

# A Drama Plays Out, But Its Full Meaning May Be Missed

The drama has played out at Sumner, Mississippi, and the verdict is in. Acquittal.

Two white half-brothers, accused of killing a Negro youth from Chicago, cleared by a jury of their peers.

Cleared in the full view of a watchful nation, and an apprehensive South. The nation was watching, and the South apprehensive, because there is no way to lift the case of Emmett Louis Till out of the context of the tangled and emotional race question.

Were that possible, the real tragedy could be pointed up more sharply.

For if the trial of J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant proves anything, it proves that justice is all too often thwarted in many parts of the South — by whites and blacks alike — by incredibly inadequate law enforcement at the local level.

A modern, professional criminal investigation would have closed the loopholes in the state's case.

But the sheriff — a politician, paid by fees — couldn't say for sure whether the hole in the head of the body pulled from the waters of the Tallahatchie River was made by a bullet.

Or whether the bullet penetrated the skull.

Nor was there an autopsy which would have revealed the time and cause of death, and determined any distinguishing physical marks.

Nor did the sheriff produce the flashlight and the gun Milam was said to have carried the night he and Bryant took Emmett Till from the home of an uncle.

And so the defense was able to cast doubt on the identification of the body

as that of Emmett Till. Despite aggressive prosecution and even-handed rulings from the bench, the state's case was less than air-tight.

These things will be forgotten.

What will be remembered is that Emmett Till was a Chicago Negro... that a white woman in Mississippi said a Negro tried to "date" her... that a white jury freed her husband and his half-brother who admitted taking the Chicago Negro away in the night but said they turned him loose... that the mother identified the battered body as that of her son, Emmett Till... that no one has turned up another body.

And so, the verdict of public opinion will be that Mississippi has granted license to murder, if that is necessary to keep the black man in his place.

The thoughtful Southerner — and he is more numerous and more influential than residents of the non-South realize — is bitter and ashamed that an Emmett Louis Till could be murdered in his region without the murderers being found and brought to justice.

But if he is a realist, he also knows that there may be other Tills in the South's future, and that his job is to fight with all his vigor against those who would take the law into their own hands, no matter what the provocation.

If the drama at Sumner shocks the South and the nation into a greater understanding of the complexity and explosiveness of the race question, if it prompts men of good will and patience to seize the race issue from the extremists on both sides, it will not have been without ultimate benefit.



THE OBSERVER FORUM

## When Do The Buses Run?

Is there anybody in the City of Charlotte that can tell me what schedule the buses run?

LAST THURSDAY night, I stood and waited 20 minutes for a bus at a quarter to 11, at a quarter to 12, at a quarter to 1, and at 20 minutes to ten is when I gave up.

Saturday night I again missed a bus at a quarter to 11, at a quarter to 12, I had to walk all the way home. I can't afford cars every night on the week-end. If that is the best service they can give it would seem time their charter was revoked and given to someone else.

BOTH IN THE MORNING and at night I stood on the corners waiting for buses. Cars drive by, in some cases, the drivers stare at you, but do you think they ever ask if you can give you a lift? That might come under the heading of Southern Hospitality. During my sojourn in Charlotte, I've found that to be something sadly lacking.

cent, or four-hundredths of an acre, for each acre measured.

I might say that the errors arising from area determination by this method are not to be laid to the photos—they are remarkably accurate—but to the scale used, the exact determination of the edge of the field and its proper delineation on the photo, and the mechanical and visual impossibility of tracing exactly this line with the tracing-point.

To justify expression of area in terms of one-one hundredth of an acre would require a photo made at a much larger scale, say ten rods, or 165 feet to the inch, plus very careful tracing under ideal conditions of light, by an experienced planimeter operator.

IN MY HUMBLE OPINION, if it is desired that these areas be determined within such limit of error, the use of aerial photography would be necessary. Certain methods, known to most good surveyors, would yield the desired results, and with accuracy.

RECREATION LACK Sells Town Shirts

Very few communities have sufficient facilities for entertaining our teen agers. Soon the rainy days of summer and early fall will be history. The swimming pools, recreation parks, local beaches, baseball parks, and picnic grounds will be closed.

What do we have to offer our youth in the way of recreation? If we are ill-equipped and fail to have a place where our youngsters can meet to spend their leisure time, we are selling our community short. We should exert our efforts collectively in bringing into existence a decent place where the young generation can congregate and be supervised in healthful recreation.

KARL HARTE

Acreage Measure Called Inexact

I have read your account relative to the controversy over tobacco acreage measurements, and have also heard it discussed over the radio.

