

By JOSEPH & STEWART ALSOP

The Court Record Of Bruce Blackmon

THE OTHER DAY, we ticked off the amazing in-and-out court record of Benjamin W. Preate, a young man charged with eight serious offenses involving the use of an automobile since 1945. Let's take a look today at another court record—that of Bruce Blackmon, now charged with manslaughter after the death April 1 of Kersey Kersey from injuries received in a wreck on March 28.

Like Preate's, Blackmon's record was not limited to careless and negligent driving. But we shall eliminate everything except violations of the motor vehicle laws. Here's the record:

On June 22, 1944, Blackmon paid one-half the court costs and a fine of \$4 for driving without an operator's license.

On July 31, 1944, he forfeited bond in county court on a charge of speeding and reckless driving.

In April, 1947, he forfeited bond in county court for driving with improper lights.

On May 2, 1947, he forfeited bond in county court on a charge of speeding 65 mph in a 40 mph zone.

On May 23, 1947, Blackmon once again forfeited bond in county court on a charge of speeding.

On July 7, 1947, Blackmon was sentenced to six months on the roads in county court on charges of speeding and reckless driving. The sentence was suspended on payment of a fine of \$500 and costs, and on condition that he not violate any N. C. law for two years and that he not operate a motor vehicle for one year.

The next day, July 8, Blackmon filed notice of appeal to Superior Court.

But on July 25, 1947—less than three weeks later, and while his appeal in the July 7 case was pending—Blackmon was in county court on charges of speeding and reckless driving again, and failure to stop at a red light. The cases were consolidated for judgment, and Blackmon was sentenced to 12 months on the roads.

He appealed this charge to Superior Court, also.

On August 6, 1947, Blackmon was sentenced to 18-24 months in Superior Court in the two cases. But the sentence was suspended on these conditions: (1) that he be of good behavior and not drive an automobile for three years on one charge of reckless driving and speeding; (2) that he pay a fine of \$100 and costs on the second speeding and reckless driving charge; (3) that he pay a fine of \$100 and costs for driving with-

out lights; and (4) that he pay a fine of \$100 for failure to stop at a red light.

Less than a year later, on July 12, 1948, Blackmon was convicted in city court of reckless driving, and sentenced to 12 months.

He appealed to Superior Court again, where he was sentenced to serve three months on the roads. His suspended sentence from August 6, 1947, was not put into effect, however.

On April 10, 1950, Blackmon was back in county court, charged with speeding, reckless driving, improper car license, and driving after his license was revoked. He got a four-month sentence, suspended on payment of a fine of \$250 and costs. Blackmon still scorned the law. On Nov. 15, 1950, he was in county court once again charged with speeding, reckless driving, and driving after license revocation. He demanded a jury trial, and a bond of \$750 was set for his Superior Court appearance.

Yet, incredibly enough, when the case was heard in Superior Court on Dec. 4, 1950, prayer for judgment was continued for six months. The court attached no conditions.

For over two years, Blackmon was more cautious with his driving—that is, if he was driving during the period.

But on March 13, 1953, there was the old familiar entry in county court again: bond of \$750 was set for his Superior Court appearance.

And on April 12, he forfeited bond for speeding in city court.

On March 16, 1954, his driving license was suspended for 30 days by the Wadesboro court for speeding 70 mph.

And on March 29, the record came to an end when Blackmon was charged in city court with two counts of assault with a deadly weapon (auto), reckless driving and speeding for the accident on N. Davidson St. in which Kersey Kersey was injured.

On April 1 of this year, the charge was changed to manslaughter after Kersey died, and a preliminary hearing was set for April 15.

The record speaks for itself. It shows that Blackmon was a chronic speeder and reckless driver; and that the courts knew it. Yet in the 10 years during which he persistently and repeatedly endangered the lives and property of others, he served only the stretch of three months. In the end, a human life was sacrificed.

Either the statutes are a farce, or the courts were grossly negligent of their responsibility to society. No other explanation fits the case of Bruce Blackmon.



