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Charlotte, North Carolina, Monday, December 28, 1953

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Percentage Method Gets Board Approval  
Minimum Based On Residence Worth.

By ANN SAWYER  
Charlotte News Staff Writer  
The County Commissioners approved today a new system of personal property taxation.  
Meeting at the Courthouse, the board voted to adopt a method calling for a minimum personal property listing of 10 per cent of the listing value of the house and lot in which a taxpayer resides.  
The commissioners voted to approve a recommendation from Rufus A. Grier, County tax supervisor.  
In a letter to each of the commissioners, Mr. Grier asked them to "approve a minimum listing of 10 per cent of the value of the house and lot in which a taxpayer resides to cover all household and kitchen furniture and miscellaneous personal belongings except motor vehicles, poll tax and dog tax."  
Commissioner Sam McNeill, a long-time advocate of a more equitable method of assessing personal property, moved that the tax supervisor's recommendation be approved by the receiving committee.  
Chairman Sid Y. McLean and Commissioner John P. White.  
Commissioner Craig Lansing was absent from today's session and Commissioner Ernest K. Brown said he could not go along with the proposal.

EDITOR'S NOTE—William L. Ryan, AP foreign news analyst, is back from a three-month trip to the Soviet Union. He speaks Russian and has traveled alone through eight of the republics that make up the U.S.S.R. This is the first in a series of unceasing articles in which Ryan describes and analyzes post-Stalin Russia as he saw it.

Middle Class Is Threat To Regime

By WILLIAM L. RYAN  
AP Foreign Analyst  
The post-Stalin era has brought the Soviet Communist party face to face with a bloodless revolution it would like to ignore.  
News signs in Moscow and other Soviet capitals are more than mere advertisements. They are portents of the future.  
"Invest your personal belongings."  
"Save your money in a savings bank."  
It traveled more than 6,000 miles inside the Soviet Union and saw a large slice of the vast, powerful, puzzling country, a shuffling and sloppily giant among nations which realizes its own strength and is frightened at its own weakness.  
There is evidence of something which may prove one of the most significant developments since the Bolshevik revolution, and also one of the brightest hopes for a lasting world peace.  
It is this: The Soviet Union seems to be undergoing a middle-class revolution, no less revolutionary because it is non-violent and gradual.  
In spite of Communist doctrine—in fact, in spite of itself—the U.S.S.R. is building a powerful life for foreign affairs, and the ownership. Some day it may engulf and overwhelm the Communist party.  
I did not find revolutionary restlessness, but I did find evidence of annoyance and irritation with the bureaucracy. There was bound-

REPORTER IN RUSSIA



William L. Ryan, Associated Press foreign news analyst, stands in front of St. Basil's in Moscow during his three-month trip to the Soviet Union. Formerly a cathedral of the Russian Orthodox Church, St. Basil's now is a museum. (AP Wirephoto).

Manager Assaulted By Escaping Robber

By DONALD MACDONALD  
Charlotte News Staff Writer  
A neatly dressed white man in his early 30's pulled a pistol on the manager of a midtown store shortly after noon today and escaped from the store with what police reported as "approximately \$2,200 in cash."  
The armed holdup took place at Bennington's Haberdashery, 326 N. Tryon St., while W. C. Bennington was in the store alone.  
Mr. Bennington said the gunman kicked him in the stomach and ran from the store, heading south along Tryon St. Police were alerted at 12:22 p.m., and an all-alarm was sounded.  
Officers said the gunman escaped on foot and ran into heavy crowds of shoppers, many attending after Christmas shopping sales.  
Detective E. T. Haney, who was called to the haberdashery with patrolmen R. M. Thompson and R. B. Phillips, gave the following description of the gunman:  
White, male, medium build, brown hair, in his early 30's, wearing a tan hat and trousers and a tan overcoat.  
Detective Haney said the man came into the store at a time when no customers were inside. One of the store's salesmen had just left to make a trip to the post office.  
Tried On Jacket  
Mr. Haney quoted Mr. Bennington as saying that the man asked to try on a yellow plaid jacket, then gave the store manager a \$100 bill.  
While Mr. Bennington was making change, Detective Haney said, the unidentified man pulled out a pistol and ordered Mr. Bennington to hand over all his money.  
The detective said Mr. Bennington had approximately \$2,200 in a money bag and \$200 from the cash register preparatory to taking it to a bank to be deposited.  
This is the money which was handed over to the gunman, who kicked Mr. Bennington in the stomach and ran.  
A Negro woman was in the back of the store at the time of the holdup but Detective Haney said she was using a vacuum cleaner at the time and could not hear Mr. Bennington's cries of pain.  
The holdup was the third to occur here within as many weeks. One week before Christmas a young man, still at large, held up four persons at Personal Finance Corp., 120 E. 4th St., taking nearly \$400.  
A Negro woman was also robbed at a grocery store on Graham St., but the thief escaped with a bag of groceries.

