

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1943

Change Of Face
Labor Leaders Sing New Tune Of Steady Wage, Cheap Food

It's true, as reported, that the President listened and took notes at his parley with Labor leaders the other day, he's due for the shock of his career as a Labor leader, for his notes will show an amazing change of tune by CIO and AFL spokesmen, and a sincere attempt at prising the buck which should fetch a grin even from the staunchest friends of an often irresponsible leadership.

Labor has decided, from the evidence that abounds, at least, that higher wages are less to be desired than a falling on retail prices. Having been shown that great new wage gains are impossible—and the overall gains have been great in the past two years—they turn now with a show of patriotism to forego their own increases for the good of the nation.

The truth is, of course, that price ceilings would not have climbed so high had not wages been forced upward by Labor leaders after the start of the war and an alleged understanding had been reached with the administration on wage levels. There would be no need for the cry that the working man must pay too much at too many retail establishments for necessities. And the truth is not that wages have been long depressed, and that food prices have run away.

For millions of American workmen, a great many of them new, Labor Union pay checks have swollen so greatly that the money runs loose and runs such property is reflected in many a war center that it had become a waste of money to hold beyond their ability to spend wisely. These men and women have more than kept pace with the rising price of food; they, indeed, have led the race toward inflation—and the gains which they have worked wonders with the economic system were made for them by the leaders who spoke so ingratiatingly this week. They "laid down the law" for the President. They have become, suddenly, ardent patriots.

A roadside necker in Alabama is reassured on proof that the party of the second part was his wife. How refreshing in these uncertain times to feel that some are holding their own.

No Change
The South Stirs Like Other Sections—But Will Stick

There are those who predict that the solid South will no longer be lumped in the Democratic bag in 1944; there are those who foresee the formation of a Southern Democratic Party; others who hazard the guess that Dixie will join the Republicans. As proof, they offer the signs of Southern irritations; grudges against the New Deal. Those irritations are there, true enough—but they also exist in many another section of the country (witness the November elections).

This week, Time listed the Dixie grievances so:
New Deal "meddling" with the Negro problem, which the South wants to solve in its own way and at its own chosen time. (Chief offender in Southern eyes: Eleanor Roosevelt.)

New Deal labor legislation—antithetical to the open-shop South.
Farm policy and rising control— which many a Southern farmer hates like the hot sun.

States' Rights—a convenient term for resentments against bureaucracy, red tape, rationing forms, etc.

the guess that she will pick up and leave is a risky one. The old party still holds too many of the South's hopes and dreams; there may be a great number of votes for Wendell Willkie if he makes the race, but there will be no stampede out of the stockade. Besides, for one thing, is too good, and in such times, ideals don't go far with the voting people.

Of course, we shall be only too glad to help La Belle France back to her feet again. And, still, sometimes we wonder if we shall ever get LaFayette paid for.

New Game
British Pilots Now Carry War to Europe Sans Bombs

Life in the skies over captive Europe isn't what it once was. There are nights, of course, when British bombers are heavy over the strongly-defended cities, but in these times fewer fighters come up to meet the marauders and bombs are often dropped almost in peace. With the ascendancy of Allied air power, new techniques are coming into play, and their coming may signal the far-off breakdown of the German war machine.

There was, for instance, the RAF flight dropping its phonograph records to the people of Berlin, a little master stroke of practical psychological warfare. Fake German aircraft, flitting over into the streets, brought confusion to the Nazi rationing system, set up a new class of saboteurs on the enemy's home front, and contributed to the distress of the Third Reich. The bogus tickets had previously been dropped in Essen as part of a campaign for confusion.

In Denmark, British parachutists are reported to be staking boldly into war plants, and fixing their bombs while the workers stand by; in Norway, camps are alleged to be springing up, complete with small armies, ready for the day when the liberators come back to the land. Everywhere, there is a new stirring. New chinks appear in Hitler's armor.

The air war is in the stage now that presages growing advantages for the United Nations. Espionage and intelligence should become more efficient, and there should be aid to resisting populations in greater quantities. Part of the process of breaking down Germany must be wrought from the inside, and that process is now beginning. The Reich comes to the time of greatest danger.

Bondsmen
Mecklenburgers Must Be To Meet The New Quota

The community must not be allowed to forget the supreme importance of the coming second bond drive, and what the new goals for county, state and nation mean to the financing of the war. To the 4,000 men and women of Mecklenburg whose task is the selling of over five and a half million dollars in bonds, purchasers large and small must turn in greater numbers than ever before. This is only the second of the Treasury's big drives, but it is one of the most difficult of all to complete with success.

A record amount of money still circulates in the country, but is drained off rapidly by rising costs, by the virtual voluntary freezing of business funds in banks, and by the widely expanded system of taxation. Now, therefore, it will be more difficult for the general public to buy its share of the bonds—

Heritage of America
THE GOLDEN MOMENTS, QUICK TO HAST!

