THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Charlotte's Providence Road Puzzle Should Be Settled By Compromise

THE atom, when split, sends out a lot of highly charged particles. So does Charlotte's Providence Road issue.

There is, first of all, the State Highway Commission. It wanted to widen the thoroughfare to 78 feet, later proposed 60 feet, finally junked the whole plan in disgust when waves of protests rolled in.

There are the residents of the area who insist that the road be widened no more than 45 or 50 feet.

Finally, there are those who cannot bear to see a stalemate result, who seek some sort of compromise.

The time has come to put away fierce language and temper tantrums and get down to the business of settling the matter sensibly.

The thoroughfare, as it now stands, is shockingly inadequate. It is an 18-foot blacktop road in poor condition. It cannot safely handle the 6,000 to 7,000 vehicles that use it daily. By delaying improvements indefinitely, the state will be inviting tragedy.

Obviously, Providence Road must be widened without delay.

* * *

WE ARE NOT engineers but we do believe that a compromise can be worked out—a plan satisfactory to all parties.

First of all, it must be stated that the 78-foot width first proposed is impractical and unnecessary at this time.

The remaining choices then would seem to be:

1—The state's 60-foot width (two 22-foot paved lanes and a 16-foot parkway which can be trimmed to eight feet to provide turn-out space). This, of course, would take up the full 60-foot right of way.

2—The 50-foot maximum desired by the citizens group—people who point out that over 200 trees are just beyond the right of way limits, trees that should be given some leeway for good health and future growth.

Stern objections have been raised to each of these schemes. But why couldn't a third plan be devised, a plan fashioned to satisfy state requirements and the desires of property owners?

The rough details:

Two 25-foot paved lanes, a parkway of only four or five feet in the center, a two- or three-foot leeway on each side to protect the trees.

This would probably answer the state's turn-out argument for three cars can pass on a roadway 24 feet wide. A left-turning car could hug the inside, leaving space for two cars to pass on the right. If necessary, a painted lane with left hand arrows could be placed eight feet from the inside curb 100 feet from each intersection.

Property owners, meanwhile, would face the future responsibility of providing the frontage necessary for walkways, thus completing the improvement.

* * *

THIS sort of a widening project probably would not decrease property values. On the contrary, property values would be more likely to rise.

In addition, a fine, wide highway would be provided with a center parkway and ample space for trees and walkways.

Admittedly, the plan would have at least one flaw. The center parkway would be fairly narrow (four or five feet). If a car—in crossing Providence Road or making a U-turn—paused crosswise at the center parkway, it would probably stick out fore and aft.

Compromises, however, are seldom fool proof.

We do believe that the advantages of this alternate plan far outweigh the disadvantages.

We further believe that any improvements to Providence Road should be accompanied by improvements to other thoroughfares in the area—straightening and widening. Providence should not be required to bear the full load of traffic to and from this fast-growing section. Rather than piecemeal solutions, modern traffic problems require broad applications of long range planning.

Meanwhile, arguments over widths should be prolonged no longer. The compromise we have discussed or some other compromise should be adopted.

An Airport Authority? No Thanks

IN THEIR ZEAL to dredge up support for long range airport planning, some Charlotteans would go too far.

A proposal to establish an autonomous airport authority is being seriously discussed. It would sever this vital transportation facility from direct City Council control.

The responsibility is now right where it belongs—in the hands of the council. This municipal governing body is advised by a special committee of interested citizens headed by Jack Erwin. The advisory committee recommends, the council acts.

The present arrangement has been most satisfactory. Mr. Erwin's advisory committee has done a highly creditable job of diagnosing airport needs and suggesting remedies. One of its shining accomplishments is construction of the new terminal—one of America's finest airport buildings.

A long range master plan for airport development would not require a separate authority. Past and present councils have demonstrated air-minded attitudes. There is every reason to believe that future councils—with the guidance of a conscientious advisory committee—will be just as interested in the Queen City's role in America's air age.

The problems of the airport cannot and should not be considered separately from the general problems of Charlotte. An authority might simply become a special pleader for a special activity, might lose sight of other essential related activities of the company.

Efficiency in municipal government and community development does not come through the division of municipal functions. It comes through strong, *coordinated* efforts.

