

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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OUR NEW BLIGHTED AREAS

D. BETHLEH reports on "primitive" sanitation conditions in four areas of the city should jar the conscience of the whole community.

The best solution would be to get city water and city sewage facilities into those areas. City Manager Tatrov had arranged for an early estimate of the cost, and will place the matter before the City Council.

The long-range solution is to consolidate the City and County Health Departments so that such blighted areas will be detected at once and viewed in their proper relationship to all the County's population, both rural and urban.

THE REPORT covered sections of Hoskins, a neighborhood off Statesville Ave., Furr Town, and Orieltown. Here are the main findings:

1. Sanitation in some of the areas is so primitive that all residents who can be induced to take them are being given typhoid and paratyphoid vaccinations.
2. Wells are contaminated by open privies, yet some well-owners are selling water to other persons.
3. On five streets off Statesville Ave., an open stream is the main water supply. Its banks are dotted with privies. "This is a Negro shanty town in the making," wrote the report for Charles W. Palmer's Alley, which is improving.
4. Numerous diarrheas and intestinal disorders are reported by the residents. One three-month-old child from Furr Town has been hospitalized for diarrhea six times in six months at a total cost of \$348.80. A seven-month-old child has been hospitalized seven times at a cost of \$474.85.

THREE CONDITIONS are not new. Furr Town and Orieltown have been in the news for a long time. What is new is that these areas are now in the City limits, and hence a responsibility of the City Government.

When the city limits were extended at the beginning of this year, they were only

MORE HOME RULE NEEDED

ONLY TWO STATES in the Union have more new laws than their books this year than North Carolina. The California Legislature enacted 2225 new laws and Florida enacted 1,515. North Carolina was third with 1,327 new laws.

But the Tar Heel Assembly took first position in one category: it passed 74 bills out of the bills passed, the highest percentage in the nation.

Our leadership in this field is not a distinction. It does not mean that the N. C. General Assembly works harder, or maintains more harmony, than the legislatures of the other states. It simply means that we still have no home rule in North Carolina, that the legislative agenda is cluttered up with a host of purely local bills which are either passed or rejected without consideration or recommendation of the legislators who introduced them.

A special Commission on Public-Local and Private Legislation, presented its report to Governor Kerr Sec. 1 in February of this year, said "In no other state is the problem of public-local and private leg-

FROST

DURING the afternoon the wind had blown from the north, the barometer high. It was late November, a biting crisp evening. The wind was still and night fell, but the electric lights and the thermometer outside the window sat on 30.

In the cold calmness of the night, then, a transformation began. Slowly, as it were, by a stiller engraver, delicate signs, swirling and twisting in icy perfection began to form on windows. Silver forests of ferny patterns and fragile, brittle collections of crystals grew from the night outer-curtain of the glass.

Across the fields the damp mists of yellow-brown autumn grass caught the moisture of the night and glistened as dappled as turns to brilliant crystals.

ST. PETE SHOTS SANTA

SANTA CLAUS, it appears, doesn't pack his prizes with salt at the polls. At least, not in St. Petersburg, Fla.

The voters of that seaport metropolis in a referendum on a low-rent home project for which Uncle Sam was ready to ante up \$6 million. The vote of the St. Petersburgers was 5,970 against the plan and 3,000 for it. Only 15 of the city's 63,000 eligibles bothered to go to the polls.

But here was a "handout" which a majority of those entering a referendum rejected. There was a lot of "free" money that the voters didn't want.

Both of St. Pete's newspapers advocated the project. The news media interests were solidly against it. A survey in 1944 had found 1,000 "unintentional" housing units in the city, and the Federal Government

23 pit privies within the city. Some of these have been eliminated since then. Today there are approximately 1,500 privies inside the city limits! Practically all were inherited from the County.

Furthermore, there are over 1,200 septic tanks within the city limits today, most of them also legacies from the County area taken in last January.

In the absence of city water and sewage, of course, some other means have to be used. It is not the County Government's fault that these fringe areas did not have city water and sewage, but it was certainly the responsibility of the County Health Department to see that the substitute facilities conformed to State and local requirements.

The City has had its blighted areas. But it has come to grips with them far more realistically and more courageously than the County has done in the past, or is doing in the present.

HERE, it seems to us, is an irrefutable argument for consolidated City-County Health Department. At present, sanitary conditions in fringe areas around Charlotte and in the other population centers of the county, are viewed by the County Health Department as the public problem, and treated accordingly. Standards which fit rural areas are often used.