A Comparison With Other States Education In North Carolina

By VIC REINEMER
Associate Editor, The News

SOME years ago Author-Newsman Burke Davis, then with The News, gave North Carolina a nickname. He called it "Old Forty-five." He named it thus because the state frequently ranked 45th, among the 48, when rated according to measurements such as per capita income, cash farm income, years of school completed. That nickname is recalled by reading the booklet, "Educational Differences Among the States," published this month by the National Education Association. It compares educational facilities among the states, using 23 standards. By four of them, North Carolina ranks 45th or 46th. However, by two standards used by NEA, North Carolina ranks among the eight leading states. Here is how North Carolina ranks and compares with the U. S. average and states in first and last place:

1. Average number of pupils per teacher, 1950-51: N. C.—28.7; U. S.—24.1; N. C. rank—40th; North Dakota ranked first with 14.6; Alabama last with 30.6 pupils.
2. Median school years completed by persons 25 years of age and older, 1950: U. S.—9.3; N. C. rank—45th; Utah ranked first with 12.0; South Carolina last with 7.6 years.
3. Per cent of school-age children in school, 1950: N. C.—42.7; U. S.—42.7; California ranked first with 80.1; Kentucky last with 73.6 per cent.
4. Average per capita income payments to individuals in the state, 1952: N. C.—\$1,049; U. S.—\$1,629; N. C. rank—49th; Delaware ranked first with \$2,590; Mississippi last with \$618.
5. Per capita school taxes, 1952: N. C.—\$17.2; U. S.—\$10.00; N. C. rank—44th; Delaware ranked first with \$1,403; Mississippi last with \$56.
6. School-age children per 1,000 wage-earning adults, 1950: N. C.—59.7; U. S.—59.7; California ranked first with 44th; New York ranked first with 30.5; South Carolina last with 47.
7. Amount of income payments per child of school age, 1952: N. C.—\$32.7; U. S.—\$32.7; U. S. rank—44th; New York ranked first with \$37,340; Mississippi last with \$3,500.
8. Amount of income payments per pupil in average daily attendance, 1950-51: N. C.—\$25.7; U. S.—\$10.662; N. C. rank—44th; New York ranked first with \$22.56; Delaware last with \$22.56.
9. Per cent of the population 25 years of age and older with less than five years of schooling, 1950: N. C.—2.2; U. S.—1.8; N. C. rank—43rd; Iowa ranked first with 3.9; Louisiana last with 28.7 per cent.
10. Per cent of rejections for failing the armed forces qualification test, July, 1950: N. C.—19.1; U. S.—19.1; N. C. rank—42nd; Minnesota ranked first with 1.3; South Carolina last with 35 per cent.
11. Average current expenditure for public education, from state and local sources, per pupil in average daily attendance, 1950-51: N. C.—\$14.8; U. S.—\$14.8; N. C. rank—41st; New York ranked first with \$24; Mississippi last with \$8.
12. Average value of public school property per pupil, 1949-50: N. C.—\$261; U. S.—\$454; N. C. rank—41st; New York ranked first with \$790; Mississippi last with \$114.
13. PER CENT VOTED
14. Per cent of persons voting in the presidential election, 1952: N. C.—63.1; U. S.—63.1; N. C. rank—38th; Utah ranked first with 79.1; Mississippi last with 24.3 per cent.
15. Median expenditures per classroom, 1950-51: N. C.—\$3,256; U. S.—\$4,290; N. C. rank—40th; New York ranked first with \$7,227; Mississippi last with \$1,451.
16. Per cent of the population 25 years of age and older with four or more years of college, N. C.—1.8; U. S.—1.8; N. C. rank—47th; Arkansas ranked first with 3.1 per cent.
17. Per cent of the population 25 years of age and older with four or more years of college, N. C.—1.8; U. S.—1.8; N. C. rank—47th; Arkansas ranked first with 3.1 per cent.
18. Average current expenditure, per capita, on public elementary and secondary education, from state and local tax sources, 1950-51: N. C.—\$12.2; U. S.—\$12.2; N. C. rank—40th; Wyoming ranked first with \$19; Mississippi last with \$19.
19. Per capita debt of state government, 1952: N. C.—\$69.35; U. S.—\$46.14; N. C. rank—30th; Nebraska ranked first with \$61; Delaware last with \$22.56.
20. TEACHERS' PAY—\$3,175
21. Average salaries of classroom teachers, 1952-53: N. C.—\$3,175; U. S.—\$3,175; N. C. rank—33rd; California ranked first with \$4,800; Mississippi last with \$1,745.
22. Per cent of total capital requirements for school building program which states are considered unable to finance for themselves, 1952: N. C.—45.9; N. C. rank—26th among 38 of the states. (Seven states did not take part in the School Facilities Survey on which these statistics are based, and surveys in two states are incomplete.) Among the 29, Connecticut ranked first with 2.2; Alabama last with 97.64 per cent.
23. Per capita general state revenue from taxes, 1952: N. C.—\$54.4; U. S.—\$54.4; N. C. rank—22nd; Washington ranked first with \$102.72; New Jersey last with \$55.83.
24. Average number of days attended, 1950-51: N. C.—161.4; U. S.—156.8; N. C. rank—14th; Nevada ranked first with 176.3; New Mexico last with 140.2 days.
25. Per cent of expenditures, from state and local revenue, in support of public schools, 1950-51: N. C.—82.0; U. S.—82.0; N. C. rank—7th; New Mexico ranked first with 37.0; Rhode Island last with 17.5 per cent.
26. Per cent of elementary school teachers with less than four years of college preparation, 1952: N. C.—21.8; U. S.—21.8; N. C. rank—6th; Arizona ranked first with 2.5; South Dakota last with 99 per cent.
27. By only the last four of the 23 measurements used was North Carolina above the national average and median. By 18 of the other 25 states ranked ahead of North Carolina.

