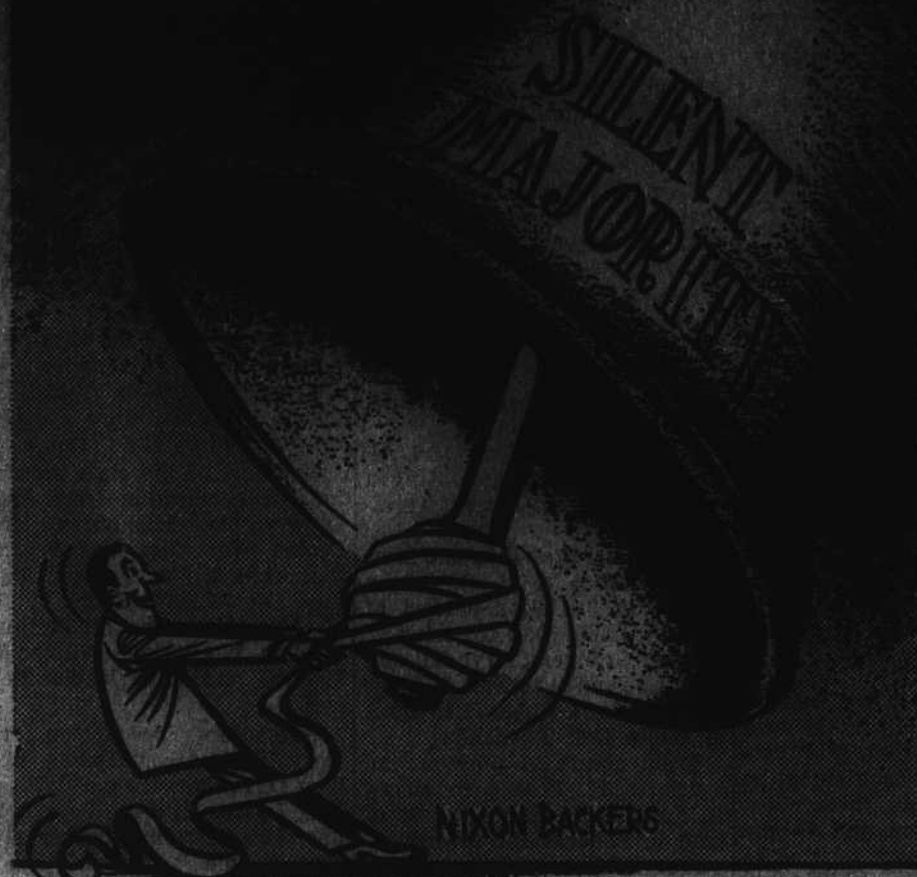


Taking Off the Wraps!



EDITORIALS

Never Forget That These Editorials Are The Opinion Of One Man And He May Be Wrong

Thanksgiving

For the past 22 years we have tried to find a new way to impress upon our readers the fact that every day of the year should be a Thanksgiving Day for Americans . . . not just the last Thursday in November.

But there are not but just so many ways one can say the same thing, so this simply resays what we, and others, have said many times before.

Those earliest white men who came to these strange and hostile shores had practically nothing to be thankful for compared to even the most poverty stricken American of today. But they did give thanks for the little they had and the custom has been handed down to us, but for a majority of us it is more a day off from work than a real inventory-taking.

None of us is without problems. Many of us have terrible problems. Health, business, family, national affairs place a heavy hand on most of us, but when we quietly list the plusses they far outnumber the minuses.

Although it is typically American to complain a great deal about government we still have more real freedoms than any other people on the face of this small planet. There are some who are less restricted by laws and by habit, who live the jungle life, of the frozen openness of the barren northlands, and even the fantasy land in which the new drugged society tries to escape.

But all of these who seem so free are fenced in by powers more terrible than even the petty tyrannies of bureaucratic nit-picking, about which most of us have an occasional ugly word or two.

Freedom from need, from harassment in our homes, from hunger, imprisonment for political heresies, freedom to have or not have religion, to

vote or not to vote. These are a few of the things we take for granted that so few other people in the world today really enjoy.

This makes us smug, and in all too many instances it makes us more unthankful than thankful, because we permit ourselves to ignore the much we have while we poison our soul with envy of those who have two crusts more than we can grab.

This Thanksgiving Day spend a minute really giving thanks. You'll be gratified to know how lucky you really are.

Now Football

What has been said of professional baseball for many years has now become applicable to college football; that it is too much of a business to be called a sport, yet too much of a sport to be classified a business.

College football has been called upon to support the total athletic program in a majority of colleges and universities, and faced with that pressure it has had to respond with business techniques.

College football is no longer a game of "The Yales" against "The Harvards," it is a brutal contest between professionally scouted, professionally supervised and professionally paid young men of exceptional talent and considerable brawn. Whether they actually draw a pay check or not a full four-year scholarship to practically any school is worth something like \$10,000.