(Our only standard, in choosing excerpts for this little, was that the writer sing of America and its scenes. We think of you who sing most truly or with deeper feeling than Mark Twain, Kipling, or any other. We have chosen a few paragraphs from Cross Creek, her delightful exposé of life in inner Florida.—The Editors.)

A dozen other whites and a baker's dozen of other blacks have lived at one time or another among us, or in the immediate vicinity of the Creek, coming and going like the robins. We are clannish and do not feel the same about them as we feel about ourselves. It was believed in the beginning that I was one of these. Surely the Creek would drive me away. When it was clear that a freezing of the orange crop was as great a catastrophe to me as to the others, surely I would not be here long. It was when Old Martha, who had set up the Brides as Old Boss and Old Miss, referred to me one day at Young Miss, that it was understood by all of us that I was here to stay.

For myself, the Creek satisfies a thing had long gone hungry and unfed since my childhood days. I am often lonely. Who is not? But I should be lonelier in the heart of a city. And, as Tom says, "So much happens here." I walk at sunset, east along the road. There are no houses in that direction, except the abandoned one where the wild plums grow, white with bloom in springtime. I usually walk halfway to the village and back again. No one goes, like myself, on foot, except Bernie Bass, perhaps, striding firmly in rubber boots with his wet sack of fish over his shoulder. Sometimes black Henry passes with a mule and wagon, taking a load of lighter's home to Old Boss; sometimes a neighbor's car, or the wagon that turns off toward the turpentine woods to collect the resin, or the timber truck coming out from the pine stands. The white folks call "Hey!" and children wave gaily and with pleasure. A stranger driving by usually slows down and asks whether I want a lift. The Negroes touch a finger to their ragged caps and extend courteously not to see me. Evening after evening I walk as far as the magnolias near Big Hammock, and see no one.

Folk call the road lonely, because there is not human traffic and human living. Because I have walked it so many times and seen such a cumulus of life there, it seems to me, one of the most populous highways of my acquaintance. I have walked it in ecstasy and in joy it is beloved. Every pine tree, every gallberry bush, every pistachio vine, every horse nutting in the undergrowth, it vibrates. I have walked it in trouble, and the wind in the trees beside me is easing. I have walked it in despair, and the red of the sunset if my own blood dissolving into the night's darkness. For all such things were on earth before us, and will survive after us, and it is given to us

to join ourselves with them and to be comforted.
The road goes west of the village, past open pine woods and gallery flats. An eagle's nest is a ragged cluster of sticks in a tall tree, and one of the eagles is usually black and silver against the sky. The other perches near the nest, touched and proud, like a yellow throat. There is no magic here except the magic of the four miles to the Creek and stirring, like the bleak, portentous beginning of a good tale. The road curves sharply; the vegetation thickens, and around the bend massed into dense hammock. The hammock breaks, if pushed back on either side of the road, and set down in its brooding heart is the orange grove.

Any grove or any wood is a fine thing to see. But the magic here, strangely, is not apparent from the road. It is necessary to leave the impersonal highway, to step inside the rusty gate and close it behind. By this, an act of faith is committed, through which one accepts blindly the communion of life. One is now inside the grove, out of one world and in the mysterious heart of another. Enchantment lies in different things for each of us. For me, it is in this: to step out of the bright sunlight into the shade of orange trees; to walk under the arched canopy of their jade-like leaves; to see the long shingles of lichen-trunks that stand in a geometric rhythm; to feel the mastery of a seclusion that has shafts of light striking through it. It goes back, perhaps, to the fairy tales of childhood, to Hansel and Gretel, to Babes in the Wood, to Alice in Wonderland, to all half-luminous places that feed the imagination as a child. It may go back still farther, to racial Druid memories, to a staccato sense of safety and delight in an open forest. And after long years of spiritual homelessness, of nostalgia, here is that mystic loveliness of childhood again. Here at home—An old thread, long tangled, comes straight again.

Who owns Cross Creek? The red-birds, I think, more than I, for they will have their nests ever in the face of delinquent mortgages. And after I am dead, who am I childless, the human ownership of grove and field and hammock is hypothetical. But a long line of red-birds and whippoorwills and bluejays and ground doves will descend from the present owners of these old orange trees, and their claim will be less subject to dispute than that of any human heirs. Houses are individual and can be owned, like nests, and fought for. But what of the land? It seems to me that the earth may be borrowed but not bought; it may be used, but not owned. It gives itself in response to love and tending, offers its seasonal flowering and fruiting. But we are tenants and not possessors, lovers and not masters. Cross Creek belongs to the wind and the rain, to the sun and the seasons, to the cosmic secrecy of seed, and beyond all, to time.

