

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

And Evening Chronicle

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

W. O. David Jr., President Burke Davis, Editor
and General Manager Mrs. David Jones, Secretary.

Found. J. E. Dowd, USNR, Vice-President and Editor, on leave for the duration of the war. W. O. David, 1865-1871

The daily edition of The Charlotte News was established in 1888. The Evening Chronicle was established in 1901. It 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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By carrier: 30 cents a week; one month, 87 cents. By mail: One month \$7.00; three months, \$21.00; six months, \$42.00; one year, \$81.00.

THURSDAY, MAY 6, 1943

The Smile

Suddenly, Russia Becomes Broom Friends With Us

To those listeners with keen ears tuned in on the Russian wave length, this must seem a strange, changing world these past few weeks. For Russians are making new noises and sending them forth to Americans. There is a change of heart in the Soviet Union; since Hitler's invasion we have been allies of a sort; but now we are true friends, officially and unofficially. And this is no trend to cause derision in the United States, but a trend to bring forth rejoicing. Somewhere, something big has happened.

Who remembers back some months ago when Admiral Standley blared forth from Moscow that Stalin was keeping American aid a secret from the Russian people? And who remembers that Washington was shocked, as at a sudden burp at the banquet table? Who remembers that Sumner Welles, on that day, beat the censors in a foot race to the press, cleared his throat and said: "I cannot make a statement. I have not yet seen the full text of Admiral Standley's statement?" And have you noted that Sumner, so far as the world knows, has not yet seen the text these months later?

Yes, something has happened since the Admiral roared out clear and bold that Uncle Sam was being double crossed in Russia. Either the booted Red soldiers who went into dances at the sight of U. S. tanks for Russia, or the Russian people themselves, or, as we hear, Joe Stalin and his staff, nursing an inside tip, have changed the course for Russia. Suddenly, Russian papers are full of praise for the Allies, especially the American. Obsolete U. S. weapons, and U. S. fighting in Tunisia, U. S. bombers over Germany—anything U. S.

And there are new threats against the Fascists. Russia says, perhaps on the basis of new knowledge, "coming invasion, that the American and Allied arms will soon strike for victory. Do you recognize this Russia, just after the break with Poland?"

Among papers found on a captured Nazi general is an order for the removal of Stalingrad's population to Germany. Perhaps the Russian Army will do indeed. It is going that way.

We Give Up

Uphot of Tax Planning It Too Much for Us

In the beginning there was Rumi, and he was the People's Favorite. But the champion tax defector, says Means Committee, the Republicans dissenting. Bob Doughton headed the obstinate group which resisted all efforts to put taxation on a current basis, though he sharply denoted that state-meat. His own plan, a sort of watered Rumi, was voted down, too. And then there were Rumi and Doughton in the discard. Both lived, somehow.

This week, the House really got down to work. It should have been weary of Rumi this and Rumi that, after all these long months, enduring pressure from without and pressure from within. But the House showed a special kind of limps which enabled it to resist anything. It was almost spinelessness. It named the Rumi plan, and then defeated it. It voted down Doughton, almost voted him by, and then turned back into the forgotten discard and pulled out the old Forand-Robertson plan.

The new plan, miracle of miracles, was not "forgiveness" at all, but it still gave the taxpayer a "gift" of some 75 per cent of his 1942 income. The best previous estimates had been up to 30 per cent, and that had the Treasury and Bob Doughton screaming about loss of "assets" and "windfalls" to the rich taxpayer. Now they've wound up with a scheme which could find no friends at the beginning to introduce it.

The House may be in the groove, revolutionizing the tax structure. Bob Doughton may be exerting a great leadership and statesmanlike influence. It doesn't seem so to us. It seems, instead, that the confusion began in the Ways and Means Committee room and that it spread with such great rapidity that no one in the House now has the least idea of what's what in a tax way for tomorrow. We can draw some such conclusion.

Case Of Nerves

The Duce Forgets Himself, And Makes a Silly Request

In the logs of the week's business, we hope readers didn't miss the plea of *Il Duce* to *Der Fuehrer* as concerns events brewing in Tunisia. Through London, by way of Morocco, we hear that correspondents of neutral papers in Berlin—whatever all that may mean—have reported that Mussolini is asking for help, immediately.

That might well be. For months, the Duce has needed nothing else. This time, however, assistance must be forthcoming quickly. Perhaps the jittery dictator foresees that he and his people are to be deserted once the Allied forces strike across blue *Mare Nostrum*; he knows, perhaps, that the great wall abutting in Northern Italy means his ruin. But he can still cry that he must have help, for danger approaches rapidly.

