

DECEMBER 12, 1944

Cold Dough

You'd expect any board with three "Mo's" and a "Sandy" on it to sit with a lot of unpaid accounts on the books, and doing nothing about collecting them. The "Mo's" and "Sandy" wouldn't do it in their own businesses, you can bet your sweet life. They wouldn't be doing it in the public business except for an exceedingly sloppy precedent which has somehow taken root in this community.

The present Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County—a good board, we hasten to say, and frugal, as would be expected with its predominant Scotch composition—is not to blame for the origination of the precedent of not compelling people to pay their taxes. That is an inheritance from previous boards, but we think that there is ground to charge this board with tolerating the condition rather than attacking it.

Substantial amounts in unpaid taxes are due the County for years going all the way back to 1928, beyond which point all unpaid taxes were forgiven by the Legislature. For the years 1928-1934 alone \$137,487 is owing—all of it ten years or more past due. The amounts increase as the years advance: viz.:

Table with 2 columns: Year and Amount. Rows include 1925 (\$22,217), 1926 (\$24,008), 1927 (\$26,000), 1928 (\$26,607), 1929 (\$35,342), 1930 (\$44,005), 1931 (\$50,789), 1932 (\$58,785), 1933 (\$67,794).

The \$373,372 due for the years listed added to the \$137,487 for prior years makes a total of \$510,859, which is to say a lot of dough. Collections are extraordinarily good in these extraordinarily lush times, which is all the more reason, we believe, for going after delinquent taxes while the going is good. Otherwise, the Legislature will come along, as it does periodically, and forgive all unpaid taxes of a certain age, with the practical effect of demonstrating that it is possible to get out of paying taxes to Mecklenburg County by just not paying.

Beside, lenience is not necessarily an accommodation. Chances are that the people who owe 1928 taxes owe for all the years up to the present, and will continue to default. Whereas if they were made one to toe the line, there would be some chance of keeping them up to date.

We see many reasons for making them pay now. We see none for letting them get by without paying.

Tar Heel Share

The annual report of the Julius Rosenberg Fund, a foundation which spent something over one and a half million dollars in the cause of race relations last year, chiefly in the North Carolina, is a shining example, but its name crops up time after time in the recounting of the impressive Rosenberg story.

Its name does not appear at all on the debit side of the ledger, with the riots and race-baiting, the flagrant cases of discrimination, and violence between whites and Negroes. It is not included in that darker phase of the story, in which the mother of the colored girl who, when asked how Hitler should be punished, said: "Make him black and make him live in America."

But the state appears often in the story of progress, and often enough to indicate that same progress in race relations is going on in North Carolina, without ballyhoo. Examples: The recent equalization of white and Negro teachers' salaries; the award of the Mayflower Cup to J. Saunders Redding for his No Day of Triumph in the state; the important statement from the Durham Conference by a group of Negro leaders, that awarding the Fellowship to Negro teachers from Fayetteville and Winston-Salem for graduate work at Harvard and Pittsburgh; the appearance of Dr. Howard Odum's book, Race and Rumors of Race.

These are only straws in the wind, so to speak, but they tell a North Carolina story of importance, and that

Statesmen At Work

(Excerpts From The Congressional Record)

WHILE the House was discussing the present farm labor problem last week, Rep. C. W. Merrison (R-Mich.) asked a little fun. He couldn't, for the life of him, get the floor. Rep. Anderson of Minnesota was speaking, when this occurred. Mr. DONDERO and Mr. MORRISON of North Carolina rose. Mr. ANDERSON: I yield to the gentleman from Michigan. Whereupon Rep. Dondero spoke, before turning the floor back to Rep. Merrison. Then Rep. Merrison lifted again: Mr. MORRISON, Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield? Mr. COLE of New York, Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield? Mr. ANDERSON: I yield to the gentleman from New York. Rep. Cole then spoke, and the House proceeded paying its attention to Rep. Merrison. Finally, as Rep. Anderson was winding up, Mr. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks.

The Laggards

The Treasury announced last week, with regret, that the Sixth War Loan drive and the one to follow. If the Department was gratified at the magnificent response of big investors in the bond campaign, it did not say so.

For the fact that the nation has oversubscribed its sixth consecutive quota of bonds was not due to the patriotism of the individual American at all—it was due to wise investment of big money.

And that concerns the Treasury just as it does the preceding bond drive. Individual sales are about two billion dollars behind, and E bond sales are almost a billion dollars behind. That defeats one important purpose of the drive, which is to drain off surplus cash and put it into savings and thus avert inflation.

