

Editorially Speaking:

We believe that every parent in the county will agree with Judge Holshouser's remark that a bad situation seems to exist when a school bus involved in an accident is found to have been operating with five defects in its safety equipment.

When a startling and disturbing piece of information like this breaks into the news, the scene is set for the spreading of rumor, exaggeration and accusation. In the Yancey Record's efforts to get at the facts regarding our bus maintenance we have encountered much of what may be no more than loose talk, and frankly we don't know just what to believe. We have, in our news gathering efforts talked to highway patrolmen, school principals, parents of the drivers of busses, and numerous others.

We have encountered a widespread belief that the maintenance of our school busses has not been very good, and that perhaps only luck has spared us from having some very serious accident. The highway patrolmen who in their professional duties see much of the busses, are particularly aware of the frequent defects in such safety items as turn signals, brake and tail lights.

One thing can be stated very definitely from our investigation--that all the provisions of the school law governing the inspection of busses have not

been complied with.

It can likewise be stated that a widespread suspicion exists that the school maintenance garage is governed by a somewhat lax and easygoing atmosphere. In this connection, we think it possibly significant that the maintenance garage seems to be associated in the public mind with horseshoe pitching during perhaps overlong lunch hours. The story, for example, has had widespread circulation in the county that Superintendent Wilson, on an inspection of the garage, ordered that the horseshoes be taken home.

Mr. Wilson, although he recalls ordering a major clean-up of the garage shortly after coming here, denies that he ever issued the horseshoe order. But this may be one of those occasional instances of a myth, which though not founded on literal fact, nevertheless casts an illuminating light on a real situation.



According to the news story in last Saturday's Asheville Citizen, our colorful attorney, Bill Atkins has used a surprising criterion for judging the competence of Yancey County's new Director of Social Services, Randall Peacock. The latter, it seems admitted in a Raleigh hearing that he did not know the number of townships in Yancey County, whereupon Atkins

declared him unqualified to hold his job.

We take quite the opposite view of this matter. As we see it, Peacock's ignorance of the township set-up is really in his favor. It gives a strong indication that he has no interest in messing around in Yancey County's politics.

For what, after all, is a township? Nothing more nor less than an arbitrary districting device to facilitate the voting process--the registration of voters, the setting up of polling places, the counting of ballots, etc. In other words, it's all very closely tied in with politics, and if it were not for voting and politics, probably none of us would know a thing about townships.

Now for Bill Atkins, with his intense interest in political matters, we fully understand

how the township set-up looms large as a matter of interest and importance--that's where the votes come from and get counted. But to a new Welfare Director, tending to the business of running an efficient department--well, we think there are an awful lot of more important matters to be concerned with.

As for ourselves, this amusing episode has now definitely imprinted on our mind that there are eleven townships in the county. From now on, perhaps to our dying day, we shall carry about this useless bit of information, regarding which we couldn't care less. It all reminds us of an old friend, who, years after he had studied foreign languages, bragged proudly of the fact that he still remembered the German word for cranberries.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor:

We the undersigned Yancey County Jaycees are aware of and have often been ourselves, critical of the County's Department of Social Services. However, despite the present turmoil we have discovered a change for the betterment of the entire County.

Efforts have been undertaken to make known just what the department does. What it can do for each and every citizen is made more clear by the department's advertisements on the radio and in the Yancey Record. This is clearly demonstrated in the department's drive to make the public aware of its responsibility regarding the children of the County and child abuse and neglect. Many of us know that the department has put in many long hours to improve the foster home care that we, the County's citizens, can provide our children. The department has worked in cooperation with a group of Yancey County citizens to make Girls Haven a Reality.

These are only a few accomplishments made by the department in the past few months. All of these are due in part to the hard work of Randall J. Peacock, the Director of the Department. To him we say thanks for working to make Yancey County a better place to live. Keep up the fine work.

Sincerely,
Charlie M. Hensley, Donald N. Banks, Jerry Holcombe, Gene Higgins, Jerry Laws, Daniel Buchanan, Joe Gillespie, Billy R. Edge, Jap Phillips, Phillip Wilson, Bobby McAllister, Charles P. Randolph.



Dear Editor:

I have had several occasions to observe work done by our

Social Services Department over the past year--particularly at the Child Development Center. I have been very impressed with Mr. Randall Peacock's leadership, capabilities and dedication.

I feel that we in Yancey County are very fortunate to have such a man heading our Social Services Department.
Doris Hunter



To Mr. Luther B. Thigpen, Editor, Asheville Citizen:
Dear Mr. Thigpen:

The insinuations about Randall Peacock in Jay Hensley's article of March 20th are a product of incredible political malice, fantastic naivete, or sloppy, irresponsible reporting. Yancey County is fortunate to have a man of Mr. Peacock's caliber as director of the county Department of Social Services. We support our director one hundred per cent and think Mr. Hensley owes him a public apology.

Sincerely,
The Staff
Yancey County
Department of Social Services



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DEAR MR. PUBLISHER,

PARSON JONES

Dear Mr. Publisher:

I been reading a hole lot about these airplanes being hijacked. Something like that really makes a fella think. Leastwise, it did me. First off it made me wonder how come they use the word "jack". Jack shore must have been awful important to have had so many things named after him.

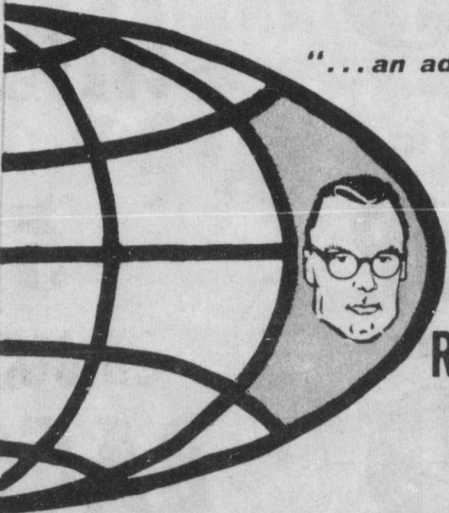
There's car jack, money jack, steeple jack, lumber jack, jack knife, jack rocks, and hi jack. Course there's also an animal that goes by that name. If this fella was so important, how come we don't say "holy-jack" instead of "holy-joe"?

Another thing this hi-jacking business made me think about was that railroads may not go outa business after all. At least a train is on a track and some nut can't order it to take off through a wheat field to Cuba. I look for more and more people to travel the slow but sure method.

All this news about hi-jacking also reminded me of something Jesus one time said, "Broad is the way that leads to destruction, but narrow is the way that leads to life." He was saying that following God's way is more like traveling on a train where the track is laid out. A fella ain't apt to get confused and go wandering off in the wrong direction. The way of the world is wide open like the sky and it's awful easy for somebody to take you off course. The Devil can get you and hold you for ransom out there in the hot desert.

Mr. Publisher, that's enough hairraising stories for now. I've got to go w rk in my shop for a while. I'm working on a machine that wil bring people together without traveling. If I ever get it done I'm gonna call it a telephone. It'll be a tough job for a jack-leg, but I'll keep trying. Remember, sir, truth is stranger than fiction. May all your progress be in a forward direction.

Parson Jones



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