He not only wants, according to the roundabout report, some help for Italy proper—where economic and military considerations are important—but some help in Africa as well. He wants of Hitler (and here he makes a bold assumption) the assurance that Italian troops will be allowed to retreat from Tunisia with the same speed and comfort as that allowed the German soldiers. Mussolini has his back up. He has also forgotten his rightful place in the Axis world.

Somewhat, with all the noise from the approaching British-American armies, he cannot think clearly. He cannot remember that along the bloody road from El Alamein it was the Italians who were abandoned, who flowed to the British rear without escort. He has forgotten that when the super-race is forced to retreat it runs pell-mell, like an army of yellow men, leaving all its allies and reasonable facilities thereof to suffer whatever fate may be. Mussolini has forgotten himself. He must know, as often as he's been to Brenner Pass, who has right of way in case of retreat. That's elementary, Brutus.

First Blow

Park Board Is One Proven Foe of Juvenile Delinquency

We are applauding today for the City Park and Recreation Board as the first local agency to take any definite step toward the solution of the problem of acute teen-age problem. The Board, at the suggestion of Mrs. Mary Sills, offers the use of the Service Men's Club to youngsters during the afternoon hours. If, as they say, the young people need some place where they may gather for games and dancing, the Army, where adequate supervision can be offered, seems to us ideal.

If the offer, extended to the school children of the City is not taken up by large numbers of youngsters, then we will lose confidence in the sentiment expressed by students from time to time that "there's no place to go in this town." If the modern idea of a place to go isn't satisfied by a well-aerated recreational center as the Army Club, then there isn't much to be done for the restless teen-ager.

We think Mrs. Sills has a working idea, and because it is the best and only idea we have heard advanced by any of the agencies which were so recently excited about juvenile delinquency in the City, we are happy to see it put before the public, and the children. We think it behooves other agencies to offer children the benefit of their own ideas and facilities.

At least, the problem of delinquency, though stealing in downtown stores has been solved, as we suspected it should, public notice can never be combated by brave talk and by wagging heads. If there is a serious problem in that direction here—and there are continued claims that the situation grows worse—then it is time that others offered help in fighting it. If there were several such offers as that made by the Park Board, we'd feel more confident of progress.

One Poor Excuse

A Yankee At King Stalin's Court

By Dorothy Thompson

WASHINGTON

"MISSION TO MOSCOW" is supposed to "portray" living history. It opens with a speech by Joseph Davies, former American Ambassador to Moscow, who, by his presence, lends authenticity to the film based on his book. The characters are living people who have played a role in the history of our times.

The object in making the film is, we are told by Mr. Davies, to create a better understanding of Russia. Judged by any of these objectives the film is phony. The characters are phony; the history is phony; and understanding will be distorted, not clarified.

No new light is thrown on Russia. We see Russian factories, all of which have been better depicted in Russian films. I recall an old Russian film "Turkibul," dramatizing the building of the railroad between Turkestan and Siberia, showing the Russian peoples conformed in the great pioneering effort to conquer their own frontiers and change a backward country into a modern state. It was impressive. Nothing as good is depicted in "Mission to Moscow."

The picture is full of fiction, presented as fact. We are introduced to the Japanese Ambassador, Mr. Shigemitsu who is now Japanese Foreign Minister. Mr. Davies meets him immediately after his arrival in Moscow and remarks in his diary that he was a very able man—as, indeed, he is. In this picture he is presented, appearing at a reception, as a stock butoon.

No attention is paid to facts of time. Mr. Davies, coming back to America via England is depicted as entering his ship at the moment when the German-Russian pact

is signed. Later in Washington, he testifies before a Senate committee that the pact was signed in two months, that is to say in August or September. But the Russian German pact was signed exactly one week before the war was declared.

The United States Senate as depicted is composed exclusively of isolationists and idiots. It would be a bad film to send abroad to nations that don't believe in parliamentary systems. I myself have testified on several occasions before Senate Committees, sometimes against the prevailing opinion, but I have never encountered as a body, such morons as depicted in this film. It is historically absurd to try to prove that another attitude in 1939 on the part of the isolationists might have prevented the war. By that time it was much too late.

The famous purge trials are grossly fictionalized. Three several trials stretched over a period of two years. Here they are all telescoped into one, and in it is a figure who never appeared in any of the public trials—namely Marshal Tukhachevsky. He was arrested, together with other generally secretly court-martialed and shot. There was no possibility of confronting him—as happens in this remarkable picture with Krestinsky and Bukharin, because both of them were already dead. No one knows what Marshal Tukhachevsky said for or against himself—one except Warner Brothers.