From The Greensboro Daily News

'FOR I'M A TAR HEEL BORN . . .'

BILL SHARPE got himself up an argument the other day in STATE MAGAZINE about why Tar Heels leave home.

Fred Springer-Miller, who married a Greensboro girl (Glenn Harden), wrote Bill last month from Norwich, Vermont, singing the blues:

> As a Yankee carpetbagger, I did right well for myself in North Carolina. . . I spent two years in Tarheelia, mostly as a graduate student and part-time instructor at Chapel Hill. During that time I accumulated several thousand dollars worth of education, plus instructor's pay (which amounts to scholarship money). The only tax I paid was on my automobile. . .
>
> To top things off, I married and abducted from the state of North Carolina a beauty who herself received many thousands dollars worth of state-subsidized education. And what has the state of North Carolina received in return for all these benefits? Nothing. . .

Fred goes on to explain that unlike the traditional carpetbagger, he feels "embarrassed about this shameless pillage of Old North Carolina." Like many of the 22 per cent of native students educated at Chapel Hill who annually leave the state, he wants to come back. He wonders: Why do these students leave in the first place?

Is it that North Carolina cannot provide opportunity for wealth and fame, or at least the security and good living that these young people aspire to? Is North Carolina's industry not diversified enough to attract those with specialized training? Does North Carolina business make no effort to recruit its potentially most valuable personnel?

Fred doesn't know.

But S. E. Johnston of Charlotte, writing in rebuttal, makes this interesting point:

> Recently the state hired some New Yorkers to do a survey on our marine resources. This cost something like $50,000, and the result was so inadequate that even the Board of Conservation and Development, which hired the researchers, refused to endorse it. In my opinion, that survey not only is worthless, but all the information in it could have been gathered as well—and correlated better—by North Carolina-trained people. The same company did the discarded highway survey, incidentally.
>
> One explanation for the drifting away of educated young people might be in the large percentage of out-of-staters on the faculties of our state colleges. . .
>
> In many cases poor salaries cannot be the reason North Carolinians are not filling these and similar jobs. Foundations (and subsidies from other sources) have supplemented salaries so that North Carolina was able to outbid others in filling key jobs.
>
> We ought to decide whether our jobs are too big for our own folks, or whether our folks are too big for our jobs.

Johnston's letter borders at times on provincialism, but he has a point. Fred Springer-Miller was a Yankee who came, was educated, charmed and wanted to stay—but couldn't find the right opening. Dozens of native born Tar Heels drift out of the state for the same reasons.

People do not love North Carolina (as Gilbert Chesterton said of Rome) because she is great. She is great because people love her. And that includes Yankees from Vermont, mid-westerners from Chicago, thousands of migrant Tar Heels in New York and all the guidance of adopted citizens who are no less native to the climate because they were not born here.

Somehow those who love the land must combine their talents to assure North Carolina continuing greatness.

A politician willing to try to form a cabinet and govern France these days is either a born optimist or an utter fool.—GREENVILLE (S. C.) PIEDMONT.

A man is like a tack—he can go only as far as his head will let him.—CHATTANOOGA NEWS-FREE PRESS.

People's Platform

'When You Read This He May Be Dead . . . .'

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

I HAVE just come from a visit to a dying man. The stench of death is there with him in the room. He is slowly dying a horrible death from cancer. The only thing that can be done for him is to make him as comfortable as possible and to take care of his few financial needs. But how is this to be accomplished? Not one charitable organization in Charlotte will help. It seems he just isn't eligible. But when it comes time for the giving campaign, everybody is eligible. How come? The people support them, why can't it come back to those who need it?

ONE OF MANY

This man (one among many, I know) was a hard-working man when he was well. Never asking anyone for anything. Always ready to lend a helping hand to anyone in time of trouble. He worked for himself, and managed to acquire two houses. The houses aren't much as houses go. They were built of scrap lumber by the man himself — sort of a hodgepodge but livable. One a four-room house and the other a very small three-room shotgun house.

But considering that man can't even read or write, it's a tribute to him that he was able to acquire the two houses by being thrifty enough to do so. But that seems to be why he isn't eligible for the help he so desperately needs. He doesn't own the houses now. But he lost them through no fault of his own. A former wife, who deserted him some time ago for another man, had the houses in her name—also the small bank account (she drew all the money out when she left him).