N. C. Schools' Big Need Is Money

DESPITE the quickening pace of educational progress in North Carolina, the state's schools are still far below par. Our Mr. Reinemer's article elsewhere on this page, based on the National Education Association's comparison of conditions in various states, points up the deficiencies.

The NEA used 23 yardsticks. North Carolina was below the national average by 19 of them, and can take pride in its showing in only two categories.

One is in the effort being made in this state to support adequately the public schools. In relation to their ability to pay, North Carolinians give a greater portion of their income to public schools, through state and local taxes, than do citizens of all but six other states.

And this state has a higher percentage of college graduates among its elementary school teachers (93 per cent) than do all but five other states. Perhaps these teachers know more than they need to know about methodology and other things they should about subject matter, because of this state's overemphasis on certification. But they have at least been exposed to a full college course, which is a surprising percentage of teachers in many states have not been.

North Carolina's greatest educational deficiency, as borne out by the NEA study, can be summed up rather simply. There isn't enough money available to build up a good school system. North Carolinians are giving a goodly portion

of their tax money to the schools. But because average income is low, because families are fairly large, and because the state school system requires so much improvement to become standard, the problem cannot easily be solved.

It can be solved, by a combination of factors which affect Mr. He's income. The state's industrial base must be broadened. More and more new industries must be established, so that they and the workers they hire will provide more tax revenue.

The passage of an adequate state minimum wage law and creation of more economic opportunities for Negroes, so that they can make more money and carry their share of the tax load, will help.

Revision of the tax law, perhaps by tightening up on sales tax exemptions, as suggested in this space recently, will put more money into the school fund.

North Carolina's poor showing among the states can, to some extent, be explained by the fact that some of the measurements used by the NEA are based on cash income instead of real income. North Carolina has the nation's largest rural population, and real income on the farm exceeds cash income considerably, because farm folks raise what many city folks must buy. But we can see little else to brighten the dark picture portrayed by the NEA study. Education in North Carolina still needs much improvement before it reaches national standards.

Sugaw Creek--A Potential Asset?

SUGAW CREEK presents both a problem and an opportunity for the city Council.

The problem is to get rid of the odors that plague a large section of the city in periods of dry weather, when the creek is sluggish and doesn't carry off swiftly the industrial wastes and other impurities now being dumped in it.

The opportunity is to restrict the flow to a more narrow, and better defined channel, followed by the development of the territory along the creek's banks in the interest of the public.

At Wednesday's Council session, Herbert Baxter proposed that the channeling of the creek be undertaken at once, and suggested sheer concrete walls topped by safety fences.

