

Break-Up Of An Empire

"For long years it has stood apart, in lonely majesty, as an empire of its own."

Thus does the Greensboro News speak of the State Highway Commission, concerning which the Currie Commission has proposed important changes which the News thinks would "integrate the highway building function into the ordinary operations of state government."

The State Highway Commission was due for an overhauling, because it was in the way of becoming a state within a state, and has been in fact a massive political structure, often devoted to the making and unmaking of political candidates rather than the prosaic function of road designing and building.

For a long time it has been a tradition that no man could become governor of North

Carolina without the support of the State Highway Commission, and that after he climbed to office it would be well for him to stand well with the said Commission.

Separation of the Prisons Department from the Highway Commission has been long overdue, but the recommendations of prison experts have been of small avail in the face of the stony opposition of a haughty Commission.

The concealed cruelties of some convict camps and the indelent spectacle of convict gangs working roads under shotguns were never abated as long as the Highway Commission ignored them.

Governor Hodges has now tackled the hydra. In so doing he has done a service to his State.

Secret Evidence OK By Court

Secrets in government branches won a victory for reaction when U. S. District Judge McGarraghy ruled that the State Dept., in denying a passport to a cosmic ray physicist who wanted to accept an appointment in India, was not bound to confront him with his accusers and was not violating the due process provision of the United States Constitution.

The Secretary of State argued that he had confidential information which he was not bound to disclose.

Nor has he ever felt obligated to state what confidential information he was supposed to have that caused him to deny a UNC professor a passport to go abroad to attend a learned gathering of professional men. The professor in question gave the name of Frank P. Graham, former president of the University and now a leading UN mediator, as a chief endorser.

Is it Graham or the United Nations that the State Department regards as suspicious or subversive?

Dangerous Ideas Valued

An interesting sidelight on the intellectual freedom of English universities is contained in the recent letter of our correspondent Mr. Edwin Yoder, wherein he asserts that at Oxford University, where he is a student, "the system draws its vitality from 'dangerous' ideas," and that orthodoxy in every sphere is always being called in question there.

In the broad USA, sad to say, the trend is the opposite. Any idea not in accord with current precepts is likely to be regarded as 'dangerous', and the holder of it is lucky if he escapes jail or other penalty.

The fact that ideas are encouraged at Oxford with a view to their value and not to their orthodoxy is no doubt responsible in some degree for the vitality that has so far held the British Empire together, despite severe stresses. In the late world war it was noteworthy that the intellectual spokesmen

for the Allies was Winston Churchill, whose opinions throughout a long political career have rarely been orthodox and have often been regarded as dangerous. The U. S. supplied no one to match him.

Foreign critics of American life have sometimes predicted that the USA is destined to become a huge monolithic intellectual entity which will some day sweep over the world like a steamroller, crushing every idea hostile to its own standards.

This is a fanciful conception, but it may serve as a warning that we have already advanced far on the road to conformity. There is no progress that does not involve at some point a break with tradition and with uniformity of thought. The new year might well begin with a prayer by our universities and colleges that they be rescued from stodginess.

Yank At Oxford . . .

'Honing The Thought Processes'

By ED YÖDER

(Continued from a previous issue—a letter from Ed Yoder, former Daily Tar Heel Editor, now a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in England.)

It is difficult to imagine that little over a hundred years ago Oxford still clung to its medieval genesis from the Church and that dons had to be ordained in its ministry. If the present attitude toward religion remains respectful, that respect is almost purely formal. I can imagine how the English got their reputation for hypocrisy—as well in the area of religion as any other. Indifference and frank agnosticism seem as stoutly entrenched in the mid-20th Century as the church ritual and the mellowed beauty of the old cathedrals and college chapels.

Union Debating

My first trip to the celebrated Oxford Union, the debating hall where the voice of Gladstone and other greats like him first gave signs of promise, took me to hear the religious question gone over in typical fashion. The question: "That this House believes it possible for modern man to live without religion."

The debate brought up to Oxford his lordship, the Bishop of Rochester, who in earlier years—forty years or so ago—served as librarian of the Union—a post now held, incidentally, by Bob Evans, a onetime Chapel Hillian from Durham.

Undaunted by the Bishop's presence, the undergraduate debaters attacked with glee.

"I take it that the members of this House," the opening speaker began, "will agree with me when I say that the Church of England is for those who are uninterested in religion, as the Conservative Party is for those who are uninterested in politics."

The political context of those days made the laughter even more significant. When his time to speak came up, the Bishop squirmed noticeably. His opening gambit he read with real, if halting, emotion from his notes. It was from Plato.