There was never any anxiety as to whether the Government could swing these war bond issues. Banking houses and other big financial firms had the drive to provide money for war. But the average man fell down on the job.

It is almost too late to hope that he can make up for lost time now, and the deadline set early this morning is falling badly. There may be any number of reasons for this failure, the chief of them perhaps that it is not, after all, the little buyer who has all this surplus cash which is floating around. Whatever the reason, it remains that the small investor is not coming through—and has not, since the first. In that respect, every drive has been something of a failure.

Face The Facts

Harris Newman of Wilmington, a veteran State assemblyman, put himself on record recently as favoring tax reduction on industry in North Carolina, and in the course of his statement he said this:

"In 1933 I was chairman of the House Appropriations Committee of the General Assembly and I carried the bill for the Senate Finance Committee, and at both of these sessions it was the understanding that the tax reduction would be heavy tax imposed on business and industry in general would be alleviated with an improvement in economic conditions."

"Conditions have improved; the State has a surplus on hand and business and industry in general are entitled to relief."

That must have made sense to the casual reader, for in the presence of swollen incomes and a rapidly-growing surplus, tax relief is almost automatic.

If North Carolina is to slash its tax rates in any respect, it must take pencil and paper and estimate what its revenue of tomorrow will be. If we can assume that our present level of the headline tax at all, all the high of 1944 it stands at \$76,688,468, including reserves then we can, and should, proceed to afford tax relief. But if we must estimate that post-war revenue will shrink to something like pre-war levels, then we would be foolish to make any such move at all.

The facts are: 1. That in 1939 (considering that the last normal pre-war year) North Carolina's total revenue and reserve was \$36,000,000. 2. That in 1944 our expenditures are well over \$58,000,000, which would leave us a deficit of some \$22,000,000 if we should experience a return to normal in revenue, and continue at the present rate of spending. This someone has determined what our post-war income is likely to be, and thoughtfully set it against any proposed tax slash, we can have no idea where we stand fiscally. If North Carolina dares to assume what tax experts refuse to assume, and proceeds on the basis that present revenue levels will remain permanent, then we face possible severe reductions in state spending. And that means a deep cut into vital programs: schools, hospitals, institutions, public welfare. North Carolina can make no such choice at this moment.

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON "Scoble should not hesitate, say Churchill's critics, to act as if he were in a conquered city, confronted by local rebellion. With the forces under Scoble's command, he should be in a position to give ELAS a lesson that would make it most improbable that others will behave in the same way."

Churchill's critics are saying that he will back up Scoble in whatever Scoble takes along these lines, and that the British must keep and dominate Athens. It would be a splendid thing if Scoble could accomplish this without shedding blood but he should not hesitate to do whatever he has to, Churchill declares.

Meanwhile, he has also leaked out that Prime Minister Churchill refused to accept a coalition Cabinet headed by 83-year-old Themistocles Sophocles which would have contained representatives of all Greek political parties. This might have avoided civil war. Not only the Royalists but EAM-ELAS and even the Communists were willing to serve under Sophocles, but Churchill said no.

British Ambassador Texeper informed the Greeks that Churchill had wired instructions that Papandreu must remain as Premier.

When Winston Churchill was in financial difficulties in 1912, he was helped out from three sources: the late Lord Merv, recently assassinated while in Cairo; Gen. Sir Bernard Louis Spears, now British commander and high commissioner in Syria; and the Hambro family, owners of Hambro's Bank in London.

Hambro's Bank has floated heavy loans in Greece. These loans financed the Athens water works, the Beotian Irrigation project, the Patras railway, and most of the Greek light and power companies.

Through an English mission sitting in Athens, interest on these loans was paid in gold right up until April, 1941, when Greece was invaded by the Germans. It was shortly after that the few countries where payments were made in gold.

The interest rate is high, varying from 7.75 per cent to around 16 per cent. One of the bones of contention between the British Government and the left-wing groups in Greece is the future of these loans. The EAM-ELAS group proposes scaling the interest rate to around a per cent, this other concessions at the expense of Hambro's Bank.

Some diplomats in Washington think that basically this is what part of the Athens shooting is all about.

