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STEPHEN ALLEN

## Pressure On the Press

*"When fascism comes to this country, it will come in the guise of Americanism."*
*— a remark attributed to Huey Long*

**HE HAD THE BELIEF** that if you can control the communications media, such as broadcasting, the press and the movies, you can control the minds of the people . . . which may or may not be true.

At any rate, he thought it was true — so he set about doing it.

**The role of the communications media was not to report events and to comment on them, he decided. That business of "comment" left too much room open for "criticism."**

And what politician wants criticism?

The role of the communications media, he felt, was to report events . . . as the government saw them . . . and then to approve of them.

**THE PERSON** he delegated to make this belief a working policy said to the press: "It can never be the task of the press to lecture the party and the state and to give advice to them or to criticize public institutions and personalities."

The press then was to be an arm of the state.

**And the officials began telling the press what had happened, what had not happened, what was to be reported, what was not to be reported.**

And heaven help the reporter or newspaper who tried to defy this.

**AT THE FIRST** press conferences, the new governmental officials were polite and only pointed out places where they disagreed with the press, and they asked the press to "consider" the point of view of the government.

But it didn't take the press very long to realize that these "requests" were indeed commands, and defiance of them could have serious consequences.

**A short time later, the governmental officials told the press that in the future, editors would be personally responsible and accountable for "errors" in their newspapers, and journalists were told: "It is not a good thing to swim against the tide."**

Very soon, prison sentences and fines began being imposed on journalists for "mistakes," and an editor and publisher from one paper were sent away because they had mistakenly juxtaposed a photo caption for a traveling carnival below a photograph of a procession of governmental officials.

**EVERY NEW PRESS** conference meant new intimidation of journalists — and consequently less public knowledge of what was really going on. Tirades against individual journalists and newspapers which had committed "mistakes" became commonplace, and journalists who had committed too many mistakes just disappeared.

Soon, slogans and cliches replaced sound news analysis . . . and the government was much happier. Journalists were warned not to look for any "disharmonies" within the government, "because they simply don't exist."

**Most of the dismissals of journalists from their newspapers took place during the early years of this change. After five or six years, it was not as necessary: The new journalists knew was expected of them, and they complied.**

After the new regime had been in power for five years, it was able to say without opposition: "Measures taken by party or state, by the officials of the former or by civil servants of the latter, are a priori above any criticism by the press."

Maybe you think this sounds a little familiar? Or maybe you just think it all sounds fanciful and insane.

**But then what would you expect from a crazy house painter from Munich?**

# Without Industry, Wenonah Is in a Bind

## *Homeowners Bear the Tax Burden, and It's Going to Get Heavier*

By RENEE WINKLER
*Courier-Post Staff*

WENONAH — Despite its image of a typical quiet town, made up of financially stable residents, Wenonah is in a bind.

Like all small towns that fight industry, Wenonah has a tax problem. And, according to borough officials, it's not going to get any better.

"A lot of people think of Wenonah as the hideout of the wealthy people of Gloucester County. That's a fallacy," Mayor Jack C. Sheppard says.

"We don't have any millionaires in town — not that I know of. And if we do, they act just like everybody else."

**"IT'S a small, middle-class town. A bedroom community. And that situation brings financial problems," Sheppard said.**

Wenonah isn't declaring itself bankrupt. The few paid employes — policemen, tax collector, borough clerk, street and road workers — are paid as well as any others in the area.

But the needs of the town keep growing . . . and the residents keep up a bitter fight against higher tax rates.

The mayor indicates he would like to re-evaluate the whole borough, to equalize the tax burden.

**POLICE** Chief James B. Miller says he plans to ask for a third full-time patrolman.

The administrative principal of the elementary school is pinning the school system's hopes on voter approval in January of the school board's second attempt at a $350,000 bond issue.

All three would help to preserve Wenonah's image of a well-run, well-educated, well policed town.

But none are necessities.

And all cost money. Money that can be raised only by taxes.

**MAYOR** Sheppard, who has been in office five years, speaks of the borough's problems in a realistic, not overly hopeful, tone.

"I'm concerned with rising taxes, and the number of retired persons who might not be able to meet them in a few years. Our residents are jealous of the town, and want to preserve it from encroachment.

"They probably would stay if the taxes were up by one-third, maybe even one-half. But they just couldn't do it if the tax rate doubled," Sheppard said.

The mayor sees a rising tax rate as "the only real threat," one than can be eliminated only by outside help in the form of a new method of financing schools.

**WENONAH** has one elementary school, the first part of which was built in 1907. In 1924 a second school was built on an adjacent plot of ground on Clinton Avenue and in 1935 the two buildings were connected.

