

Editorial Comment

Blueprint For Progress

The Cherokee County Commissioners, in their meeting here last week, adopted an advisory report by state planners for laying sewer and water lines from Andrews through the valley to Murphy, a 20 to 30 year program.

In conjunction with a planned four-lane Appalachian highway through the valley, water and sewer lines will be a glittering asset in attracting more industry. The commissioners can see the possibilities and heartily approved the plan. So do we.

The detailed report of the State Planning Task Force will be printed sometime in February or March, officials say, and at that time will be distributed in this county. It will probably be talked about by many groups and written about in this paper in the months to come.

This blueprint for progress may be followed to the letter - this county has tasted some of the fruits of industry in recent years and a little momentum has been built up. However, it may also be torn apart by the silly, schoolgirlish rivalry between Murphy and Andrews.

A rivalry, within the bounds of good sportsmanship, can add spice to an athletic contest. But a bitter rivalry between two towns, especially two towns in the same county, is costly to everyone. And it is seen far too often, even among community leaders who should know better - 'I wouldn't shop there' or 'I don't' even like to go through there,' just because the speaker feels it is a case of Us and Them. It is not - it is We, Cherokee County, and what benefits one will, to a degree, benefit us all. We will progress faster and easier by working together, in the same direction, rather than fighting against each other.

The current hospital situation is a case in point. We've said it in private conversations, we'll say it in print - Cherokee County, as a whole, would have benefited more if a new hospital had been built in a central location somewhere near Marble. It could have been called Tri-County Memorial, or something similar, and the southern end of the county joining Andrews in seeking

federal funds, even larger than the present District Memorial hospital. It could have been a landmark, offering patients from this entire area a variety of medical services which neither town will be able to afford on its own. Now, however, the time has passed and a large county hospital is just a pipedream. Andrews has a hospital and Murphy, facing a crisis in medical service, will make some sort of arrangement.

The state planners, in their report, note that the valley between the two towns will grow in population naturally between now and the end of this century. But they predict that the growth will be much faster if their plans for a water and sewer system are carried out. The rivalry, the sectional feelings, will have to be put aside if this is to be accomplished because it will take several bond issues and taxpayers will not approve bonds if they feel they are for the sole benefit of the other end of the valley.

We would like to see the program implemented, as soon as possible. The state planners' timetable calls for completion of the project by the year 2000. We wish it were ready tomorrow, to spur growth in the valley now. Perhaps the program can be accelerated, it will be up to the people. And we believe one possibility will be the establishment of a Citizens Committee, made up of people from both towns and the valley between, to study the program in detail, explain it to citizens in their respective areas and guide it to completion. Regional commissions will also have to be formed to operate the water and sewer systems and collect the user fees which will pay for them.

The valley may grow and prosper with new plants and good jobs putting needed money into the county economy or we may just sit here, fighting and squabbling among ourselves and go plodding toward the 21st Century.

Whether the water and sewer lines are laid in 10 or 12 years or in 30, or 40, or not at all, depends on the taxpayers and voters. It's up to you.

In Defense Of Press

In some degree the American press (all kinds) is guilty as charged of nearly everything in the book. It is rich, powerful, influential, arrogant, myopic, opinionated, trivial, tiresome, sensational, rude, quarrelsome, etc. Name it. Somewhere the charge is bound to stick. But with all of this, some slight case might be made in the defense of this press.

When the Vice President levels his blunderbuss at the networks, where does one read and hear about it? Why, in the press, of course.

When the press, in ruffled dignity, strikes back, how is this fat conveyed to the breathless spectators? By the press. What else?

When this brawling confrontation erupts into something approaching a constitutional crisis, where is the play-by-play account readily available to anyone in the least concerned? In column after column of print and hour after hour of video exposure, the sum of them