R. E. WICKER

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J. L. LAWSON

Wadesboro

THEY ARE said to be poor

## Southward, An Active Reminder

In their piffling recital of local virtues and their faith in civic progress, Charlotteans play second fiddle to nobody. Once in a while, though, they peek across the pit where Atlanta holds forth in brass.

With reason, too. For the music coming out of the Georgia crossroads has a most contagious beat.

The other midday, for example, the Queen City Chamber of Commerce rounded up a panel of local leaders and fed them on cold cuts as preface to more inspirational fare. The after-luncheon centerpiece was a \$15,000 color film, showing what Atlanta is doing—and plans to do—to relieve its metropolitan problems and make life a little more pleasant for the Seven Hundred Thousand-Plus it claims as its own.

The problems are the same as those of Charlotte—traffic and parking, preservation of the central business district, health, slum clearance, public transit.

But Atlanta is moving ahead in a hurry with expressways that deserve the label

with offstreet parking development, with hospitals, redevelopment projects, planned industrial areas, street improvements, water-sewer expansions.

Detailed plans are already drawn for a long-range program of improvements that public and private interests will finance for a Greater Atlanta to come.

Charlotte can learn from Atlanta—and even as a teaser, the filmed report contained an impressive message.

A lot of the problems of urban growth can be avoided if you anticipate their development through wise planning. Others can be eliminated at limited cost if you catch them in time. Some, in Atlanta and in Charlotte, need the shock treatment. And the shock treatment is expensive. But the dying patient can't afford to count pennies.

In the bid for center of the southeast stage by Charlotte and Atlanta, time is on the local side. But our Georgia neighbors have managed a handsome head-start.

## Greece Has No Claim To Cyprus

It is unfortunate that the futile argument about the possible annexation of Cyprus to Greece should be brought to a boiling point at this time.

There is no basis, historical or otherwise, for the Greek claim to sovereignty over Cyprus. It has never been subject to modern Greece. The claim recalls Mussolini's agitation for the annexation of Corsica to Italy. That island had been under the dominion of ancient Rome, but was never a part of the territory of modern Italy.

Cyprus, however, was not even subject to ancient Greece, because the Greece of those days was never a nation in the modern sense. It was composed of city states which were sometimes temporarily federated in the face of a

common danger but which were more often at war among themselves. The rivalry and hostility of Athens and Sparta was notorious and lasted for centuries.

Meanwhile, Cyprus was an independent state under its own king. Its inhabitants would have jeered at the idea that it was subject to any city state on the mainland.

In modern times it was subject first to Turkey and later to Britain, but never to Greece. The population today is 75 per cent Greek and 25 per cent Turkish. The Greeks don't want to join Turkey, and the Turks don't want to join Greece. Therefore, Greece is simply looking for trouble if it plans to annex an island with that hostile minority.

## Federal Aid Not The Answer—Yet

Ordinarily the New York State conference on Education would not cause any more comment than most of the other 47 conferences (16) are preparing for the White House meeting. But Governor Harriman might be the Democratic nominee for President, and he used this gathering as a platform to urge a sweeping program of federal aid to education.

He cited statistics, all of them correct, to show the bad state of the public schools, and then he launched into his argument that only the federal government can deal with such a situation.

He was not satisfied with aid to the public schools; he advocated also federal scholarship aid for colleges and universities.

For twenty years the partisans of federal aid to education have been saying that only the central government can provide the funds necessary to meet the emergency. They have pooh-poohed the argument that with federal aid will inevitably go federal control of the public schools.

Yet federal control is always a danger to be reckoned with.

More important, there is reason to doubt that all the states have reached the limit of their ability to do-for-themselves in building schools. North Carolina, for example, a state with little monetary wealth but great numbers of children, has made spectacular progress in the past decades.

But has North Carolina done all that it is able to do? Or South Carolina? Or even Gov. Harriman's far richer state of New York?

As a general principle, the Observer stands for local responsibility for local matters and state responsibility for state matters. Federal aid to education, at best, is a last-ditch measure, to be resorted to only when the states and local communities are so impoverished, or so deficient in their responsibilities, that the job cannot be done otherwise.

That day is not yet at hand. Let us hope it never will be.

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## THE VICTOR RIESEL REPORT

**GOP Out To Label Democrats 'Labor-Dominated'**

NEW YORK—Harry S. Truman, the prominent pianist who seldom sits-pedals anything, got out of the Republican fold on the other day which won't make his members who will make one of the stormy issues of the '56 presidential campaign.

Except in political circles, it has been little noticed that the ex-president of the U. S. told a Detroit Labor Day Rally that the approaching merger of the AFL-CIO is "scaring the daylight out of the Republicans" (and they) "... are afraid of what you will do in the elections of '56."