"Out of context," cried a student from the back of the hall; and echoing cries of "Shame! Shame!" bounced at the Bishop. He had introduced Plato into the debate—out of context. The tone of the debate edged toward hostility from the Bishop's side, refusing throughout to be impressed by his lavender suit and emmerbund and his silver-buckled shoes. His attire for the House of Lords (which he had departed as recently as that afternoon), and his argument for the binding necessity of religion seemed in the course of the evening to better his detractors—by force of dignity if by nothing else—and the motion was defeated. Such is the paradoxical treatment of orthodoxy at Oxford, even if an aftermath of affirmation may follow.

Finally, most importantly, the

nonconformity has worked its spell on the basic teaching process here. Oxford leaves the concern with fact largely, almost too much, to the Americans and Germans. The aim here is to hone the thought-processes, the attack itself replacing the accumulation of data as the important aim. A history essay, which the student must distill for his tutor once a week from a staggering bibliography, does not call for a mere description of Henry V or his kingship.

It calls instead for a discussion "of the view that Henry V was at heart a lawyer." Such a question may even be typical of the final examination for honors in history.

Similarly, a philosophy essay does not concern itself with Descartes' philosophical method; it must be either attack or defense. Concern with the interplay of ideas is deceptive—since in fact before you can handle ideas, especially before you can attack or defend them, you must labor long hours to understand them thoroughly.

You may even have to think about them in Gaelic French.

On The Way Up

(News & Observer)

The folks who like blends of liquor and those who prefer the bottled in bond variety probably will have to put out a bit more for their favorites starting January 1. Those who like the straight liquors in 86 or 90 proof won't feel the rise. Neither, of course, will those who just don't buy liquor, period.

Price rises announced a month or six weeks ago by two of the major distillers are due to reach the State on January 1. Carl Wester, auditor for the State ABC Board, said the result will be in-

creases of five cents a pint and 10 cents a fifth for the affected blends, and 10 cents a pint and 15 cents a fifth for the affected bonds.

However, not all of the blends or bonds will go up. The two members of the Big Four of the liquor industry who hiked their base prices are the Seagram group, which ordered an across-the-board increase of 3 3/4 cents per gallon; and the Schenley group, which is raising some of its brands by a similar amount. All told only 10 of 64 companies selling in North Carolina are upping

'I'm For It, Except That Inspection Part'



—Daniel in The Chapel Hill News Leader

Washington Report . . .

Atom Report: 'Treasure'

By BILL WHITLEY

RUSH. The Christmas rush will hardly be over when members of Congress start returning to Washington to begin the sessions of the 85th Congress.

The first day of business will be January 3, but there will be several caucuses and informal meetings beforehand that will make it necessary for members to return during the New Year weekend.

Sen. W. Kerr Scott plans to spend Christmas with his family at Haw River and come to Washington the following weekend.

TEACHERS. Three North Carolina colleges have received special grants from the National Science Foundation to operate special summer institutes to train high school and college teachers of science and

mathematics.

Duke University at Durham, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and North Carolina College at Durham will get grants to offer special courses for teachers in biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics.

In addition to these, grants have been offered for special work in radiation biology at Duke and chemistry at UNC.

ATOMIC RESEARCH. Recently the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy released a progress report on atomic energy research.

This particular progress report deals mainly with research that's being done in the field of medicine, biology and agriculture.

For those interested in the fantastic field of atomic energy, the report is a treasure of information.

If you have a flare for this sort of thing, Sen. Scott will be glad to send you a copy if you would drop him a card or letter.

TOBACCO. The recent action by the Department of Agriculture to drastically reduce the support prices of "undesirable" types of tobacco next year will come as a shock to many farmers.

The Department has promised, however, that it will get into each tobacco grower's hands details on the new programs and co-operate with farmers in solving problems that arise from it.

For Congress To Consider—Now



Partymiller—York Gazette & Daily

Chips That Fall

There ought to be a commission to tell us what to do with the vacant days that lie between Christmas and New Year's. They are useful as holidays and breathing spells, but they lack character. They are suspended in midair, belonging to the New Year but not quite joined to it. We have yet to meet a person who was able to show he had done anything important in the course of these featureless days.

The eager way that the papers play up the celebration of Old Christmas down on the coastal banks shows there is much Christmas energy left over that might be channeled off and utilized with profit. The community has just shown that it can draw together a strong community spirit for Christmas observances. Can't the community do something for Twelfth Night?