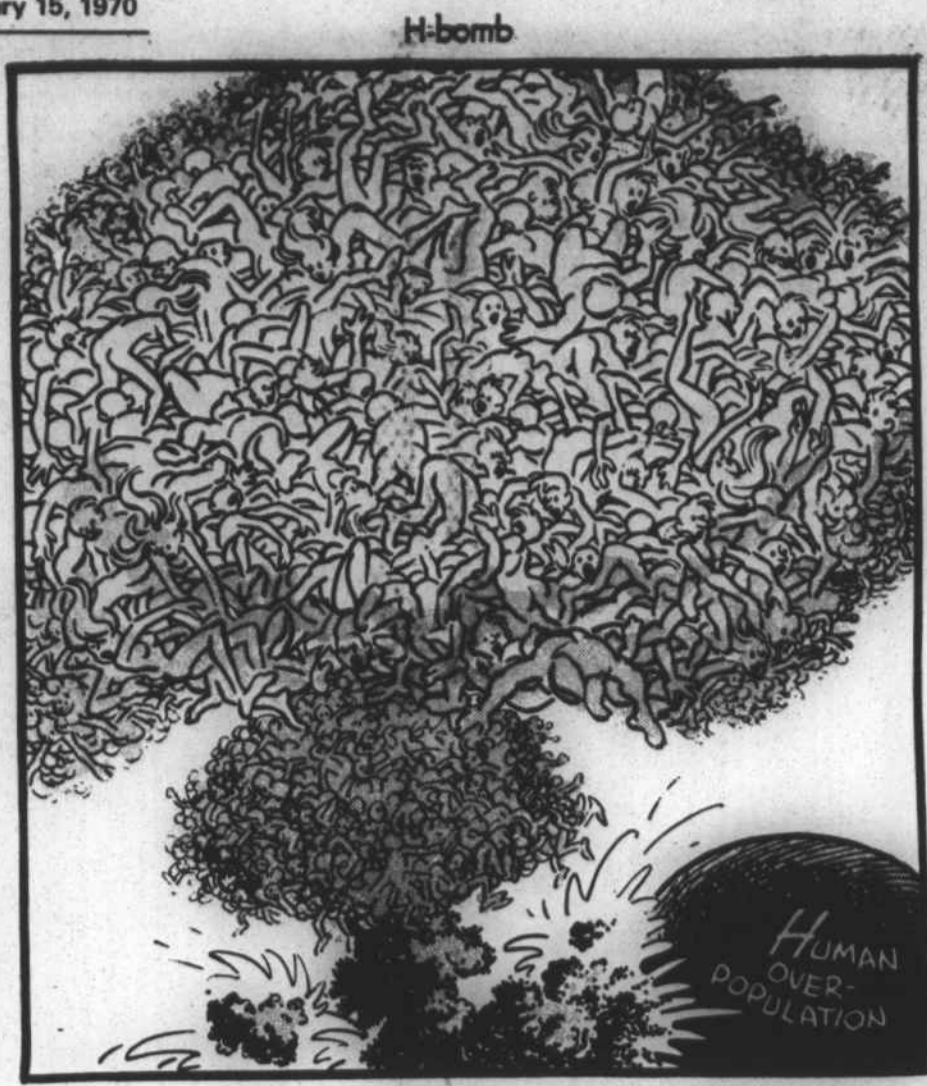
running into millions of words. And all of this takes place in a rather special set of circumstances which are so unusual that they are often unnoticed:

Those who do not like Eric Severeid can turn him off and turn on with Spiro Agnew.

Those who cannot stomach the New York Times can cancel and subscribe to the Chicago Tribune.

And for those who are bored with these alternatives, as any purely dispassionate observer might be, one more remains. They can go off somewhere by themselves and curl up with a good book. Here, too, the American press spreads a few remarkable for its abundance and variety.

SOLEMN CONCLUSION: The American press which affords so many people so many options, including the option to ignore it, with so few compulsions, cannot be all bad. Charleston (W. Vs.) Daily Mail



Around Capitol Square

By WILLIAM A. SHIRES

RALEIGH - A topic for today, appropriately, is snow. The cool, soft white stuff covers most of North Carolina. It is pretty, it is beautiful. It delights children and grown-ups alike. Of course, it is often a nuisance and a nuisance - and expensive to cope with. But it is also beneficial.

The high meadows of Watauga and Ashe Counties are greener and more lush in Spring and Summer because of the snow which blankets them in Winter. The snow not only is a protective blanket but in melting it brings moisture and minerals to the land. It is nature's way of recharging the soil and making it more productive.

One source, without reporting his method of cost accounting, believes a good snowfall is worth \$17,000 an acre in the ski resort areas.

COST - State highway officials try harder to calculate the cost and are unsuccessful. But during a season it could cost as much as \$17,000 a mile to clear snow and ice from primary highways and keep them open.

"There's really no way to figure it exactly," says a highway department engineer. "There are too many factors involved. And it varies from place to place."

The there is no doubt that the job of keeping highways open during periods of snow and ice is tremendously expensive both in terms of money and manpower.

Literally hundreds and sometimes thousands of state highway maintenance workers go out in the teeth of a snow storm. Often they work around

the clock, braving cold, bitter wind and sleet. It is not easy work. Many of these workers do not receive overtime pay. They are promised compensatory time off, at some future date. In any case, the cost is high.

But perhaps nature gives more in return. Agricultural experts think so. In late Spring or in the drought and heat of summer they talk about a "million dollar" rain. Now in Winter, snow lying across the fields gives promise of greener fields and better crops in a few short months.

SHARPE - Bill Sharpe knew North Carolina's geography, history and customs as well as any man and wrote about them better.

His name was William Pleasant Sharpe, but everyone knew him as Bill. He was editor and co-publisher of The State Magazine for 18 years. He died this week at the age of 66.

He became first director of the State Advertising Division after it was established by an act of the legislature in 1937.

One of his favorite stories was that when he assumed the job, "I didn't know the first thing about what they wanted. But it didn't matter because they didn't know what they wanted either."