As an American, living under the great tradition of Western law, I intensely resent the inference of the film that these trials established justice according to any procedure acceptable to us. In the film Mr. Davies remarks that he believes the men guilty. Maybe. But these trials are no proof. There is no attorney for the defense, and

no cross-examination of the defendants, except by the prosecution. No witnesses are called. All testimony is taken in confidence, except Krestinsky, who is condemned on the evidence of the others, and their confessions are the sole evidence. Under Anglo-Saxon law a man may not be compelled to testify against himself and must be defended, even though he does not want to be.

In case of a capital crime, involving a death sentence, our jurisprudence will not accept a plea of guilty. The duty has to be proved by incontrovertible evidence. Is it the purpose of this film to suggest that those safeguards, for the establishment of which men have worked and fought through the ages, are to be discarded? Is the public to be educated to accept this sort of court proceeding?

The film presents Karl Radek as a peculiarly loathsome character, contrasting as he did to participation in the whole plot. But it fails to record that Mr. Radek was not executed by the Soviet. He got a ten years' prison sentence. Why? Maybe Warner Brothers didn't know that answer. The tastelessness of the film is appalling. The British and Polish Ambassadors (also representing allies of ours) are presented as asses—in contrast, of course, to the infernal wisdom of us Americans.

The President of the United States is introduced—he a voice, a back, and whiff of smoke, much in the manner that God is introduced on the stage. The producers showed no such piety toward Churchill, Stalin or Kallipin. It would have been more convincing if they had, for the portraits of them are terrible.

It has been suggested that this film needs cutting. It does—indefinitely.

"Gosh! That Was a Narrow Escape!"

—By Dorman Smith



Could Be Worse

Sweden Leans To Us

By Raymond Clapper

STOCKHOLM

IN OPERA SQUARE, across from my hotel window, I can see a statue of King Charles XII of Sweden, with arm extended pointing a sword eastward toward Russia. For two and a half centuries the Swedish have remembered this national hero who led the Swedish Army in a brave but disastrous campaign against the Russians.

Thus the traditional Swedish fear of a Russian attack has deep roots. But I think there is a mistaken tendency in America to overweigh this tradition. Ever since El Alamein the Swedes have been convinced that the Allies would win, and a majority of the people want them to win. Recently there has been some fear here that Russia and Germany might make a separate peace. German propaganda has been playing on that theme, causing increasing anxiety here. Hence Stalin's May Day adoption of the unconditional-surrender objective brings a sense of relief among many here.

Fear of a separate peace has been voiced in the newspaper Social Demokraten, organ of the Social Democrats, who control the Government. Social Democrats who control no responsible opinion in Germany now expects the war to end in a German victory. It says that the Third Reich, while surrendering hope of an absolute victory, now aims at a separate Russo-German peace, which is reflected in the German press.

Moscow's abrupt action toward Poland has added greatly to fears that preparations for a separate peace were being made. The liberal paper Dagens Nyheter here said that the Polish Government, Stalin had let his Allies understand that the Soviet was waging her war according to her own ideas, and that she would establish such a peace as suited her best.

I happened to be in London when the Polish affair developed, and I am certain there was

deep concern in that capital about Russia's attitude. So Stalin's May Day declaration vastly improved the situation around. This rather deflates an amazingly effective German propaganda maneuver, which built up the Polish crisis in the winter when the Russians were good into retaliation. That in turn was built up into a war of nerves regarding the imminence of a separate peace.

German propaganda is active here, under the direction of Hans Thomsen, former Nazi Minister to Washington, who is now Minister to Sweden. The German Legation, directly facing the Royal Palace, flies the Swastika from the magnificent flagpole on the Embankment here. The establishment is supposed to have a staff of between three and four hundred, although many of them are not listed as officially connected.

It is an odd sensation to sit down with a friend for a drink and discover a party of Germans moving in to sit at the next table. Strange persons come up to Americans, introduce themselves as newspaper reporters, and begin asking pointed questions about America. Newly arrived Americans must be on their guard against falling to strangers.

It should not be inferred that the Swedish Government is especially lenient or partial to the Nazis. The United States Office of War Information has its own establishment here, which is very active in the United Nations' cause. The newspapers cooperate in publishing material friendly to the Allied cause.

The hub of it, so far as I can size it up thus far, is that no obstacles are put in the way of our side. Certainly all the Americans I have talked with are warm in praise of the attitude of the Swedish people and officials, and consider that here they are among real friends who, regardless of their infirmities, attitude toward Russia, want to see no separate peace and want an Allied victory.

For Status Quo

A Rough Week

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

PRESIDENT JAMES B. CONANT of Harvard wrote a piece for the Atlantic Monthly this week announcing that the Atlantic Monthly is finished. (I don't believe it is finished, of course, but it is important that the president of Harvard University thinks it is.)

