

Now She Knows

By KIRK GUTLIVE
In Blackhear (Ga.) Times

A SHORT while ago I received a copy of a book entitled "Revenue Act of 1942 With Explanation and Federal Tax Charts." It was presented to me by a friend who has worked himself up to a position in a bank where he now sits at a large mahogany desk and is identified by a neat name plate bearing his name and initials.

The banker said: "This book would be the year's best seller. If it were not for the fact that we are giving it away, you will find it to be very close kin to the "Who Killed Aunt Maggie" type of mystery novel with the last chapter omitted." The banker was fooling me. It was not necessary for him to have been so subtle. I know my qualifications. I cannot interpret the Government's intentions on the front cover of a new quality of filled several wastebaskets had we not donated all but one in the recent salvage drive.

As a matter of fact, I have no idea of reading the book. I did leave it on my desk for a couple of days to impress my visitors, but I actually got it for my wife, who has been practically dying to know how much income tax I am going to have to pay, ever since she heard her best friend quote her husband to the effect that "next year's taxes were going to be positively ruinous."

Mrs. S. was delighted to get the book. "It makes me feel very important to read such literature," she said as she snuggled into a comfortable position on our sofa, which managed to escape with only a slight touch of frostbite when the OPA froze installment buying. It took her exactly one week to read the book, and she didn't say a thing. Not even Section 208, which has to do with retroactive treatment of involuntary conversions of capital transactions, and the paper she used in compiling and computing nothing at all. Her husband, who is less than we did not donate all but one in the recent salvage drive.

Then came Mrs. S.'s professional opinion. Looking at it with that sharp and studious know-it-all gleam that is part and parcel of the C. P. A., she said: "You are now insolvent, and the United States Government is your biggest creditor. You owe a gentleman named Morgenthau exactly \$1,599,822, which will be due and payable after March 15, 1945." "But that," she explained, "is how can I pay that much when I don't make but very little more than that? Maybe you forgot to figure that I am married and have four dependents and also lost \$15 when I took a sure thing on Georgia at Columbus a week ago?"

"I have given you advantage of every possible deduction," Mrs. S. explained, "even to the \$100 you promised your church which I left their pastor has not as yet had the pleasure of affixing to the church records, and also I have made you a gentlemanly percent more charitable than you actually are."

"You are," she continued, "what an auditor would call a 'bracket victim.' That is a taxpayer whose income is just large enough to provide him with the necessities of life, yet not quite large enough to allow for the payment of Government obligations. Furthermore, the 'something awful' which is contributing most to the Government's war effort would have placed you on the tax casualty list, anyhow."

"Which," I said, but very meekly, "if that is what the book says, that is what it will have to be. I will not irritate Congress any more. I will not even go into bankruptcy. I will carry my tax burden without a whimper."

"That is showing a fine American spirit," Mrs. S. scoffed, "...and you shouldn't forget, during it was you who went down to the line for one of your political friends when declared that 'paying taxes should be considered a great pleasure' like buying a drape-model suit or having a fling to a night club."

OPA Orders

Long & Woolly

PRESUMABLY it is a hopeless task, trying to wean away a bureaucrat from his long words and long sentences. Nobody has taken to heart the President's reminder that it is much better to say "Put out the light" than to prescribe "termination of the illumination." Here, for instance, is an OPA definition of what constitutes pleasure driving, in the form of three sentences, which sounds very nice, until we learn that every sentence is a whole paragraph long.

The temptation is strong to quote the whole document, since it would be such a help in filling up today's column. But we must be content with the first paragraph, or sentence:

"No person to whom a basic ration has been issued may use or permit the use of such ration for any driving in the gasoline shortage area other than family or personal necessity driving for which no adequate alternative means of transportation are available, or occupational driving or driving by naval or military personnel on leave or furlough for the purpose of visiting relatives, or making social calls, provided that such leave or furlough is evidenced by leave provisions in travel, or transfer orders, or by liberty cards, leave papers, furlough certificates, letters, or special orders signed by the commanding officer."

This definition might have been framed as follows: "The basic gasoline ration may be used only for (1) family or personal necessity driving where no other adequate transportation is available; (2) occupational driving; (3) driving by persons in the armed services on leave or furlough who can show the proper identification papers."