I suppose the reason the houses were in her name is that she probably could read enough to sign her own name. And he couldn't. So she usually took care of that kind of business for him. When he and his former wife got together for a final disposition of the houses, they couldn't reach an amicable agreement as to who would get what. Maybe it was in part due to the fact he had married again. The only agreement the former wife would agree to was to sign over the property to their grandchild.

Now all this took place before the man had any idea he had cancer or had even been sick. The last part of last summer he was taken ill, and had to go to the hospital for an operation. He came home, went back to work for several months. But his incision refused to heal. And the latter part of November he again entered the hospital. It was at this time they learned he had cancer. He was sent home just before Christmas and the doctor said he only had about three weeks to live. But he is still living, with no income. And there is no likelihood of one.

He and his wife were forced to move in next door with his son's wife and child. The son is now in the Army, and the daughter-in-law's total income is an Army allotment for herself and five-year-old son—something a little over a hundred dollars a month. The total income of the man and his wife is the rent from the small house of $20 a month, which the daughter-in-law gives them. Up until about three weeks ago the rent money didn't much more than cover the cost of bandages, adhesive, disinfectant, etc. that they had to have for him. But now the City Health Dept. furnishes these. The man never even asked for this. A neighbor, seeing how desperate things were, called the Health Dept.

NOT ELIGIBLE

The neighbor also notified the Welfare Department. A case worker called. But after talking to them said he wasn't eligible for help. The reason being that he had owned two houses and had given them away. But what that has to do with it I can't see. As all that happened before the man got sick. He didn't know he was going to be ill, or that he wouldn't be in a position to take care of himself and his wife as he always had. It doesn't seem fair — if you have worked hard all your life and saved to provide for yourself by at least having a home of your own, and through sickness, domestic trouble you lose it, or through no fault of your own for a number of reasons you lose it, when you have no other way to turn, and desperately need help to survive for just a short while.

Should it be held against you? Shouldn't it prove that you're the kind of person who only accepts help when there's no other place to turn? Because it seems that the sort of people who do get help are the ones who never had anything, don't want anything, and figure that the world owes them a living and intend to collect it. With the hide of an elephant they don't take no for an answer. And they're the type that get help from the charitable organizations.

TERRIBLE PAIN

This man that is ill has to pay a doctor $8 a visit. And last Sunday he was out of the drugs that he must have to kill some of the terrible pain he has to endure. His wife called the doctor so he could phone in the prescription to obtain some of the medicine, as the man was out. The doctor not only blessed her out for calling him on Sunday, but refused to call the drug store for her and hung up on her. A neighbor phoned her doctor and had him to get the prescription filled. The man's wife had to borrow the money for it from the grocery store where they trade against the next month's rent on the house. The little food and money they have are given to them by neighbors, ministers, etc. The store where they trade has given groceries several times, also paid the first month's rent on a hospital bed for this man. As he had been sitting up most of the time in a chair he has got to where he can't rest in a regular bed. Where the next month's rent is coming from for the hospital bed I don't know, unless someone comes through again for the rent.

'ANY TIME'

The wife and daughter-in-law take turns sitting up with him, as someone has to be with him all the time. The doctor says he may go any time. So if they had a job they couldn't keep it. If this man isn't needy, who is? It seems that help for the needy means giving, not receiving. This man needs help. Can a few rules in fine print outweigh the suffering of this dying man who can only be helped for a short while?

Why bother to train people in sociology, psychology and other forms of understanding humanity? Why not a machine similar to a computing machine, and let it with its mechanical brain and heart compute by mostly deductions that you're not eligible for help?

BROTHER'S KEEPER?

I know this man is one among many in this same fix. But if no charity organization is responsible for them, who is? It seems to me they were created to be their brother's keeper.

I know mine is just one voice among many who must be thinking the same thing. When you read this he may be dead and nothing here on earth will matter to him.

But if he isn't one of the needy, who is?

—MRS. WADE ALLISON

"Wattya' mean, we're not integrated with society, society isn't integrated with us. . . ."

The Negro Must Earn 'Equality'

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

COULD be the premature letter of Kelly Alexander, North Carolina Negro leader, to Gov. Hodges asking support to immediately repeal "discriminatory racial legislation" will do the NAACP efforts more harm than good.