It might be thought that history shows there is no offense so low that some human being has failed to resort to it. But what can be said about an individual who can think nothing better to do than to set fire to an outdoor Christmas tree before Christmas has even come?

Christmas day travellers on the highways say the driver who took to the highways early Tuesday before noon was out of luck. In town after town all the restaurants were closed and on some roads the filling stations were closed until the late afternoon. Gas dealers were often interrupted at Christmas dinner by customers coming in to beg for a tankful.

WEAK CASE

Throughout the Suez crisis the basis of the government's case against the nationalization of the Canal has been the alleged inefficiency of the Egyptians to operate it efficiently. The fact that more ships were passing through the Canal on the day of Eden's ultimatum than on any previous day of its history is already some indication of the inaccuracy of Eden's forecast. —London New Statesman

No Honor At Ho

(From The Carolina Times, Durham's Negro Newspaper)

Word has been received in Durham that Asa T. Spaulding, United States delegate to the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization) Conference now in session in New Delhi, India, has been called upon at least four times to act as chairman of the United States delegation in the absence of its permanent chairman. In this capacity, he has led the United States delegation in voting on many issues of vital importance to the world organization. As temporary chairman of the U. S. delegation, he was at the time America's top-ranking representative at this important world meeting.

It is quite fitting that Mr. Spaulding should be entrusted with a position of such gravity, for he has proved himself a capable executive and a conscientious public servant. He is one of the top executives of the largest Negro insurance firm in the United States. The present UNESCO assignment is his second in as many years as this country's representative in foreign affairs. Last December, he was a member of the United States delegation to the inauguration of Liberia's President William V. S. Tubman.

North Carolina and Mr. Spaulding's hometown, Durham, should be proud of their native son for his achievement in international affairs. We can be proud that the national government has recognized his abilities and put them to use in the service of the country.

But Durham, at least, has

shown little or no honor in putting his abilities to the service of its city and country. Mr. Spaulding, in which a major portion of our working arm and make use of their talents lies the success story has been repeated in the Southland.

In 1954, when he ran for County Commissioner, he was resoundingly elected through the efforts of the whites. On numerous occasions when prospects were offered to fill vacant municipal and county positions, his name has been in favor of a member of the same race. In short, he happened to be a white man and his own city has refused to use his abilities and talents to use in his hometown.

Asa Spaulding is one in a long list of Negroes which have been the South for a long time of color with all the advantages that have had to be put to the west to put their talents to use, then upon those talents, they have accrued vicities. By its practice of denying and able Negroes therefore forcing sections of the country has further impoverished and denied wealth in human form the day not be suicidal practice.

Legion Experts

By SIDNEY SWAIM ROBINS

Having been a charter-member of an American Legion post, I recall that in the charter or the by laws of the national organization as originally formed was a pledge to keep out of politics. That was of course a foolish pledge and should never have been made. The example of the G.A.R. and other veterans' organizations ought to have told us all that it would be impossible to keep. And the American Legion has been in politics up to its nose, and sometimes higher than that, ever since it was founded.

The hopeful feature is that it has not always been easy to use veteran pressure as one massive lever. Especially since the last war, which brought much of the total population into the veteran class, different posts have disagreed and sometimes a state post has stood up against the national organization. I reckon the hope is that veterans will settle down to doing their share of promoting discussion without claiming to be experts on too many questions. Of course the G.O.P. had poor brakes.

I see in the morning paper that "Dan" Daniel, national commander of the American Legion, is now in Florida making emphatic points on foreign policy. He was in Egypt "doing a Legion survey of the situation there before the crisis developed". In private life, the commander is a textile man from Danville, Virginia, so he probably did not have all the time he wanted to study that question.

Commander Daniel is quoted: "I am convinced that many of our American citizens have a better concept of what our country needs than many of our experts". Since he doesn't say what experts, and may mean Dulles very prominently, many Democrats at least will agree with him on that.

He criticizes the US for forcing Britain out of the Suez while doing nothing much about Hun-

PORTRAIT OF AMERICANS

The American is wonderfully alive, and his vitality, not having often found a suitable outlet, makes him appear agitated on the surface; he is always letting off an unnecessarily loud blast of incidental steam. He is inquisitive, and ready with an answer to any question that he may put to himself of his own accord; but if you try to pour instruction into him, on matters that do not touch his own spontaneous life, he shows the most extraordinary powers of resistance and obfuscance; so that he often is remarkably expert in some directions and surprisingly obtuse in others. He seems to bear lightly the sorrowful burden of human knowledge. In a word, he is young.—George Santayana, Materialism and Idealism in the U. S.

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