

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

And Evening Chronicle

Published Every Afternoon Except Sunday by The News Publishing Company, Inc.

The daily edition of The Charlotte News was established in 1858. The Evening Chronicle (established 1893) was purchased by and consolidated with The Charlotte News May 4, 1914.

The News desires to be notified promptly of errors in any of its reports that proper correction may be made at once.

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Subscription Rates

By carrier: 20 cents a week; one month, \$7.00. By mail: One month, \$7.00; three months, \$20.00; six months, \$35.00; one year, \$70.00.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1942

The Skeptic

War Philosophy and Stuff On the Dilworth Bus

"Well," the man on the back seat of the Dilworth bus said, "if this fellow Berle in our State Department knew enough to warn the Russians that the Germans were going to go after Stalin, why didn't he know the Japs were gonna come up on our blind side?"

"It says here in the paper," replied the lady riding side-saddle just in front of him, "that he did know about it. Here is what it says: 'We had reason to believe that Japan planned war, and that she would engage in it against us whenever the United States ceased to supply her with certain materials.'"

"Well," said the lady, "if that happened, I don't guess the poor French could help."

"That's not the poor French," I'm worried about," the man said, "it's the poor Americans. Listen, you gotta be mean to win this war. Terrible mean. And tough as the guys you're fighting. This just ain't a softy's light."

"In some ways it would be a cruel punishment to inflict, but we wish that all Government officials charged with the responsibility of keeping the public informed about how our war effort is going, could hear 'Be Honest With Me' (dears name) rolling off the assembly line, firing on the practice grounds and shrouded in canvas on board ships taking them to the battlefronts."

"There are many hopeful signs that Washington is beginning to suspect that we shall never muster a half-way war effort as long as the public is encouraged

to believe that a half-way effort is all that will be required to win the war. It is all very well for Government publicists to say that America has never lost a war. But they would do well to point out that, up to the present moment, neither has Japan.

Impatience

The Nation Ripens for 'The Man on Horseback'

Still largely unanswered today after more than seven weeks of war is the question the American civilian asks himself most frequently: "What can I do to help lick Japan and Germany?" There have been partial answers, negative answers. Some have been asked to serve as Civilian Defense Volunteers. Others have been drafted into military service. And, of course, everybody is asked to buy defense bonds and stamps.

But for the great mass of the population, life was following much the same pattern as ever. Oh, there were a few inconveniences to be faced: the rationing of tires and sugar. However, these were things to do without, not things to do.

And commentators who travel about have begun to note the spread of a profound impatience with their Government's reaction of a people who knew of a certainty that great sacrifices, great effort, will be required to win the war, but who had not been told what sacrifices they must make or directed by their leaders to make the inevitable effort. It is, in effect, the same reaction that a prize fighter might feel on the night of his last fight for the title if, instead of being given a worthy opponent, he was told to keep punching the bag.

Mass psychologists look at the symptoms and report an alarming, if logical, tendency. Americans, they say, are ripe for the man on horseback, waiting for some shining hero to end their confusion and indecision by leading them out of what they feel is the supreme effort. They are ready for the Spartan life, for really great sacrifices. And they want to get on with it not in 1943, but now.

It is this kind of mass psychology that has already idolized Douglas MacArthur. Surely no war Administration could ask for a greater opportunity than this. The complaint is against a lack of leadership, rather than against too much of it. President Roosevelt and his associates have only to provide the leadership and lay out the job and the rising tide of criticism which besets him will fall back tomorrow.

Who's To Say? Union Shop Policy Depends On Who Frames It First The War Labor Board looked straight at Washington and asked for the Government's reaction to the burning question of a union or closed shop was up for consideration in the copper miners case, and the board didn't know what to do about it.

Key To Morale

By Paul Mallon

WASHINGTON THE mail of protest keeps coming from supposed "apathetic" citizens who resent the "official" accusations, the "official" Government officers, responsible for their condition. Many of them are right. I think of the justice of their complaints which is wrong and what should be done.

It seems to me the root cause for unsatisfactory public morale can be traced back beyond Congressional "fan dancers," suspiciously mistakes of Government lack of aggressiveness, etc., to one big basic mistake. These valid mistakes are in fact, not caused by the confused and uninformed public to express its dissatisfaction.

PUBLIC RELATIONS MEN USE OBSOLETE IDEAS The basic overall mistake of the Government has been in letting the people become confused and uninformed. The public relations counselors of the Government are, by and large, the only ones who gained experience in the previous New Deal political campaigns. They are still holding too closely to tactics that proved successful then.