Now up at Duke they're talking about de-emphasizing football, because they have not been faring too well when they play outside the Atlantic Coast Conference.

The problem is not with the quality of the young men Duke has hired to

Churches Next?

A case is pending before the United States Supreme Court which may hit churches a harder blow than public schools have been hit by this court's occasional cancellation of prayer.

At least with the schools when the federal fist began to break ancient traditions it came clutching a handful of tax money it had previously taken from the people it came to browbeat.

But churches can look for no such soothing liniment for their bruises because it is the very issue of church money that is to be decided sometime in the next few months.

A Staten Island taxpayer (\$5.55 per year) has brought suit to put an end to tax exemption of church owned property. His allegation is that he is being forced to support churches against his will, since at least in pure theory he would have to pay less taxes if the churches were taxed in the same ratio that his tiny plot of Staten Island real estate is taxed.

This, of course, is not a new notion and some churchmen for quite a long time have concerned themselves with this problem, which becomes an enormous problem when any passing consideration is given to the billions of dollars of real estate holdings by churches.

This decision is not expected before summer, but with the recent record of the supreme court it is much more a likelihood that they will assume that if prayer in public schools is illegal that exemption of church-owned property from taxes is far worse.

But the maddest tyrants do have moments of reason, and even the breed of men who have so brutally abused the powers of this high office ought to keep in mind the undoubted fact that given enough such rope they may fashion a noose for themselves.

Right now a national convention hovers about the court on the issue of prayer in school. It is quite likely that a decision to tax all church property would immediately add many more states to the list of 33 who have already asked for this constitutional convention. For that reason we hope they do loosen this financial bull in the religious china shop.

play football but is with the schedule maker, who ignores the fact that different conferences have different hiring rules for football players.

In most conferences all a young man has to do to qualify for a football job is play football well, but in the Atlantic Coast Conference young men who enter college to play football are also required to read and write, and do reasonable sums, which doesn't seem at first glance to be a very ugly thing to expect of a young man who has just completed 12 years of lower level education.

Inter-conference play ought to be between intellectual as well as equals in brawn. At present there are no two conferences that have the same entrance requirements for prospective football players. This is not to infer that a big man with brains will always beat the big man who is badly equipped in the thinking department, but it is to say that there just happens to be more brawn than there is brains available for this work.

JONES COUNTY JOURNAL
Jack Roper, Publisher

Published every Thursday by the Lenoir County News Company, Inc., 605 North Herndon Street, Lenoir, N. C. 28541. Phone JA 2-7272. Entered as Second Class Matter, May 2, 1942, at Post Office at Lenoir, North Carolina under No. 417 of March 5, 1970. By and for the owner, L. H. Roper, also 305 East North Carolina Street, Lenoir, North Carolina. Second class postage paid at Lenoir, N. C.

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS

BY JACK ROPER

The hardest part of an easy job such as writing columns and editorials is not the hunting and pecking and occasional researching that comes out on the printed page, but is the impossible job of trying to make friends of long standing know that there is nothing personal when criticisms are written of projects that are near and dear to their hearts.

This week I continue a effort of more than four years to show to those who are interested what a tremendous gypping the taxpayers of Lenoir County are getting in the expensive area of education. A great many of my oldest friends are closely connected with education and too many of them feel any attack on the overall system is a direct attack on them personally. Nothing could be further from the truth.

And no one understands any better than I the need for better education for everyone, young or old. But few are willing to accept the undeniable fact that Lenoir Countians are now, and have been for a good many years, paying more and getting about the same as their cousins in other counties of our area and in the state as a whole. With perhaps the single exception of Mecklenburg County no county gets a worse-rooking than Lenoir County when the entire educational pie is sliced.

The saddest part of it all is that this is not the direct result of any individual effort to do Lenoir County dirt. It is simply the end product of too much bureaucracy, too far removed from the madding crowd, with too much power over the distribution of the education dollar. Until about four years ago I was naive enough to presume that when the State of North Carolina through the general assembly voted money for schools that money was allocated fairly and that a child in one school district could expect to be the beneficiary of just as much state love and devotion, and money as any child in any other district. Unfortunately this is very far from true, and it is on this point that I have harped so lengthily and on which I intend to continue to harp until correction is made.

In this effort I am attacking no individual, but simply the system which has systematically robbed the taxpayers of Lenoir County out of millions of dollars in the past several years and is still robbing them at the rate of almost a million dollars per year. You would think that every local educator would be in my corner, rooting and urging me on, but a great many of them view me as a meddlesome, ignorant outsider "who doesn't understand." The problem is that I not only understand but understand too well.

Ultimately I intend to make this problem so clearly and so frequently available to the people of the county that they all will begin to understand and when they do, and not until they do, will it be possible to correct this vicious abuse that they have been exposed to for much, much too long.