Many people in this state were becoming reconciled to the idea of integration in schools in time. Perhaps in other places. But now that Alexander has made known the complete objective of the NAACP, I feel others, like myself, who have not been moved to action will become very defiant.

The white man has spent thousands of years carving for himself this civilized state. He has achieved a position—a state in his struggle toward the light — in what he conceives to be the Creator's objective in him. There is still a long way to go and there are those among his own people who want to tear down or dilute that which has been accomplished during years of struggle and sacrifice.

When the Negro has learned to be as fully able to take advantage of his life's opportunities as the white man has done then, indeed, he will become the equal of the white man. He has not done this yet in literature, music, social sciences, medicine nor art. Neither has he come anywhere near the white man's standards in morals, ethics or hyglenics.

To say the white man doesn't give the Negro a chance is utter stupidity. There were many who tried to keep the white man backward and enslaved. The chance is always there if you want to take it—and pay the bill! The white man will even lend a hand as, indeed, he has always done in the past.

The Negroes say they are not looking for hand-outs, sympathy or the right to mingle. Then let their leaders organize not to fight the white man for unrealistic concessions of a vague equality. Rather let them expend their energies to raise the colored people to a state of moral, ethical, hygienical and intellectual degree deserving equality — remember, out of nothing, nothing comes; the end crowns the work. Until then, there will be no trust — no equality! Color of the skin will have not much to do with it.

—J. C. TAYLOR

Democratic Outlook

The Grass Roots Look Green

By CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY

WASHINGTON

AS the two major parties scan the horizon for portents of 1956, the "grass roots" look particularly green to Democrats.

Reason is that in 1954 Democrats made important gains in contests for municipal, county and state offices. According to Stephen A. Mitchell, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, the party's 1954 victory was "like an iceberg, because we picked up so much strength at the grass roots" which did not show up in races for the U. S. Senate and House.

A committee survey of the 1954 election claims that in a number of importan. counties "the Democratic Party swept all or virtually all offices with the greatest majorities since the 1930's." In normally Republican Bucks County, Pa., Democrats made their best showing in 50 years and elected a Democratic assemblyman for the first time in 80 years.

SUBSTANTIAL GAINS

The survey also reported substantial Democratic gains in 1954 in three or more counties in each of the following states: Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, Oregon and Pennsylvania. But Democrats also suffered losses in at least three counties — Pinellas County, Fla., Gallatin County, Ill., and Salt Lake County, Utah.

STEPHEN A. MITCHELL
'Like An Iceberg'

Big Democratic gains were made in state legislatures, which involve a total of 7,531 seats. Democrats gained a total of 500 seats in 1954. 397 in lower houses, 103 in upper houses, although only about one-half of the state senate seats were at stake.

WINDFALL

Democrats picked up a total of 42 seats in Connecticut, 25 in Missouri, 24 in New Mexico, 22 in Indiana and in South Dakota, 21 in Arizona, and 20 in Michigan and in Montana. Other states in which Democrats gained 15 or more seats: Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Oregon and Wyoming.

Moreover, Democrats captured control of lower houses in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Missouri, New Mexico, Montana and Washington; of the senate in Connecticut; and of both houses in Delaware.

Republican gains in 1954 were severely limited—a total of five seats. The GOP picked up one state senate seat in Nevada, Oklahoma and Utah, and one house seat in Tennessee and Georgia.

The parties head into the 1956 campaign with control of the state legislatures almost evenly divided. Republicans control both houses in 20 states, Democrats in 19. There is divided control in seven states. Nebraska and Minnesota have non-partisan legislatures.

GOVERNORSHIPS

Most publicized of the 1954 Democratic gains were in the governorship contests. Of 34 races, Democrats won 19. They replaced Republican governors in eight states—Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York and Pennsylvania. In three other states—Nevada, Vermont and Wyoming — Democrats came close to winning.

How Many Ratholes?

The Sound And The Fury

A Letter To The Memphis Commercial Appeal

I HAVE read with interest the "Letter to the Editor" of Mr. Wolstenholm, of Hohenwald, Tenn., in your issue of Sunday, the 6th, in which he suggests that the Negro inhabitants of Memphis slums could nail up their ratholes if they were not too shiftless to do it; and that the white investigating groups would do much better to come to Lewis County, where they could find plenty of white people deserving of their offices.