POW Problem Turned Back To Reds, Allies

PANMUNJON (AP)—A three-members majority of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission today turned back to the U. N. and Communist commands the question of what to do with more than 22,000 war prisoners who have refused to go home.  
An Indian communist spokesman said that if the two commands reach no agreement by Jan. 31 "we do not appear to have any legal right to hold them (the prisoners)."  
The majority report was signed by the Indian chairman and by Czechoslovakia and Poland.  
Switzerland and Sweden filed a protest saying it was "improper" to refer the prisoner problem back to the two commands. The Swiss and Swedes said they could see no reason for a formal report at this time. They demanded the 44-page majority document which also charged the South Korean interference in anti-Communist compounds and criticized the U. N. Command.  
Official sources there was little prospect that the majority report would lead to settlement of the bitter prisoner dispute.  
The Allies hold the that armistice provisions specifically that unrepatriated prisoners be freed as civilians 90 days after the close of the war. The Reds also insist that the prisoners remain in custody pending action by the peace conference, and said signs they will agree to the offer and, been pressing for the meeting.  
The State Department indicated this is the U. S. attitude, even though it implied the Russians might be maneuvering to lessen the chances of France joining the European Defense Community (EDC).  
The British Foreign Office spokesman expressed confidence the three Western powers, which had proposed Jan. 4 for a meeting in Berlin, would accept the Russian counter suggestion that it be held Jan. 25 or later.  
Both sides then continued toward the European destination. But the Bluejacket went only about 15 miles before huge waves made it pull up to ride out the stormy seas and severe stormy." The ship also was believed to be headed for Europe.  
A message from the Bluejacket quoted the Oklahoma's skipper, Robert Kutschbach, as saying the vessel broke in two about midnight. Efforts to find the ship later were unsuccessful. Kutschbach messaged the ship's general freight agents, Furness-Witby & Co., of New York, that it had probably sunk. However, a Coast Guard spokesman said the search would continue today.  
Kutschbach gave the position of the Oklahoma when she split open.

Allies Weighing Reply To Soviet

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States, Britain and France are considering their reply to a Soviet proposal for postponement of a Big Four foreign ministers' conference, amid signs they will agree to the offer and, been pressing for the meeting.  
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Ships Rescue 43 Persons From Icy Seas

NEW YORK (AP)—Rescue Vessels plucked the last of 43 persons from open lifeboats on 17, wind-lashed North Atlantic seas yesterday, hours after the survivors' freighter had split in two.  
The dramatic rescue operations hampered by a heavy sea, were completed by the U. S. Military Sea Transport ship Bluejacket and the Finnish freighter Orion.  
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Fire Levels Block In Massachusetts

HOLYOKE, Mass. (AP)—A preliminary fire levels block many homes and stores here today because it was brought under control.  
The structure all were accounted for. There were no deaths.  
Several children were thrown from windows when a second fire broke out in a nearby building. More than a score persons were carried down ladders. Thirty persons were hospitalized and 100 were suffering from various degrees of smoke inhalation.

Comic Dictionary

MAKEUP  
What a girl finds easier to do with her face than with her mind.

Homecoming Units May Reshuffle Men

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Wreck Kills Four



All four occupants of this demolished school bus (background) were killed Saturday night also miles east of Oklahoma City when a Continental Trailways bus plowed into its side at a highway interchange. (AP Wirephoto)

Toll Passes Estimate Made Before Holiday

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
The nation counted a toll of 111 Christmas holiday weekend.  
The final tabulation today listed 210 traffic fatalities, 31 who died in fires and 111 victims of all other types of fatal accidents.  
Lives lost on the streets and highways exceeded a pre-holiday estimate by the National Safety Council. The Council had calculated that 210 fatalities would occur during the 75-hour period between 6 a.m. Thursday and midnight Sunday.  
This year's traffic toll fell short of the 1950 record of 545 for a three-day Christmas period. The greatest Christmas traffic death toll ever recorded was 526 during 1951's four-day holiday. Nevertheless, it meant one death every nine minutes during the holiday this year.  
The rate of deaths in traffic during the Christmas weekend was more than 50 per cent greater than the average daily toll of 102 for the first 11 months of the year.  
A non-holiday survey of weekend accident deaths earlier this month showed 316 traffic deaths reported in 78 hours. This check, covering the period from 6 p. m. Dec. 3 to midnight Dec. 6, resulted in an overall accident toll of 422—including 43 fire deaths and 99 from miscellaneous causes.  
No attempt was made to count the number of non-fatal injuries or even of traffic crashes, believed to number several thousand.

Survivors From Stricken Freighter

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OUR WEATHER

Rain today and tonight. A little warmer tonight, turning somewhat cooler Tuesday and Tuesday night.  
Low temperature expected tonight, 43 degrees.  
High temperature yesterday, 56 degrees.  
Low temperature expected today, 43 degrees.  
High temperature expected today, 56 degrees.  
Sunrise, 7:21 a.m.; sunset, 5:19 p.m.  
More Weather Data on Page 4-A

SHIP WHICH SAVED 36 FROM STORMY ATLANTIC

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foundland. Both crews were saved by the Finnish freighter Orion. Seven others are now en route to Europe. (AP Wirephoto).

EVENING PRAYER

O Heavenly Father, give us this day our daily bread. Teach us to remember that it is not by bread alone that man may live, but grant that we may feed on Him who is the true Bread, increasing in us to make an everlasting difference, however it might be spent.  
Speaking at a conference on manpower at the 1953 meeting of the Assn. for the Advancement of Science, Hersey said "Inaccurate ideas" many young men have about military service are "discouraging these young men into indifference and indecision, frittering them into ill-considered or hasty decisions about college, the choice of a profession or anything else in their future."