But disease recognizes no boundaries. Epidemics don't stop at the city limits. Had the County Health Department its jurisdiction extended to the fringe areas, it would have applied much more stringent requirements to these fringe areas, and prevented the growth of danger spots immediately adjacent to Charlotte.

A consolidated health department would view the problem as a whole. There would be no peculiar needs of the fringe population areas as the City Health Department is, it would have applied much more stringent requirements to these fringe areas, and prevented the growth of danger spots immediately adjacent to Charlotte.

The Commission recommended changes in the State Constitution to define very clearly the respective authority of local governments and the Legislature, and to prevent each from invading the field of the other. The report, however, went into the files, and nothing was done about it.

If Governor Scott wishes to render a real service to the people of North Carolina, rural and urban, he will shut off the report and give it top priority in his message to the 1951 General Assembly.

Moisture hidden in deep, invisible crevices in boulders became frost and continued the unending, inevitable task of disintegration of the rock.

And as sunrise the whole world shimmered, damp and silver, merciful and brilliant before the blinded eyes; glacial and most beautiful before melting death.

The first hard frost had been born, had lived a few crystal hours and had died.

Most of the defendants are in court because they do not receive needed love and affection at home.

Most of them are from underprivileged families. Almost without exception, the youngsters have received no Christian education.



The Gentler Touch

BY RALPH GIBSON
Charlotte News Staff Writer
(First of a series of three articles)

THE City and County Governments are each paying \$60,000 a year to support a court that specializes in not sending people to jail.

Justly operated, the Domestic Relations & Juvenile Court here is a judicial and social experiment that is repaying the taxpayers in rehabilitated youth and mended marriages.

The courtroom is off limits to the press and the names of the defendants are seldom published. Juveniles are protected from publicity by law, adult cases are usually settled in the judicial chambers or by the court's conciliator.

The conciliator, a sympathetic former solicitor or prosecutor, holds an office created by special act of the 1949 Legislature. He is the only one in the state and his friendly-sounding title was coined to fit in with the atmosphere the court strives to create.

Strong arm methods are out both in the juvenile and domestic divisions. Youngsters are not declared "guilty" nor guilty of any crime. Operating on the "no conviction" "no detention" juvenile delinquency cases never see the courtroom because their hearings are held in the informal chambers of the judge's chambers.

The grown-ups can usually stop short of facing their differences after thinking things over. They may see the light after a conference with the conciliator or after the assistance of the judge and one or two of the staff "social investigators" assigned to the court.

JUDGE WILLARD I. GATLING is lenient wherever possible, but he knows how to be hard—though in a way that is trying to guide them.

In his early forenoon, Gatling has behind him an outstanding record as a criminal lawyer and chief investigator of Superior Court clerks or other court officials who may or may not want the job. Asheville, Durham, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem, however, have separate judges, and the other counties go along with no judge at all or a full-time man.

AFTER a year on the bench, Judge Gatling has reached several general conclusions about the juveniles who come into his court. Operating on the premise "There is no such thing as a bad boy," made famous by the late Father Flanagan of Boys Town, some of them are:

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Merry-Go-Round U.S. Loses To Fascism At Front Door

Drew Pearson's Washington

RECENT revolution and rioting in Latin America has bogged down so far that the United States is now in a real, namely that while we are fighting Communism in Europe, we are losing out to Fascism at our own front door.

Parana, which surrounds the most important waterway in history has been taking place. Approximately 1,500 people have been killed, and a Fascist party, deliberately led by a priest, Franco, has been instituted in such a manner that it was impossible to hold two-way elections.

Embarrassing Joseph And Stewart Also New Taxes?

WASHINGTON
The present status of tax policy is so uncertain that the Truman Administration's increasing tendency to lack the courage of its convictions is being exposed. The President himself told his press conference that he would ask Congress for additional tax cuts. He said that the President's decision on this important aspect of the 1950 program yet to be made before leaving for the West, he asked both the Treasury and the Council of Economic Advisors to prepare memoranda on tax policy, for his use while on holiday.

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Meanwhile, however, it is already pretty apparent that the President will have to reverse his advisers, if he keeps to his present promise to demand a heavy tax increase. It is very rare indeed for Secretary of the Treasury to have a member of the economic advisory council who is not a member of the cabinet.

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Henry C. McFadyen Roads To Knowledge

ALBEMARLE
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Quote, Unquote

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