He spent four years getting the Advertising Division (now the Travel and Promotion Division) started. He criss-crossed the state obtaining material. He authored several books and issued pamphlets and promotional brochures. After purchasing The State Magazine he initiated a policy of featuring a single county in each issue. And he compiled these exhaustive reports into three volume work called

North Carolina Counties complete with maps and statistical data and a text of interesting information.

VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

We close our mind to any infiltration of thought counter to our own established conception. We negate that which is new to our mode of thinking even though it is as old as the Bible and even older. The thought of spirit communication is so embedded in our old wives' tales that the true concept is lost in the telling. Did not God talk to Moses by a burning bush? Did He not give the precepts by which to live by communicating with him the Ten Commandments? How do you suppose Moses translated this knowledge without the possibility of a direct contact through the mind?

If it was done then why do people think it is impossible now? It is not. It is as true today as it was then and even more so, for now is the time of the beginning and the end. We will live to see the prophecy come true, whereby the meek shall inherit the earth and the pure in heart will govern.

The Cherokee Humane Society, Inc., meets every third Tuesday evening of the month at 7:30 at the Power Board Building in Murphy. This month it will be on the 20th of January. Won't you please join us?



Q. I am already receiving monthly social security benefits and will be 65 next May. How do I apply for Medicare?

A. You will automatically be entitled to the hospital insurance (or Part A) of Medicare as of the first day of the month you reach 65.

But you will have to enroll for the supplementary medical insurance (or Part B) of Medicare - and definitely should do so during the 3 months before your birthday.

Actually all you'll have to do is check the "Yes" on an enrollment card you'll get in the mail, then sign and return the preaddressed card. Naturally if you have any question you should promptly contact the Social Security office.



The very first man who ever grew a field of corn planted it beside a small creek. He had planned to put it in a field of rocks, thinking they might scare away evil spirits, but his brother-in-law talked him into putting it beside the creek.

His wife's younger brother was out of work at the time, as he was most of the time, and was sitting under a shade tree dreaming up the design for the first wide-tread tire. Which was rather odd, for the wheel had not yet been invented and he had no rim to mount it on. Nor could he envision one.

However, he could see the corn needed water. "Put the corn beside the creek," he said. It was probably the only intelligent thing he ever said and the Corngrower heard practically everything he said since he had lived in the Corngrower's family cave practically all his life.

So the Corngrower did as the brother-in-law advised and the corn crop came up strong and green and full of weeds, which didn't matter anyway. And then one night the beavers who lived in the creek dammed up the stream, creating a small lake which covered most of the corn patch.

The corngrower, who had always voted a straight Democratic ticket, could not understand why such a calamity had struck him. "Dichflub it," he cursed, which goes to show you that profanity was then still in its infancy.

"Don't worry about it, baby," said the tire designer. By this time he had woven a mold out of sticks and was preparing to make his first wide-tread tire. The mold was a rough triangle, a shape which appealed to him. As the Corngrower watched, he poured liquid rubber, melted over a fire, into the mold. "Man, look at them beauties," he yelled gleefully, as he repeated the process, again, and again. And, behold, there appeared the world's first triangle-shaped, wide-tread tires, not a whitewall in the bunch.

The Corngrower scratched himself under his bearskin T-shirt, which harbored a lively colony of fleas, and said "I can't see how that's gonna help me any." The other didn't answer, but just kept popping out new tires until he

(This week The Scout began publication of a regular column, to be carried on the editorial page, written and signed by editor Wally Avett.)

had a stack of 25, most of them in popular 7.75 by 14 size.

That night over a supper of mastodons in the family cave, he explained his plan. And shortly after supper two of them, Corngrower and his brother-in-law, lit out for the flooded cornfield with the 25 wide-treads under their arms.

By the light of the moon, they bust up the beavers' dam with Corngrower's stone axe and then they piled the tires up along the creek bank and set the afire. The stench of the burning rubber soon routed the whole tribe of beavers and they paddled off down the creek.

The choking clouds of Black rubber smoke also routed Corngrower's family and all the other families who lived in nearby caves and they left, raining down a shower of curses, rocks and dinosaur bones on the tire-burners.

The brother-in-law hid behind a Sock City sign but Corngrower was beamed on the head with a dinosaur legbone and fell into the creek, where he developed a nasty head cold before he was pulled out.

MORAL: Recaps and old casings okay, but if you burn new wide-treads in the backyard, the neighbors will talk.

Bill Sharpe was editor and co-publisher of the State magazine for 28 years and his beat included Murphy, Manteo and all points in between.

His magazine covered current happenings in North Carolina and also held fascinating bits and pieces of the past, putting flesh over the bare bones of the basic state history course we were taught in the eighth grade.

To quote Bill Shires, who writes the Around Capital Square column on the page, "Bill Sharpe knew North Carolina's geography, history and customs as well as any man and wrote about them better."

Bill Sharpe died last week. He was 66. He will be sorely missed.



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