While the suggestion has a great deal of merit—and it ought to be kept in mind by the Planning Board—we have the idea that Mr. Baxter, in his enthusiasm for getting something started on Sugaw Creek, may have switched the

horse and the cart.

The elimination of industrial wastes from the creek by absorbing them in the city sewage system should come first. And that should be possible when work at the sewage disposal plant is completed some eight months hence. Once it is established that the odors are no longer objectionable, the opportunity to make something useful out of the creek will present itself.

There are several possibilities. One of them is to construct a boulevard paralleling the creek, with cross streets going over or under. Another is to make a strip of land, a strip of land on both sides, landscaped and planted with shrubs and trees.

A project for the future? Perhaps so, since there are many other emergency needs and too little money to meet them. But the idea should not be permitted to die. And knowing Mr. Baxter, we suspect he'll keep it alive and kicking.

Drew Pearson's NSC Emphasizes Indochina's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON

THE current educational campaign to prepare the American people for possible war in Indochina was preceded by the NSC's study of the situation in that country. It was conducted by Undersecretary of Defense Roger Kyes and Undersecretary of State Wendell Smith, and was charged with ascertaining whether the Truman policy regarding Indochina was correct.

It had been the definite policy of the State and Defense Departments under Truman that Indochina was vital to the anti-Communist defense of Asia. However, the Burma and Thailand governments have been telling Washington that they can hold out against the Red Chinese even if Indochina falls, rather belatedly—because this problem has been all too apparent for months—the National Security Council ordered a special study.

The conclusion was exactly the same as that found under Truman: "That a non-Communist Indochina was essential to the free world."

If it became Communist, the NSC study concluded, Russia would be able to wield two of the greatest resources of Asia: 1. The manpower of China, and 2. The steel materials of Southeast Asia. The chief remaining Communist goal would be the industrial power of Japan. And the NSC study concluded that with Indochina gone, all the surrounding countries, plus eventually Japan and the Philippines, would fall later.

To intervene actively in Indochina with the definite risk of war involves delicate, embarrassing political problems. Hence the Eisenhower educational campaign, plus the hesitation. Here are the problems he faces:

1. War in Indochina would show the fallacy of push-button warfare and Mr. Truman's "strategic hamlets" and get bogged down in local wars again.
2. All the budget cuts saved at the expense of the Army, Navy and Air Force would go to Indochina.
3. The Republicans used Korea as one of the most effective campaign issues during the 1952 elections; the Democrats could do likewise regarding Indochina.

Talks With Australia

Nevertheless, here are the moves now under consideration regarding the blood-soaked jungles regarded so essential to a free Asia:

Australian Interest—Talks have been proceeding with Australia and New Zealand to arouse their interest in Indochina. The two countries have agreed these two British dominions would be in greater danger than any other part of the "free world" if the Communists succeed in having sent outdated military equipment, and current talks have evoked not one word of protest from the Australians.

More Air Support—The NSC study proposes sending two or more airborne armies which could stand off the French coast and bound the Communists. This may be done. It involves the risk of course, that Chinese troops will be

dumped into the fighting. So far there are plenty of Chinese-Russian munitions but apparently no troops.

U. S. Troops—The sending of four U. S. divisions has been under discussion. They would replace French metropolitan troops, thus relieving the political furor in Paris when it's demanded that French troops come home. French North African troops would remain. The political repercussions of such a move on the American public are not related, but may be unavoidable.

United Nations—Herb Hoover has taken the stand that Indochina was a domestic problem, not one for U. N. action. Russia was absent when Korea came up, and has regretted it ever since. The Kremlin will not make the mistake of that country goes, and these are the chief problems being discussed backstage today regarding the most difficult problem the Eisenhower administration faces.

Parnell Thomas Campaigns—To go in northern New Jersey, an ex-congressman to make an ex-congressman is staging a vociferous campaign to go back to Washington. He is Parnell Thomas, Republican, who pleaded guilty to taking kickback funds and served a stretch in the federal penitentiary—though soft-hearted Harry Truman later pardoned him and even forgave his \$10,000 fine.

Thomas now claims he was railroaded by those in Washington who did not like the way he fought Communists. Widnall is demanding "rehabilitation and woman" in his district sent him back to Washington so that he can get back at the people who sent him to jail.