But apparently there is nothing on heaven or earth which will induce a public servant to draft a bill or issue a regulation in three or four short sentences if he can pile them all in one long sentence, full of "provided" and "other than." And the more the thing is intended to be a definition or a clarification the longer and woolier is the sentence likely to be.

Visitin' Around

The Ain't In No Shape To Be Roked Now

Palmerville Item, (St. Louis News & Press)

A request has come asking that those who use sharp flint rocks please refrain from such rocks on where they are not intended and may cause injury to some one. A glass window in a house here was penetrated by a flint rock and one lady standing on her front porch has reported that rocks riddled and came near hitting her. We ask the parents to see to this and put a stop to it.

Side Glances



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"Why are you worrying about clothes rationing? The colder it gets the less you wear!"

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

And Evening Chronicle

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

W. C. Dowd, Jr., President Burke Davis, and General Manager Editor

Lieut. J. E. Dowd, USNR, Vice President and Editor on leave for the duration
W. C. Dowd, 1865-1927

The daily edition of The Charlotte News was established in 1868. The Evening Chronicle established in 1909 was purchased by and consolidated with The Charlotte News May 5, 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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Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Charlotte, N. C., under the act of March 2, 1879.
SUBSCRIPTION RATES
By carrier: 20 cents a week; one month, \$7 cents. By mail: One month \$7 cents; three months, \$2.00; six months, \$5.00; one year, \$10.00.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 1943

All For War

Billions for Victory, but Not a Drop in the Budget for Waste

In the same breath that it proclaimed its willingness to bleed the country of all the money needed to win the war, as per the President's Budget message, Congress warned that it would not approve an extra dime for the Administration to fritter away on non-essential projects at home, or to treat the world to feast, a la New Deal. And if there was grim humor in the fact that Senator Pork Barrel K. McKellar of Tennessee was the first to declare his patriotic fight against waste, there was also the fact that the people agree with him completely this time.

The Budget, true enough, is staggering. That whistling total of \$109 billion, about half of which is to come from taxation, will cut the national income down to a skinny shadow of itself. Taxes, bonds and enforced savings will squeeze the revenue from the public, and so long as the record-breaking funds are properly administered (and that means in aggressive prosecution of the war) there will be no winners or losers.

But Congress, skimming through the message, saw at once that the President had not cut to the bone, that many a Federal agency could be weaned, or cut off entirely. That was proof that the Congress had taken the recent Roosevelt proclamation that Federal spending was almost solely for war with plenty of salt. Congress still doesn't believe the President, and its work for the next few months is to be spent in checking the books behind him.

The nation is ready for more sacrifice, though most of it still does not realize the size of the catastrophe scheduled to strike March 15. It wants all of its money spent for war, and for ending else. We believe it wants to force the most radical of measures for spending for the duration, so that the war might have everything. We believe that it wants some form of pay-as-you-go taxation to help it pay the President's \$109,000,000,000. And we are sure it will suffer no enormous program of waste spending at home. It will welcome sacrifice, but will brook no trifling with its tender mercies and still more tender pocketbook. The time for that is past.

Gas Gestapo

Motorists Who Dare Motoring Ban Find OPA Hard to Please

To those citizens who are pretending that the cessation of pleasure driving has not completely altered their lives, and continue to bustle about almost as usual, we would offer a word of warning. This time the Government isn't idly jesting. It has twitted and kidded about the war on occasion, but this is something new. You must conform, or else—and for the first time we can remember the burden of proof of good behavior is upon you. If you drive, you're guilty, until you offer a convincing story.

As the blow fell upon Charlotte it brought a new way of life that was not without its lighter moments. We noted, for example, that Saturday night streets were not at all empty of cars. Hundreds of them were parked in the business area—but not a single one near a theater. Those parking areas near movie houses were conspicuously bare. Motorists avoided them as if they were plague-ridden. But a block or so away in all directions (perhaps by coincidence), streets were as crowded as usual.

On Sunday night, a gentle Gestapo was on the prowl. Five OPA cars and all available police cars herded the light traffic, and business was good. The officers were polite, but hard-hearted. One had a favorite greeting for apprehensive drivers: "I'm checking on pleasure driving. You folks having a good time?" And among those who had to surrender gas ration books were: A man who had driven his boss to a hotel, one who confessed he was going out to Aunt Liza for a pint of whiskey, one who said he'd been to church, but couldn't remember sermon, preacher or location of the church.

