

JONES JOURNAL

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Never forget that the editorials in the Journal are the opinions of one man, and he may be wrong.

DOUBLE PROOF

This week double proof has been offered of the absurd situation that has been allowed to exist for much too long in connection with tobacco markets in the New Bright Belt. The Supreme Court has reversed a lower court's decision against Rocky Mount which had added an "unauthorized" fifth set of buyers to meet the need and to bring it up to the level of competing markets in Wilson and Greenville.

Kinston was, of course, doing the same thing as Rocky Mount and for the same reasons.

Coming along with the Supreme Court decision and giving absolute, and what should be final, end to the argument over which markets should have five and which markets should have four sets of buyers were the final figures on sales of the four leading markets in the belt. Wilson retained its world leadership but Kinston jumped from third to second place by selling well over six million pounds more than Greenville, which enjoyed five full sets of buyers for the entire selling season. This is no accident.

The Bright Belt Warehouse Association, whatever its loyalties and whoever its rulers may be has no further basis for denial of equality insofar as numbers of sets of buyers is concerned since both Kinston and Rocky Mount proved the point they were courageously trying to make when the season opened this year.

ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

It should and can truthfully be said that the resolution passed last week by the Lenoir County Board of Public Welfare in which it was asked that the school officials give more active support to the Welfare Department in the enforcement of the school attendance laws was not a reflection on School Superintendent Henry Bullock.

Bullock as principal in two of the county's largest schools had an enviable record in the realm of school attendance and it was because of his efforts in that direction that the resolution was voted by the Welfare Board.

It was the wish of the board to let Bullock know that the full powers of the Welfare Board were ready and waiting to enforce the little law there is to force attendance of farm children to school. (Under existing school laws farm children may be kept out of school when in the judgment of their parents they are needed for work on the farm.)

This is an ancient and thin legal veil behind which a lot of harm has been done to the children of the State. With the heightened emphasis we have today on providing better and more schools there is no good reason for such a law continuing.

We both recommend and urge that every Parent-Teacher Association in our rural community unite to remove this law from the book and replace it with a strong and workable law that will eliminate the legal truancy of many children who should be learning their ABC's.

ON FARM FINANCING

Kinston Production Association Secretary-Treasurer Yates Creech says "Money is scarcer than it has been in rural sections since 1939. I think demands for credit will be greater and harder to get than in many years in 1950." Is this bad news and if so, how bad?

If people are broke, that obviously is bad news. If people are just becoming more wise in farm financing, that obviously is good news. We think Creech's opinion is a combination of the two reasons. Bad weather caught certain sections of our trading area and gave it a bad time. The unfortunate farmers caught in this section are bent if not broke, and in need of credit assistance.

There is, however, an extremely fast moving increase in the intelligence quotient of the average farmer and not the least of this increased intelligence is located in the field of farm finance. The old days when the farmer walked innocently into the nets of the time merchants, with their high interest, sales coupons and off-season high prices are something almost ready for the history books.

Today the average landowning farmer knows and knows well that he can get money at a reasonable rate of interest, from a semi-official source that will be far more lenient in case of temporary default than has been the standard operating procedure in the past by the men who created great fortunes and acquired farm empires in the manner of the time merchant.

Today the time merchants are largely confined to furnishing tenants on the multitudinous farms they have accumulated in the past. They, of course, still are able to do business with a small few independent farmers who for one reason or another fail to make use of less cumbersome and costly types of credit.

The informed farmer—and most landowning farmers are in this group—goes to such credit sources as that provided by Creech's Association and at an equitable rate of interest marches out with cash money—not coupons—to barter in the open market and to buy at the cheapest price the materials he must have to run a farm.

The increase in business that Creech's and similar associations continue to experience may certainly be a reflection of bad luck, bad weather or bad prices but to a far greater degree these increases are a reflection on the ever widening knowledge of the man behind the plow.

No group in the American economy has had more intelligent or lavish attention in the past 16 years than has the farmer. Extension work among farmers, soil conservation, parity prices, farm credit are each a fundamental part of the Rooseveltian belief that the basis of prosperity in the United States is in the hands of the farmer.

Bust the farmer and you bust the nation.

HOW TO INVITE DEPRESSION

A man lived by the side of the road and sold hot dogs. He was hard of hearing, so he had no radio. He had trouble with his eyes, so he read no newspapers. But he sold good hot dogs.

He put up signs on the highway telling how good they were. He stood by the side of the road and cried: "Buy a hot dog, Mister." And people bought.

He increased his meat and bun orders. He bought a bigger stove to take care of his trade. He got his son home from college to help him. But then something happened. His son said, "Father, haven't you been listening to the radio? There's a depression on. The European situation is terrible. The Domestic situation is worse."

Whereupon the father thought, "Well, my son's been to college, he reads the papers, he listens to the radio and he ought to know." So the father cut down on his meat and bun orders, took down his advertising signs and no longer bothered to stand out on the highway to sell hot dogs.

And his hot dog sales fell almost overnight. "You're right, son," the father said to the boy, "We certainly are in the middle of a great depression."

—The Clarkson Letter

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