While the ex-congressman is raising a lot of fuss, his opponent, Congressman William Widnall, is conducting a quiet, hard-working campaign, saving little, but meeting a lot of people. Widnall is the Republican incumbent, Parnell Thomas' seat after Parnell went to jail.

Thomas now accuses Widnall of being a do-nothing congressman. One thing Widnall doesn't do is take the taxpayers' money. Other than that, he has been working hard in Washington and has a good record. He returns to his district on weekends to conduct his campaign against Thomas.

So far political soundings in northern New Jersey indicate that Widnall will be easily re-elected. The chief thing he is worried about, however, is that non-New Jerseyites will criticize Thomas. Widnall is hoping to make a martyr of Thomas. New Jerseyites may rally to his support. Widnall, incidentally, is simply ignoring the man who is making so many blistering charges.

There is no appreciable increase in lateral destruction, because additional power is dissipated in the relatively non-resistant upper atmosphere. Thus even if the forthcoming test in the Pacific does develop several times the 40-megaton power anticipated, the actual difference in destructiveness will only be a couple of miles or so.

But this is by no means the only limitation. As more power is built into a hydrogen bomb, it becomes more bulky, and thus more difficult (and finally impossible) to deliver by air. This fact introduces a complicated power-deliverability equation involving the size of the bomb and the radius of destruction will be from 8 to 14 miles (depending on the point of explosion. This is quite enough, after all, to tear the heart out of a great city.

It is to quote President Eisenhower) when it exploded with 14-megaton force. The third hydrogen bomb was supposed to develop a power of about 3 megatons, and most surprising of all, instead it developed close to 17.

The forthcoming big bang, if it is permitted to go through on schedule, could quite conceivably foil the scientists' hopes of developing several times the expected power. But does this mean that the hydrogen tests are "getting out of hand?"

LOTS OF TALK

Such statements have been widely repeated in the last few weeks. If they are, the resigned despair is the only sensible attitude; it is obviously simple folly to talk about civil defense, civil defense, or any other kind of defense, if a mere handful of bombs can destroy the whole continental land mass. But such statements are not true at all.

To be sure, it is theoretically possible to build into a "thermonuclear device" any amount of power, a million megatons or more. But for practical reasons, the million-megaton bomb will almost certainly never be built. The matter is not one of power, but of the number of the weapons. It is not how much power a bomb theoretically develops. What matters is how much of the target it actually destroys, and whether it can be delivered on the target. A phenomenon known as the "limit of blow-out" curtails the lateral destruction of the hydrogen bomb; after about 50 mega-

Statement Of Conviction

(Note: The following statement, signed by 116 students at the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Va., with supporting signatures by faculty members and neighboring clergy, was recently delivered by resident Eisenhower at the White House, Eds., The News.)

WE, as Christian citizens and future ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church, believing that God made man to be free, are concerned by current evidences of deterioration and decay of public morale and personal liberty.

The most recent indication of this is the clash between a subcommittee of the legislature and the executive branch of the government. We believe this incident points up a growing spirit of fear and distrust among citizens of the United States. This spirit would substitute conformity under pressure for liberty and law.

We believe that men were not made to live alone, but in communities based on trust and respect. Individual liberty and healthy community life stand or fall together.

We believe that our elected government should protect the people from totalitarian threat both alien and domestic. We loathe Communism which at home and abroad is an evil creed hostile to our Christian faith and to our Christian confidence in the principles of democracy.

We believe that Communists hold principles hostile to freedom. We believe it unmistakably true that Communists act on principles that are also hostile to freedom. We believe he has tended to weaken the liberties of the government as well as members of the teaching profession and other individuals and groups.

We believe that many citizens in and out of the government have become afraid to stand up for free speech and personal liberty. We believe the present for passive response to this threat on the part of the American people and their elected representatives is evidence of the degradation in our common life. We believe that the widespread fear of Communism in America today is of decisive advantage to the Communist power.

We say these things humbly, for we are not ourselves members of our country's troubles. We urge each other and our fellow citizens to stand up for the right to freedom and the common good.

We believe that those members of the teaching profession who have been elected to government who are now speaking out of conscience in opposition to Sen. McCarthy deserve our highest praise and encouragement.