The haul of ration books was big; one estimate said over half of the motorists stopped were driving illegally. And in a great many cases the regulations were found; names were on, all coupon books, coupons for future use were missing, registrations were in error.

The first check-up proved, if nothing else, that not all the people were abiding by the new law, and that they were going to suffer for their sins. The war has brought a real emergency, and it's going to be answered, regardless.

The Liberals

President Delivers Australia Into a Ward-Heeler's Hands

It has ever been infuriating to those who picture Franklin Roosevelt as the greatest of progressive liberal leaders in American history to be reminded that he was moved into the Presidency, each time, with the unbecomingly political machinations of Chicago, the Bronx and Jersey City all giving him a healthy shove. Now, with his appointment of Edward J. Flynn as U. S. Minister to Australia, the President has stirred up all the old memories of the muck-rack practical politics.

The appointment of the Chairman of the Democratic Committee caused consternation in Australia and in Congress, and they are likely to break out everywhere that Paddy-faced Boss Flynn is known. So far as we can determine, Ed Flynn has nothing to recommend him as minister to any nation, anywhere, for any reason. The cry was out quickly in Congress that the appointment was a means of giving Flynn diplomatic immunity in the case of the paving-block fraud. There will be others.

It matters little, we think, that Australians complained because Flynn himself produced the first announcement of the appointment of that Opposite-the-Congressman type of man, Ed Flynn. The man's record may be as black as black, or as white as white, but if it is not a record that recommends his appointment as Minister to an Allied nation in time of war when the United States has a reputation of New Deal Congressmen type of man, Ed Flynn. Then it is no record at all. And that's the way Flynn's reads.

He went into the Democratic chairmanship when there were no minor available, having risen to the minor importance of a career in Bossing the Bronx (the late Dutch Schultz was once his lieutenant). His ignorance, demonstrated at his first press conference, was amazing to reporters; his knowledge of party, nation, politics was close to an all-time low.

We could use no need for digging back into Minister Flynn's past crimes or misdemeanors, if only. The facts are plain enough for us to see, just as they stand. A man who will handle a Minister's portfolio with all the aplomb of a hood-crook has been shifted from one political seat to another. It is as if the President considered Australia just another ward to be healed, and an insignificant one, at that.

Rejection

WPB Turned Down a Solution To the Great Steel Shortage

It is not only news of tremendous importance to North Carolinians that the state is attracting new industries at the rate of one a month (with construction expenditure of \$25 million a year); the War Production Board is also being asked to produce coal deposits, a labor supply, sufficient electric power. While facilities lie idle in the state, the big steel companies and a branch of WPB have bickered back and forth between delays and red tape, action and rescinded action have prevented any effort to bring a sponge industry into being. Thus power for production which might supplement the nation's efforts to make steel for war is lost.

North Carolina, as well as many other states, has, on the word of experts in the field, an answer to the entire problem. It remains only for Washington to give the signal, and relief will be forthcoming. Further delay, on the basis of Republic's experience, will be inexcusable.



More Than Weapons

China Needs Our Confidence

By Samuel Grafton

NOTHING stands still, you see. We have lately become aware of something new in China: impatience. The Chinese do not think we have been helping them enough, and lately they have found ways of saying so. We are so surprised, you could knock us down with a feather.

It is his fate to remedy the ill by giving China a little more. The history of the last ten years is a history of a little less, and then a little more. More quantitative changes are no longer needed. We need qualitative changes. We not only need to increase the amount of our help to China; we need a new set of scales in which to measure our help. We need to give up the Lady Bonifill, or dear friend, relation with China and exchange it for a partnership.

We are united nations, yet the amount of aid China gets from us is based entirely on our own unilateral decision. When Great Britain was involved with China, as in the defense of Hong Kong, then Singapore, and then Burma, the extent of its use of Chinese troops and of its armaments of Chinese make, rested entirely on Britain's unilateral decision. She could give, or she could deny, just as we give, or as we deny. China needs more than a little additional supply, or a little less supply. She needs voice and vote. Had Britain and China lost Hong Kong together, the loss would not have been half so important.