Does this mean that, for every rathole Shelby County Negroes have, Lewis County white folks have two? Which can't be right, since white folks, not being Negroes, are not shiftless; and therefore, for every rathole which a Shelby or Lewis County, Tenn., or a Lafayette County, Miss., Negro has, a Shelby or Lewis County, Tenn., or Lafayette County, Miss., white man can't have any. Which won't hold water either, since, for the simple reason that there are more rats than people, there is some inevitable and inescapable point at which the white man, no matter how unshiftless, is going to have one rathole.

So, at what point on the scale of the Negro's non-ratholes does the white man gain or earn one or anyway have one rathole? Is unshiftless twice as unshiftless as shiftless, giving the white man twice as many ratholes as the Negro man, or does this get us into the old insoluble problem in amateur physics about how much is twice as cold as zero?

—WILLIAM FAULKNER

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Synthetic Rubber Sale Stirs Row

WASHINGTON

DEMOCRATS took a long step toward throwing away two of their chief campaign issues—"giveaways" and helping small business — when a top Democrat, Congressman Carl Vinson of Georgia, bucked and bristled over giving a hearing to the Small Business Committee regarding the sale of 11 government-owned synthetic rubber factories.

Vinson was all set to join with the Ikeites in handing the synthetic rubber factories over to the big tire and oil companies when his fellow Democrat, Wright Patman of Texas, blew the whistle.

Patman, as chairman of the House Small Business Committee, had prepared a resolution with his colleague, Sid Yates of Illinois, pointing to the unfairness of the synthetic rubber giveaway. But Chairman Vinson of the Armed Services Committee didn't want to listen. He even challenged Patman's veracity, which to a Texan of integrity is tantamount to high treason.

"Mr. Patman, we are delighted to have you here this morning," the Georgian gushed as the hearings opened.

"Thank you, Mr. Chairman," replied Patman, "I shall make——"

"Wait a minute," cut in Vinson. "Before you start, for the record, I want to find out—are you speaking in behalf of the Small Business Committee, and by direction of that committee, or are you speaking in your individual capacity as a member of Congress?"

"My committee has had no time to call a meeting," replied Patman. "But I was assured by a majority of members of my committee that I could speak for them. In addition, I conferred with the ranking Republican member of my committee."

Insulting A Texan

"I suggest that the names of the members who have authorized Mr. Patman to speak for them be inserted in the record," broke in Republican Congressman Bates of Massachusetts.

"Don't you think that is going very far, Mr. Chairman?" inquired Patman, angrily.

The meeting almost blew up at this point as several members, including Democrats Paul Kilday of Texas and Mel Price of Illinois, tried to be recognized by the chair.

"Are you going to require him to corroborate himself by placing in the record the names of Small Business Committee members he is speaking for?" insisted Kilday.

"No," back-tracked Vinson.

Gas Station Monopolies

Patman then explained how his resolution, prepared by the Small Business Committee, would stop the sale of the rubber factories on March 26 as now scheduled by Eisenhower. Supporting him, Congressman Yates presented a masterful report which impressed even hostile committee members.

Yates showed that under the Eisenhower rubber sale, 87 1-2 per cent of all rubber production would be in the hands of the big four tire companies, who worked together to control the sale of tires.

Shell Oil, for instance, which takes over the government rubber factory in Los Angeles, has a contract with Goodyear and Firestone to sell them rubber; then Goodyear and Firestone turn around and sell Shell tires. These tires are distributed to the public through Shell gasoline stations.

And Congressman Yates showed how any Shell dealer who tries to stock any other tire competing with Goodyear or Firestone loses his Shell franchise.

The Standard Oil companies also have a deal with U. S. Rubber to make Atlas tires, sold exclusively through Standard Oil filling stations. No other tire can be sold by Standard Oil stations except Atlas.

Thus the Eisenhower rubber sale plan, Congressman Yates said, would tighten this monopoly by putting all the government rubber factories in the hands of Shell, Goodyear, U. S. Rubber, Goodrich, Firestone, Phillips Petroleum, Texas Oil, Sears Roebuck, Anaconda Copper, Endicott Johnson, and Dunlop Tires of England.