The lack of a reliable political geiger-counter prevents a measure of the alleged fright in Republican circles. But it can be reported that the White House, Secretary of Labor James Mitchell and the staff leaders of the Republican National Committee now realize that Labor's campaign machinery next year will be smooth and hand-lining—perhaps more so than that of the Democratic Party itself.

TO BEGIN with, the AFL and CIO political machines will be meshed, for the first time in history, into one national political headquarters when the '56 campaign starts.

That's definite. Plans for such political action will undoubtedly be discussed at the AFL's high command sessions in New York on Oct. 19 or 20.

This means the AFL's Labor League for Political Education, which can easily put 100,000 precinct workers into action in the big industrial centers, will be merged with the CIO's Political Action Committee, which itself has scores of thousands of such activists available for duty.

## Wild-Riding Italians Put Rodeo To Shame

ROME — On his routine political pilgrimage to Israel and Rome, Mr. Wagner, the mayor of New York, told the mayor of Rome that he was well impressed by the horrible squawking and yapping of the automobile horns, day and night.

Thanks for that civilized innovation goes back to Mussolini, although the undisciplined French forbade the nuisance about 25 years ago and the British, too, in recent years, whether by compulsion or decent forbearance, have shown competence at the wheel in place of the barbarous din of most American cities.

However, if Wagner had wanted to be honest and not just complimentary, he should have added that the horrible racket of the exhaust from thousands of masty, snarling little motorcycles, and the rumbling bellow of big ones and practically all cars, including trucks and buses, continues beyond midnight and with mufflers to be had for a few hundred lire the reason may be found in a childlike desire to make a noise to celebrate their ownership. Mussolini would have liked that with an order.

I suspect that this racket is also a halli-cry of freedom by a people who are divided by a ride in the pie wagon in any American city.

THERE ARE thousands of these chorus men around town, beautiful body work surmounted by a mosh, who just stand around and let the walking traffic, including feeble old people and knee-high children, risk their lives in wild traffic guided by the absolute reverse of the New York principle that the pedestrian always has the right of way.

That rule was laid down promptly by ill-tempered tyrant of the traffic court years ago because a member of his family had been killed and, I think, killed by some motor vehicle.

It has been, generally speaking, the rule of the cops ever since, although in some exceptional positions people are expected to obey the signals as the drivers do.

A friend of mine who has lived in Italy a long time and observed the Italians under Mussolini, in the war and since, frankly puts down this barbarity toward the people on foot to immaturity.

THESE PEOPLE are utter fools when they get aboard any vehicle driven by a motor.

They must be fairly good drivers because otherwise most of them would have been killed long ago but even so their accident rate is fabulous, though without a very high rate of human casualties. That is, they smash up an enormous number of cars and motorcycles and walk away, as the flyers used to say.

They haven't the slightest respect for the pedestrian and I tell you I have stood on my little balcony at the Hotel Flora overlooking the Borghese Gardens and watched as many as three and four of those beautiful, stupid dummies in the white police uniforms ignoring outrageous conduct that would get me not merely a ticket but a ride in the pie wagon in any American city.

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JACK DUNWOODY

Charlotte

'Right To Vote,' Period, Exclamation

Seems to me that some of you educated editors would investigate the meaning of segregation.

Here is what my book says, and as taught me while studying law in a large southern law college:

"Article XV, the right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of color, race, or previous condition of servitude. (2) The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

Now where does this social equality give the colors and rights to white schools, etc. Looks like a big book of politics.

THEY ARE said to be poor

FROM THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

'Twixt Cup And Couch, A Slip

For a time in Washington it is fashionable to use a psychologist and a cocktail glass in an aptitude test for job applicants. The purpose of the system, known as the "assessment method," was to study the applicant when he wasn't applying for a job but just being assessed by himself.

The general idea was that by observing closely the manner in which an ordinary cocktail party can understand their "objections," it would have become increasingly difficult to tell the applicants from the assessors of the party progress.

Whether some of the notes made at the party were entirely describing the "objections," or not, Dr. Cronbach of the Office of Naval Research says that all away the assessments weren't all they were intended to be.

In fact, Dr. Cronbach, as president-elect of the American Psychological Association, told the members the other day that the whole method was just a pipe dream. The trouble was that the system tried to predict how a man would react in a difficult situation when neither the man or the psychologist knew how he had ever been in just that situation.

There certainly is good logic in the doctor's view. Predicting human behavior in unusual circumstances is about as easy as a bit of work as we can think of. It's even trickier business when the circumstances are not at all unusual. But it is hard to predict how a person will behave away from a cocktail party is about as difficult as predicting who will behave at one.

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