"The school is maintained well, and our curriculum is good," said the administrative principal, Thomas C. Summerill, beginning his fifth year as principal.

"But we could do a much better job with a multi-purpose room and library. We can use the library we have only two afternoons a week for class projects."

The three other days the room is used by Mrs. Mary Shedaker, Wenonah's full-time learning disabilities specialist. The days when the library is used by classes, Mrs. Shedaker moves her equipment, records, and pupils to a stock room.

**FILMS** are no longer shown in the art-music room. Instead, projectors are lined up in the school's corridors, and teachers run the films in the classrooms.

"We have good support between parents and the school," Summerill said, sitting in his office which can't accommodate more than one visitor.

However, many parents have never seen any part of the school other than their child's classroom.

Even if the referendum is approved in January, and Wenonah can build a third addition, the system will "have only minimal facilities — just up to par with other districts in the county," Summerill said.

**WITH** the town, composed almost entirely of single-family houses, there isn't much help anticipated for the school in next year's budget.

There are several commercial establishments in town — a grocery store, a luncheonette and at least one beauty salon. There are no butcher shops, supermarkets, hardware stores, dress shops or five-and-tens.

"We would love to have an office building here," Mayor Sheppard said, "and we were approached about the idea last year. It fell through."

The borough has only two tracts of land yet to be developed, and one is being slowly filled by Academy Hill homes, about 20 homes individually built by a Moorestown developer.

**"WE** don't have enough room for industry. We wouldn't even have enough ground for the required buffer zone," Sheppard said.

High-rise apartments are out, by an ordinance limiting the height of buildings to 35 feet. "Apartments would create a need for more fire equipment, additional water pressure and a larger trunk collection system," Sheppard said.

Still, the mayor would like to see a "high-quality, first-rate garden apartment complex somewhere in the borough, to give the older residents who prefer to go when they get too old or too tired to take care of large houses."

The largest tax problem the borough has now recurs each time one of the old, large houses is sold.

"GALLOPING inflation has swelled the value of many of these homes which are assessed at far below their selling price. It's a real problem to maintain a constant reappraisal of the community. It's many for the new homes and the ones that are sold, but what about the houses that aren't sold," the mayor said.

Sheppard feels that the township would have to pay at least $12,000 for a full-time assessor, an expenditure that borough officials "can't justify to the taxpayers."

The taxpayer residents, or those who recently have moved into the town, complain that taxes are inexplicable. But the older residents hold the majority in a vote, and they are the property-owners most likely to be hurt by another re-evaluation.

Sheppard is "definitely satisfied" with police coverage in the borough. "Their primary duty is to maintain order among the teenagers. There are some family spats, skirmes, accidents, and vandalism, but it's pretty quiet here," he said.

**CHIEF** Miller agrees that Wenonah is quiet, but emphasizes that he and his patrolmen work "long and hard" to keep it that way.

"Things are pretty quiet on the surface here. The residents don't fight with each other on the street, but we still get our share of domestics and larceny. We have no drug problem," and like all communities, Wenonah's teenage problems are "usually caused by outsiders."

Chief Miller said police get along well with the community but "you have to watch everything you say. People want everything hushed up."

Chief Miller said he "didn't remember" any murders during his 11 years on the police force, the last three as chief. He ignored a question about suicides, but commented that "the rash of people here have a lot of pressures."

**MAYOR** Sheppard has plans and ideas for the community, that could be implemented by volunteer groups.

"We have a lot of residents who would like to help out, and who have abilities we can use. I keep a list of those who have volunteered to work on committees and when we have an opening, I use a person who is interested," he said.

One of Sheppard's "fringe ideas" is a conservation committee, separate from the planning board, which could look at the land remaining in the borough, and recommend uses for it. "Maybe it's suitable for apartments, or other development, or maybe we should keep it for recreation or study its use under a Green Acres proposal," Sheppard said.

In an area like Wenonah, many things are done on a volunteer basis, since that's the only way the budget can afford it.

"PEOPLE are usually understanding. We cannot collect leaves, and large items like roaches the same day. We have only two dump trucks, and now we're using one for leaves."

Sheppard said he gets calls from residents complaining but "usually if you explain the situation, they understand."

"When you start to get indignant about telephone calls, and irritated by requests, it's time to get out.

"This job could take all your time, so you sort of spread it around. With me, it's almost like a hobby; one I take very seriously," Sheppard said.



ADMINISTRATIVE principal of Wenonah school, Thomas C. Summerill, feels money squeeze in lack of multi-purpose room and permanent space for learning disabilities teacher.



LEARNING disabilities specialist, Mrs. Mary Shedaker, looks over books in library of Wenonah Elementary School. When the library is in use, Mrs. Shedaker holds classes in stock room.

