

One More Reason Crime Rate Has Risen 19 Per Cent

By Jack Rider

Last week the FBI reported a 19 per cent increase in serious crimes in the nation during the first nine months of 1968.

One glaringly obvious contribution to this skyrocketing lawlessness was the absurd sentence passed on Wesley Fordham last week in Lenoir County Superior Court by Judge Joe Parker of Windsor.

Fordham was before the court charged with armed robbery and assault of Francis Atkinson, who was badly beaten as well as being robbed of a watch and all the money he had in October of this year in Southeast Kinston.

After hearing the evidence Fordham was permitted to plead guilty to assault with a deadly weapon, and he was given a 2-

year prison term suspended on condition he be placed on probation for three years and pay the court costs, and the judge further included in his order the recommendation that Fordham's parole not be invoked!

Fordham has a police record in Kinston that began in 1945. In this 23-year period he has been convicted 17 times, including conviction for murder in 1951 when he stabbed a woman to death and left her to rot beneath a South Kinston warehouse.

His convictions include one for vagrancy, one for disorderly conduct, one for contempt of court, one for malicious damage to private property, one for abandonment and non-support, seven for assault with a deadly weapon, one for assault with a

deadly weapon with intent to kill, one for assault on a female, two for larceny and one for murder.

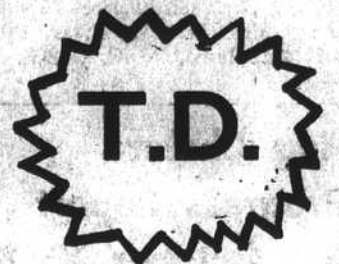
He was paroled for the murder, and now he has the stupid judicial distinctions of being served by both a paroles officer and probation officer, who will have the joint responsibility of keeping this gentleman out of further trouble, which is about as likely as judges waking to their responsibility to protect the public, rather than to coddle criminals.

TO PAY MEDICAL BILLS

In Lenoir County Superior Court last week James Harris, who put off-duty Kinston Policeman Durwood Smith in the hospital from a severe beating, has a 2-year jail term suspended on condition he pay a \$50 fine and remain on probation three years. On the same court day James King who was charged with breaking in to do his variety of stealing, was given four to six years in prison.

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Social Security Tax Going Up Jan. 1st Rate to 9.6 Per Cent for All Workers

Starting with the first pay checks they receive in the New Year, the Nation's working people will pay 4.8 percent of their earnings toward their social security protection, an increase of four tenths of one percent over the contribution rate in effect since the beginning of 1967.

Social Security contributions are still payable on only the first \$7,800 of annual earnings, Fred Jones, social security field representative, said today. For a person earning \$7,800 or more a year (\$150 a week or over), the increase will amount to 60 cents a week; a worker earning \$100 a well will pay 40 cents a week more.

The contribution rate of 4.8 percent for 1969-70 is actually slightly lower than the 4.9 percent rate that was scheduled for those 2 years in the previous law, Jones said.

Gradual increases are scheduled in the contribution rate until, for 1987 and later, the rate will be 5.9 percent. Jones noted that this is only 0.25 of one percent higher than the rate scheduled in the law before the amendments of 1967. This rate includes 5.0 percent for retirement, survivors, and disability insurance, and 0.9 percent for hospital insurance.

The increase that goes into effect January 1, was scheduled in the social security amendments of 1967. Those amendments increased cash benefits for all beneficiaries by at least 13 percent.

Younger workers, as well as those who are middle-aged or older, can look forward to getting social security retirement benefits worth considerably more than the total they will pay into social security toward that retirement protection, Jones stated.

In addition, he said, they have survivors and disability insurance under social security that

may mean as much as \$75,000 to \$100,000 in payments to an individual family, should the worker die or become disabled for work before retirement.

A look at the schedule of benefits and contributions in today's law, Jones said, will assure the worker that his social security is a good investment. But he can look forward to an ever greater appreciation in its value in the years ahead. Unlike the usual private insurance contract which promises a fixed amount of money in return for a specified premium, the value of social security protection grows as the economy grows.

Meanest Thieves?

Kinston Police last week charged a pair of young Kinstonians with what must be the very meanest kind of stealing: Taking Social Security Checks out of mail boxes, forging them and blowing the proceeds on a big-time. The accused pair, who have been turned over to federal authorities, are Linwood Hood of 822 Thompson Street and Fred Williams of 513 Williams Lane. Under federal law the theft of the checks is punishable with up to five years in prison and forgery of an endorsement is punishable with an additional five years.

LAND TRANSFERS

Jones County Register of Deeds Bill Parker reports recording one land transfer in his office during the past week of two acres in White Oak Township from Love, W. J. Jr., and Estelle Dillahunt and Virginia Morton to Willie and Lucy Jones.

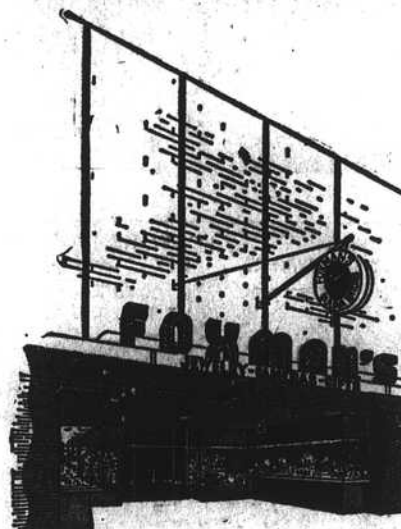
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