox runs to the red-coal center of our breath.

Nomination for the Song Title of the Week: "My Old Flame Doesn't Hold a Candle To You."

And from Richard Armour we pass along this observation: Good neighbors we appreciate More every passing day. And just when friendship's at its best Good neighbors move away.

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