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Monday, December 1, 1969
Camden, N. J. Page 11

N.J. 'Abuses' Cited

## Rent Moratorium Slated for 10 Days

FT. LEE (UPI) — The New Jersey Tenant Association was set to begin its 10-day rent moratorium today aimed at making landlords "aware that the tenants are organizing."

Association President Martin Arnow, calling the action a "modest form of protest," said some 125,000 disgruntled tenants will hold back December rent for 10 days in a demonstration that they are willing to take action to correct alleged landlord abuses.

Arnow said the December action will be followed by an 11-day delay in rent payments in January as well as full-fledged rent strikes that are being planned for two middle-income buildings.

He said that rallies are set for Dec. 12 and 18 in Newark and Jersey City "to start organizing buildings" in those cities.

"It is hoped," he said, "that the landlords will accept this demonstration for the purpose in which it was intended, that they will open their eyes to the problems and seek to assist in their resolution."

Arnow said rent strikes are planned for two buildings, one on Scott Court in Richfield Park "where there are rats and roaches," and one on Rosewood Terrace in East Rutherford where he said there are "no leases and the landlord wants a hike in the security deposit."

## Drivers Escape Injury in Crash

GLASSBORO — A 17-year-old Pitman youth narrowly escaped injury yesterday when his auto smashed through several fences and came to a halt inside a garage at 461 Carpenter Street.

Police said Alfred Pierce of 601 Horton Ave. had lost control of his vehicle moments after he and Mrs. Elizabeth Carson, 56, of 108 Market Place, had collided at the intersection of Carpenter and Heston Rd.

Although there were no injuries, both drivers were issued summons for careless driving.

## Father Groppi Hits N.J. Church Project

CONVENT STATION (UPI) — The Rev. James Groppi, a controversial priest at the forefront of Catholic dissent, told a group here yesterday that the Catholic Church is using too much of its funds on building at the expense of feeding the poor.

He made the allegation in a special mass held on the construction site here for the proposed St. Thomas More Church.

Groppi said he had flown to New Jersey from his home in Milwaukee for one day specifically to say a special "Mass of Sensitivity" in protest of the construction project.

The outspoken priest said he had heeded special permission from a federal judge to leave his home state of Wisconsin where he faces, among other things, a contempt charge issued by the Wisconsin State Assembly.

"We as Catholics do not want to be identified with huge construction projects," Groppi told the crowd of some 400 that gathered amidst reports they might be arrested for trespassing and conducting an illegal mass. No arrests, however, were made.

And Groppi said the Catholic Church was "founded on blood and civil disobedience."

Thomas Burk, president of the New Jersey Association of Laymen and co-ordinator of arranging the mass, called the construction project "a dramatic gesture of insensitivity" of the Catholic Church to the needs of the poor.

He said a petition protesting the construction project already has 811 signatures and will be submitted to Bishop Lawrence W. Casey, of the Paterson Diocese, when it has 2,000 signatures.

## PUC Hearings Start on Wires

NEWARK (UPI) — The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) opens public hearings here today on proposed regulations requiring all new electric and telephone lines to be installed underground.

The new regulations, which would not affect present overhead lines, were proposed by the PUC last September.

In June of 1967 the commission released a decision upholding the position of the Public Service Electric and Gas Co. that underground lines would be too expensive.

At that time the utility company said a 94-mile transmission line from Holland Township in Hunterdon County to Sayreville, N.Y., would cost $36.1 million if it were underground, against $11.4 million for overhead construction.

## Crash Injures Berlin Resident

MOUNT LAUREL — Mrs. Charles A. Keller, 22, of 21 Florence Ave., Berlin, was in serious condition today in Burlington County Memorial Hospital, Mount Holly, with internal injuries suffered in a head-on collision on Route 73 here Saturday night.

Mrs. Keller's car was in collision with that of Rudolph B. Hitz, 43, of the 600 block of Howell Street, Philadelphia, about one-half mile north of Greentree Road, police reported.

Police said Hitz was committed to Burlington County Jail in default of $500 bail on charges of drunken driving, and failure to keep to the right. A hearing is set for 9 a.m. Dec. 16, police said, in Mount Laurel Municipal Court.

## Spring Fashions To Be Previewed

Will the big look for spring be mini, midi or maxi? How high or low will the hemline go in 1970?

The answers will appear as leading American designers show their new collections to the press this week in New York.

Courier-Post Fashion Editor Ruth Oils is in the fashion capital to preview the spring trends. Read her daily reports on the 1970 fashion excitement beginning tomorrow in the Courier-Post.



POLICE chief James B. Miller wonders if request for third patrolman will fall victim to Wenonah's fight on higher taxes.

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