General Scoble at Athens has been informed in a message from Churchill that SAC (Supreme Allied Command) has been ordered to leave all British troops in Greece and to reinforce them as fully as possible. The SAC (Prime Minister) states that he holds Scoble responsible for destroying or neutralizing all EAM-ELAS groups (National Liberation Front which opposes the King) who approach Athens, and authorizes Scoble to intern any desired number of persons and to issue all regulations necessary for complete control of the streets.

When the shooting begins, said Churchill, it can be expected that ELAS will put women and children in the first line. Scoble is instructed to be "clever" about coping with this and to avoid errors.

Ordered Open Fire "Scoble is also instructed that he should not hesitate to open fire on any armed male in the Greek capital who assaults the authority of the British or of the Greeks who are collaborating with the British. It would be a good thing, said Churchill, if Scoble's forces could be augmented by the forces of the home Greek Government. The British Ambassador, according to the message, is advising Papandreu (Greek Premier supporting the King) not to hesitate.

It is almost too late to hope that he can make up for lost time now, and the deadline set early this morning is falling badly. There may be any number of reasons for this failure, the chief of them perhaps that it is not, after all, the little buyer who has all this surplus cash which is floating around. Whatever the reason, it remains that the small investor is not coming through—and has not, since the first. In that respect, every drive has been something of a failure.

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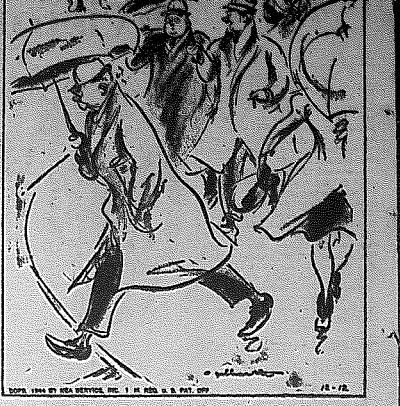
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"He's the most miserable man I know—he predicted so many terrible things before election that now he's afraid they won't happen!"

Everyday Counselor

By Herbert Spough, D.D.

VOICES continue to be raised warning us against the peril of placing our trust in immaterial things. The National Association of Manufacturers in new literature concerning these present and past days reminds us that "man will not live by bread alone."

They might have true comfort in the remainder of this passage which reads: "The word which is written in the Bible, 'But by every word which cometh out of the mouth of God.'"

A new voice of warning is reported by Time Magazine, Dec. 4, that of the well-known author, Frank Werfel. The article states: "Werfel is a Jew who writes so much like a Christian (embezzled Heaven, The Song of Bernadette) that he has more than once led to deny that he is a convert. In his new book, Between Heaven and Earth, published last week, Czech author Werfel (now living in California) tells us that he is a Jew and that he is a deeply religious faith."

"Although he believes that Christ is teaching 'covers a broad high', and that the world 'can be

spiritually healed only if it finds its way back to true Christianity, Werfel will always remain a Jew; there is more than a nation; it is an historical and biological order. . . . into which . . . one cannot come, never in some way released until the last day but one. . . . Like Jeremiah warning against trusting in the arm of man, the modern man of the perils of materialism. This evil, he declares, is responsible for the present conception of the state as an insurance company, and for the German churches. As Werfel writes: 'Without faith in God, man seeks security elsewhere.'"

Sometimes we think the words of Christ are true of this generation. "Eyes have they but they have not seen, ears have they but they hear not." With war destroying the material elements of great civilizations, men in some way come to realize that "the life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment; but the things which we can buy, . . ."

The approaching Christmas is a good time for both personal and personal philosophy of life. If we are going to allow things to make and break our Christmas, giving them first place, or are we going to make the Christ in Christmas, taking Him first in our hearts, our homes, our churches, our lives, and our high, and that the world "can be

or some blood relative has no further use. If the army of the "misbranded" could be demobilized and sent home, or transferred to more appropriate jobs, the medical profession, medical advisers assure us there would be enough room for, and enough money to pay for, the patients and attendants to take care of all real mental sufferers.

This year let us both remedy. Consequently, when legislators yield to the pressure for more hospital beds, let us remember that they are delaying the final solution. And meanwhile, they encourage the "misbranded" to shift the care of their aged or other bothersome members, and more hundreds of persons, to themselves, not as you indicate, they recognize the helplessness of these, whose most commonplace aspects, make the sensitive shiver, to say nothing of the grosser forms, make the sensitive shiver.

We wonder why general hospitals tolerate the use of the term "State hospitals" for places which, a great many times, are better than the state, do not really deserve the older term, "asylums." For asylums were, in fact, the best of places of refuge, and not the American equivalents, too often, of concentration camps.