For an over-simplified instance, if graft was charged against WPA, they might have selected a fight against "corrupt" officials. It removes the pressure and divert attention. Now that criticism is being made, they like to make-believe that the work of some mysterious "Citizen set" or examples of the people in Washington who have misled the whole country with rumors.

The trouble is that at the start of this war, the official line was to suppress military information (which ought to be suppressed) but at the same time to lead the people to believe everything was all right. The first MacArthur announcement, for instance, was a piece of "hot" news. The production was going. Navy Secretary Knox said something about it being a "hot" news item.

PEOPLE WERE UNPREPARED FOR THE SHOCK The public was unprepared for the shock of MacArthur's announcement, the loss of Singapore, the absence of aggressive action from the Pacific theater. They were read about. The setbacks were really expected by those in authority. But the people were not.

Naturally, people began asking questions and they found answers that they didn't want. They were misled in the employment of a manager friend of Mr. Roosevelt in civilian defense.

WAR IS ALWAYS WASTEFUL, inefficient and full of mistakes. In general, the public will be misled through history, that victory was decided not so much by aggressive action as by the making of fewer mistakes than the enemy.

But the Government has been handling its public relations in a political campaign in which it was afraid to confess a mistake. If there were no mistakes.

HE PROBABLY Caught Cold, Too The New Yorker "I've told of a San Francisco gentleman who likes the Japs with a peculiar personal bitterness that the passage of time has not dimmed. He has a friend who found this man in the steam room of a hotel; he didn't hear the gentleman's name, but he went back he had simply concluded that the Japs had failed. He went for an attendant and he appeared. The place was pretty hot and he figured he'd better get to the bathroom. He went out, feeling his way along the walls, trying to identify the correct turned and the steam he climbed, and humped into a large tub. "Where am I?" he gasped. In the lobby, a man in a dark told him. To his amazement it was a feminine voice, and this caused him to do the best he could with a damp bath towel he had tossed along. Just then the lights came on, and he was in the lobby all right, along with a crowd from the street which had been attracted to the tub. The gentleman has become a heavy buyer of Defense Bonds.

Another Horse Shot From Under Him

—By Herblock



Letters to the Editors: Income Tax Inconvenience

(Note: Last week The News published an account of some of the difficulties experienced by citizens who wished to file their Federal income tax returns at the Charlotte office. The News:

Editors, The News: Keep up the good work. This is a bad situation and is doing a lot of harm, especially at a time like this. I made my return out and attached a check, but found the place closed at 1:30 P. M. On first trip, went back at 2 o'clock. Several (persons) were in the room. No one seemed particularly busy. After standing a while, I asked one fellow, who seems to work there. If I could leave the return. He didn't answer for a while, but finally took it, so I suppose my return is filed, but I am not real sure. But I was given the impression that I was somewhat of a bother.

THE ADVANTAGES OF Navy Life Editors, The News: Dear Sirs: I think this poem is worthy of publication and would appreciate your printing it. —MR. THOMAS GROVE, 622 Hawthorne Lane.

TO MOM I'm going in the Navy now. I tried the Army first. Thought I'd like a change, something. For better or for worse. The soldiers eat and sleep and fight. Through mud and blood and ditches. While squitos, bugs and cooties And get down in their britches. Our sailors sleep in cabins neat. As they drift over the water. Each fellow has enough to eat. And lives as white men oughter. Our dough-boy loses legs, an arm. He's paid for the loss. Gosh, either never come to harm. Or go down with the cruiser.

THE WAR MAY LAST FOR many years, But we will beat the Japs. In the end I have no fears. There'll be the war. We'll sail into the Rising Sun, Across the broad Pacific. Our battles on Iwo and Hun. It battles so terrific. We'll try to sink their ships at sea (But, Mom, I'll miss your cooking) And if a Jap slips up on me, You'll know I mean 'em.

Should I kick the bucket, Mom, I have every doubt. I'll be thinking of you, Mom. And know you'll think of me. —JAMES T. HASKINNEY, 810 Healey Place, Charlotte.

SAY MISS Thompson "Gets 'Em Told" Editors, The News: I have every doubt reader of The News read Dorothy Thompson's article in today's paper, entitled "Sings, Shouts and Chatters." If there is one outstanding woman in America today, that woman

is Dorothy Thompson—a woman whose keen brain, indomitable courage, facile pen, and strong, forceful voice have all been devoted these many months to the task of arousing her fellow countrymen to their danger, both from without and within.

The medal for distinguished service to her country should be hers, by right of merit; but instead she has had to bear sneers and abuse from "ironpumps" Johnson and others of his ilk, without number these past months. If I were a man, my hat would be off to Miss Thompson for "getting 'em told" today, as on so many other occasions. Being a woman, I can only say: "Thank you, and more power to you, Miss Thompson." —MRS. EDNA C. HENDRICKS, Dallas.