Rendezvous
—By Dorman Smith



Lewis Will Behave
By Raymond Clapper

THE reason there won't be a big coal strike this year is that John L. Lewis has decided not to attempt one in the middle of a war. Recently the war has been winning in Washington. That has not been the case in the coal fields, but Lewis, second—after some contractor gets his or some group gets his—

But the war sometimes wins out, although we don't hear as much about these instances as we might. For instance, the war won out over the coal strike in 1918. The coal fields were working again in the middle of the year. Lewis has decided not to attempt one in the middle of a war. Recently the war has been winning in Washington. That has not been the case in the coal fields, but Lewis, second—after some contractor gets his or some group gets his—

If only for a few days as a kind of demonstration of strength. The last time, in 1941, the mines were tied up during April. The chief controversy was a wage differential between Northern and Southern mines. Then 50,000 miners were out over the issue of introducing the closed shop into the captive mines owned by the steel companies.

Neither of these questions had the proportions that the current issue does—the demand for a wage increase of 42 a day. Mining living costs slumped last year. But this year President Roosevelt notified all



"If you told me what I want to know about you, I wouldn't have to go to fortune tellers!"

A Name's A Name
Our Dark Stars
By Dick Young

OUR Southern Negro is a picturesque character and even in his wrondding adds a different and mysterious flavor to the town. Take for instance, the nicknames of those who fall into the spell of the law. Many unusual and interesting characters, made more distinctive by eye-catching and attention-drawing monikers, have paraded across the records of Charlotte's Police Department and the older officers can regale you with the exploits of "Stormy Weather," "Big Meat" or "Turkey Red."

Many of the nicknames have a reason—our colored friends have a way of dramatizing ordinary experiences and specializations the more exciting. Some of the man-made designations are really underpinned, others are hidden in the mysteries of the individual's life and activities. "Stormy Weather," a striking man, who reeled in court appearances with her flashy clothes, was more recently before the bar on liquor charges, but her officers think her name must have sprung from an earlier phase of her life, when a tempestuous career must have brought her the name of "Stormy Weather." "Big Meat," a Negro thief who attained a local reputation for quick flowing tears, must have been so knighted because of his love for such porcine delicacies as pigs' feet, chittlings, or porkies, or perhaps he may have made off with somebody else's porker to fire him that name by his fellows.

"Pie Meat's" greatest claim to local distinction was his ability to start crying before the Judge. He could turn on the showers at the slightest provocation and he was such a master of psychology that he could put on his crying act just at the right moment when the Judge was ready to send him to the roads. Until the jurist got on to him, he escaped many a day improving the state's highway system. Nobody around the nation house could think of "Turkey Red," an appellation but all were ready to testify to her prowess as a fighter. Many of the comradre who has fallen under the blow of her scolding epithets, or perhaps she may have made off with somebody else's gun to fire him that name by his fellows.

And there's "Eight Ball" Barnes, whose name officers couldn't reason out but it must have been because of his ease in getting into a jam. At any rate, his "eight ball" career was fittingly climaxed with his experience in a Mecklenburg chair, a chair where his feet were frozen and had to be amputated. This incident clinched the late lamented Barnes with an opportunity for an expiate that brought an official investigation.

Contradictions provided at least one citizen with his name. "O.K." was the designation of a Negro who was frequently behind the bars for checkfasting. If there was anybody who wasn't "O.K." it was this checkfasting. But "John Overcoat" was really dubbed and bore his title with consistency. He got that way because of his peculiar for overcoat stealing. "Running Tom" was another—he could out-run a scared rabbit when the cops got after him for some theft. He quitted his career by leading the police a merry chase in a series of pure stunts.

A mere recital of some of the names gleaned from police records is interesting to say the least. Here are a few of the nicknames: "Jigger," Honey Pie, Fossun, Noses, Rubber Crack, Bama, Blackjack, Pig Eye, Black Boy, Glindo Rose, Snowbird, Rabbit, Rabbit, Red and Run, Gizzard, Fizzle Ears, Mickey Mouse, Moonshine, Big Foot.

War Aims?
No Social Gain
By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK
ARTHUR KOESTLER, brilliant writer, some weeks ago announced he was no hope of social progress from this war. Fortune magazine has taken up the theme. It finds there is "distraction" among those who thought social improvements would come out of the war. "Scarcely anybody speaks of the war as a revolution any more," says Fortune, plainly.

Some people can hardly wait for the war to end before starting a new lost generation. And where will that new lost generation be? It is the strikes and miseries that are being met. Has it picked its city already? Will it be Paris again this time? Mr. Koestler gives up too easily and Fortune magazine gives up too readily.
I admit that politicians, the world around, follow the immemorial pattern of describing this war as a people's war when they are losing, and as a war to preserve the grand old traditions when they are winning. I admit that once, in the springtime of our defeat, under the weary, invigorating winds of failure, we talked of the great improvement in education, health, security, etc. necessary if we were to overcome. Now it is the winter of our approaching victory. We seem to have reached it without improving anything for anybody. We seem to be winning, and yet we are not winning. Old Tories, who feared for a time that this war was a war to preserve the grand old traditions when they were winning, are now talking of the great improvement in education, health, security, etc. necessary if we were to overcome. Now it is the winter of our approaching victory. We seem to have reached it without improving anything for anybody. We seem to be winning, and yet we are not winning. 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