This one-sided machinery for making decisions about munitions, and not to mention of munitions, hurts American-Chinese and British-Chinese relations. China knows how to do without us. She has done more with less, longer, than any other country in the war. Only, at least one of the United Nations voters, telling her to do with less, should be a Chinese voter. If, because of a world-wide strategic plan, we must say "No" to China, we should find some way of saying it in Chinese.

General Chiang's military mission has sadly left Washington, to return to Chungking. A Chinese colonel remains, as China's direct contact with our own military apparatus in Washington. That colonel

The Same Objectives

FDR Holds To His Ideals

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON—NOT SINCE the honeymoon ten years ago has President Roosevelt had such favorable comment on a message to Congress, but the circumstances then and now are quite different. Ten years ago the country was flat on its back, confidence had been lost in all leaders, and Mr. Roosevelt had been elected and carried the country and a huge Congressional majority with him.

This time Mr. Roosevelt deals with a Congress that is not as friendly as that in 1933. It is, it is against the New Deal—the name and the bungling, sewerball excesses, bootlegging and shabby government that are popularly associated with the New Deal. The Congress may not be as much against the ideas for which the New Deal label originally stood as it is against the name and the barnacles that have grown on it in these years, of which there are a lot because there has been a scraping of the bottom of the sea. That's one thing Mr. Roosevelt was too soft and too busy to attend to.

Mr. Roosevelt began with this Congress by talking in a conventional moderate tone. He couched mistakes, and somehow that went over as an unexpected novelty. Mr. Roosevelt also made some time with Congress, but he was not so sure of himself as Speaker Rayburn to which a number of Congressmen, including some Republican and Democratic members were asked. Such little friendly social occasions may become more frequent now. The White House cushions that have been pillaged these last few years by the new breed of men on top feel the imprint of more careful backside.

The President also will make full use of James F. Byrnes, his Director of Economic Stabilization, former member of the House and former Senator, was up in Congress when the President delivered his message. Byrnes was Jimmy at the President's elbow to show his Congressional credentials how close he was to the big boss? No. Jimmy Smart Jimmy was in Washington where he used to sit as a young Congressman. He sat back with the new breed, but the same old Jimmy hadn't changed a bit. From Tommy Corcoran to Jimmy Byrnes—that's the cycle of White House liaison with Congress, tells the story of the transition from the old days of sending up "data" for Congress to study.

will not sit on our combined chiefs of staff committee; he will wait outside for the decisions of that committee. That's what's wrong; we give or we take away, on our own motion.

A turn-down by a board on which China was represented would be more palatable; it would, in fact, not be a turn-down. It would be a Chinese decision, or a United Nations decision. We should have enough faith in our over-all strategic plan to believe that, if it makes sense, it will make sense to Chinese as well as to others.

And it is not safe, either strategically or politically, for one nation to make final decisions about another. We know that's true. That's what the war's about. Democracy's chief strength is precisely that it allows each party to make the case for its own interests.

We need, for our own interest, to be able to say to China, whatever the future brings: "You shared in the decision." That is the other side of the democratic method; it avoids unilateral responsibility as well as unilateral authority, and both are good things to avoid.

As to what happens, in the field, because of the present arrangement, read Michael Straight's brilliant and I don't mean merely good, I mean brilliant, new book, "Make This the Last War." The Chinese are told, say, that a certain number of motor trucks will arrive in a certain number of months. They have a strategic plan on the arrival of those trucks. At the last minute a unilateral decision, by us, sends the trucks elsewhere. The result is not merely a lack of trucks, the result is also the blowing up of a strategic plan. And all this happens in the painful climate of supplies.

It was good to hear the President promise more aid to China in his first message to Congress. Yet we need more than more supplies. We need a qualitative change; we need the kind of partnership that can grow stronger even if supplies should, unhappily, grow shorter. We need, right now, the kind of relationship with China that we faithfully promise ourselves we shall have with all countries the moment the present unpleasantness is over.

Today's Bible Verse

The world is turned upside down and many things men thought fixed eternally have proven quite the reverse. There is only one immovable rock to cling to, and that is God. He only is my rock and my salvation, He is my defense; I shall not be moved.—Psalm 62.