AIR RAID Shelter Site Suggested Editors, The News: If we must have a city air raid shelter, the Trade Street Hill might be an excellent location. Between the Square and the Freight Yards Bridge there is a drop of about 25 feet which could allow for a roof with little depth in the ground. Entrances to the shelter could be both from Fourth and Trade Streets, and could be set vertically with heavy concrete doors so as to be proof against his nearby. They would be only two minutes' walk from Tryon Street. —J. L. SPENCER Charlotte.

POSTLUDE on Georgia Football Editors, The News: I have in my possession a copy of your editorial entitled "Substant U. Ga." in it are several nasty insinuations about football players in general, football players at the University of Georgia, and Frankie

Side Glances A Heavenly Blue, Of Course (Aunt's Item, Mount Airy Times) Next Sunday is time for the regular monthly appointment at the Pine Hill Methodist Church and the members are requested to be present for the purpose of deciding what color paint to buy for the inside of the church.

Some Glens and Some Gals (Bruny Mountain Item, North Wilkesboro Herald) Paul Dault, the milk route man from here, says the amount of milk is increasing on his route. Why Don't You Try It Again, Miss Hill? (Old Springs Item, Marshall News-Record) Mrs. Mary Lee Hill is much improved after having a fall. Them Are Sweet Words—Sugar! (Heraldine, Morganton News-Herald) NO RATIONING FOR MOLAHSER, HONEY Pretty Willie Jr. (Colored Item, Zebulon Record) Mr. and Mrs. Willie Pretty are proud parents of the 7-1-3 lbs. Willie Jr.

Shotgun Criticism

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON A Republican Congressman stood on the floor of the House this week and said that President Roosevelt had maneuvered the United States into this war.

One can regret the lack of intelligence that makes it possible to hold such a conviction, but the chances are it is the case beyond the power of reasoning. The only thing left is to appeal to the loyalty of such persons to refrain from weakening the country by spreading views like this during a time of danger.

RECKLESS SPEECH WILL BE STOPPED As any reference to the Congressional record or to the newspapers will show, we still retain the right of free discussion in spite of necessary military censorship. If we exercise that freedom with a sense of responsibility we can keep it. But if reckless speech reaches the point where it is damaging the war effort, the nation will stop it, by one means or another. No people, certainly not the American people, will tolerate irresponsible discussion if it plainly interferes with winning the war.

Although we have been at war only two and a half months, shotgun criticism is scattered all over the place, creating a confusion that is making it difficult to go ahead with the war effort energetically. President Roosevelt is showing his exasperation at the ceaseless pounding. Other officials, working long hours under a strain of responsibility which is a severe tax to the strongest nerves, are harassed daily by sniping criticism that never lets up.

If you have a child at school who is having hard going, you only make his situation worse by riding him. If he is trying hard, and has reasonable intelligence, he will do better work if he is given some encouragement than if he is nagged ceaselessly.

BLUNDERBUSS NAGGING DISCOURAGES OFFICIALS None of these officials here is doing a perfect job and they know it better than anybody else. But the indiscriminate and blunderbuss kind of nagging that is going on here discourages them, makes them hesitate to take a bold chance, keeps them all on the defensive, and induces exactly the wrong psychology. The executive who gets the best work out of his men is not the one who is always barking at them. The good executive knows that part of the time he can get better results with a pat on the back, some show of confidence in his men. If can then criticize specific mistakes freely and without wrecking a fellow's morale.

These men here are working for us and we cannot get the best results out of them by incessant abuse. The other day Donald Nelson moved in to pull the aircraft people out of the dumps and to give them greater recognition. For some time previously he had been using his own authority to give them materials in spite of their inferior technical rating. But when he raised the priorities and explained how he was going to do it for psychological reasons, some critics leaped on him with both feet. They said he was being patronizing instead of recognizing the importance of aircraft. The criticism didn't make sense, because Nelson was doing every thing he could do for them by actual allocation of materials and by psychology to get the air corps and the aviation industry out on top.

TODAY'S BIBLE THOUGHT Keep firm grip of your thoughts, your actions, your life. And he said unto them, seek to enter in at the narrow door, for many I say shall strive to enter but shall not be able. —Luke 13:24.

Visitin' Around A Heavenly Blue, Of Course (Aunt's Item, Mount Airy Times) Next Sunday is time for the regular monthly appointment at the Pine Hill Methodist Church and the members are requested to be present for the purpose of deciding what color paint to buy for the inside of the church.

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