Dr. Conant called for the appearance of a new kind of man, an "American radical," who would take his ideas from America's Jefferson rather than Europe's Marx. He says that this fellow, when he comes along, will believe that every man is as good as his neighbor, and is entitled to a real chance at a decent living. One function of the American radical, says the Doctor, will be to keep the country from splitting into right and left wings, which might otherwise sit down and stare at each other while the world went to hell.

But this issue was supposed to have been settled at the last election. In Washington some people will tell you that last November proved a conservative drift was on. Here Dr. Conant says otherwise, precisely as if there had been no such election.

That is the wonderful thing about democracy. It is always undergoing alterations while doing business. It is never finished. A number of Americans thought they had settled forever the liberal hash of one prominent graduate of Harvard, and here the president of the whole school pops up.

And the Supreme Court of the United States picked this week to reverse itself on the famous pamphlet case. Last year the Court ruled that Fort Smith, Ark., and other communities, had the right to impose a tax on the sale of books. Now the Court has ruled that Fort Smith happened to be \$10, which meant that if you had only 9.99 to spend you did not have the right of free press; but that if you had one penny more, the Constitution would be allowed to protect you.

That decision (with Mr. Justice Frankfurter, shockingly, on the majority side) would have allowed each local community to set up a kind of juridical Sears, Roebuck catalogue, so much money needed to enjoy free press, so many dollars for free speech, and so on. The doctrine would have had the Constitution reserve its favors for those with the price, a very immoral thing.

Now there has been a reversal. (With Mr. Frankfurter still on the wrong side.) It was no ground of my profession to note that the American Newspaper Publishers Association, practically every member of which has \$10, nonetheless joined in fighting this curious concept, that you have the right of free speech, as you are round asleep in bed, but if you want to get up and use the right, it will cost you money. The implications of the reversal are vast. Isn't the poll-tax the same kind of business, a lock set on the exercise of a basic right? So we had this sudden, liberal turn this week.

Not only that. Representative Ham Fish happened this week to send one of his usual broadside letters, which attack Wendell Willkie, to Mr. Roland B. Marvin, an up-State New York Republican leader of some size. Mr. Marvin not only turned upon Ham Fish, snarling, but said it was an outrage to use Government franking privileges for this purpose, and then added that Mr. Willkie was a priceless asset to the Republican Party. You could have knocked the Republican isolationists over with a mailing frank. They have been going along, gleefully kidding Mr. Willkie, and voting against every international measure in Washington, and then this happens. It was as if a kitten had turned on them with a growl and a speech.

Meanwhile, the life-long Republican, Mr. Ben H. Tarkenton, told a group of Midwestern Republicans in Chicago, quite bluntly, that the United States was already in a kind of league of nations, and would stay in it; that we tried to get out, it would be at the cost of blood and suffering. The reaction against certain recent Republican votes, such as those against the trade treaties, comes within this Republican ranks.

All in all, it was a week of rough weather for believers in things-as-they-are.

Side Glances



"Yes, but I'm almost old enough to enlist in the Marines! I feel like Benedict Arnold when everybody asks how's my sister going in the WAACs!"

Platform Of The People

Help Save The Forests

Editors, The News:

Forest fires in the Southern states this season are taking the highest toll ever. Ninety-five per cent of the fires are not intentional. They destroy millions of board feet of merchantable timber, and literally uncountable billions of young seedling trees which might provide lumber for future generations.

The principal reason for this destruction is the traditional public attitude toward forest fires. It has been fostered generally that there would be plenty of timber left. That no longer is true. A timber famine is not impossible, even in the South. Moreover, this section is at the beginning of a new era of development of industry based upon forest products. That de-

velopment, well started before the war, will resume again—but only if the timber is here.

In an effort to awaken the public to the losses caused by forest fires, the Forest Farmers Association Co-operative has asked some 250 large banks, power companies, wood-using industries and similar institutions to advertise to try to develop a more healthy public attitude.

This Association also worked to have standing timber placed under the protection of the National Forest Law, and FBI agents are working on incendiary fires in every Southern state. Because of the public attitude, prosecutions are slow, convictions difficult, and a sentence often of no value. Meanwhile fires burn on. Southern losses in taxable property may triple to \$50,000,000 this season.

This letter is an appeal for your further co-operation. Frankly, we do not know of anything more which the Association can do. Apart from war emergency expenditures, forestry is a mighty important source of wealth and employment for the Southern communities, especially the smaller ones. They can lead off to take the losses which fires are causing. If they fold up, the smaller centers will lose valuable trading areas. It looks like it is up to all of us to handle a very serious situation. We need the public and building a better attitude, your aid will, of course, be essential and invaluable.

WAYNE O. MILLER, Secretary, Forest Farmers Assoc., Valdosta, Ga.