Anyone who cares to join a national movement for the protection of the mentally ill, and who is a victim of institutionalism (we pay no dues, and draw no color line), or in the name of the "misbranded" state branch in North Carolina, are invited to write the chairman of the Founders Committee of the Starry Cross.

—SAMUEL C. SPALDING, Great Barrington, Mass.

Here's That Address Editors, The News: We are in receipt of letters from Miss Louise Moss and Miss Ruby Ginn, both of Charlotte, requesting the name and address of the soldier whose letter appeared in The News last week, pleading for honorifics. I have his name and his address but not his name. Because of the requests, and a great many others made by telephone, we hasten to publish the soldier's name and address. The editor's name and address are: Mr. W. B. Freeman, 10014th APO 350, U.S. Army, Care Postmaster, New York, N. Y. Editors, The News.

Quote, Unquote In an advance we had to forego our usual heavy barrage by the big guns because we did not have the shells. When the infantry men moved in, 40 of them were killed by a mortar gun, that ordinarily would have been destroyed by the barrage. —Sgt. Clarence W. Alois of the 1st Div., N. Y. on Army Tour to appeal for greater production. Through learning to produce for war, China will learn to produce for peace and will begin to travel the road that leads to industrial progress. —Donald M. Nelson at Chungking. Actually we have shot down in the air over 4,000 planes in the last year and a half, and I have an idea that their (the Japs') production is not as great as they would have us believe. —Vice Adm. Marc A. Mitscher.

Among the Casualties

IT'LL BE ALL OVER BY CHRISTMAS



The Cigarette Mystery

By Marquis Childs

WHEN a brief examination into the current cigarette shortage is enough to dispel a good deal of the mystery, the upward curve of cigarette sales, as charted by statisticians, follows almost exactly the upward curve of prosperity. When people have money to spend, as they have today, they buy tobacco in its most expensive form—cigarettes.

Then you take out approximately 30 per cent of all production for the armed forces—and just now every effort is being made to increase this percentage so that shortages can be eliminated where they are really scarce, which is on the fighting fronts.

The share that goes to the armed forces is distributed in a variety of ways, which is one of the reasons why the boys overseas have been short of smokes.

Cigarettes in varying numbers are put in four different types of rations, distributed free to our fighting men. In each K ration are 12 cigarettes a day. C rations have lately included nine cigarettes a day. The ten-to-one ration package contains enough food for 12 men for one day, and 200 cigarettes.

The ration accessory packet contains 20 cigarettes. These rations are necessarily prepared in large volume. They are stored in warehouses awaiting shipment. And, incidentally, urgent combat needs sometimes absorb much of the stock of cigarettes in the front line.

Add to this the fact that millions of cartons were purchased in September and October as Christmas gifts for boys overseas. They are in the malls en route to the fighting fronts.

Then, of course, you have the home front hoarder. It was slight hints, he is she, raising the price of cigarettes out into the market by three or four times a normal supply.

What these unthinking hoarders can do in four or five days is a short list. They can completely clean out the retail stocks of a common commodity and thereby make the shortage twice as difficult to overcome. Moreover, the hoarder is likely to keep his stock of reserve while he stands a line to get part of the scarce supply.

These very same hoarders are often the ones who start the cigarette shortage. A fellow passenger in a taxi volunteered the explanation to me the other day that all our cigarettes were being shipped under license to the British and the Russians, and that was why we didn't have any.

Notes On A Family Feud

By Samuel Grafton

THE remedy for enmeshment between Britain and the United States is warmth. Everybody knows this; both sides to the current controversy know it; the children in the streets know it; the American boys know it; Mr. Eden and Mr. Stettinius know it. The two countries must come together.

One reason is that the two countries are not facing up to the real issue. Let us not be confused by the form which the near-crisis has taken. British-American affairs has been in Premier Bonomi's hands, over the right of the people of Italy, Belgium and Greece to pick their own government. In form, it is a quarrel over whether there is to be order or disorder in these lands. In form, it is a quarrel over whether Italy's fascist government, or support Bonomi, when and if he enters a Bonomi Government. But these are only the forms.

The British tell us it is a quarrel over whether there is to be "order" in Belgium and Greece. Let us not delude ourselves. If the British Government in Belgium and the Panandreu Government in Greece were anti-British, Mr. Churchill would be against them. The British are not concerned with the form of the government, but with the substance of the government.

A similar situation obtains in Italy, where the British oppose the gentle Count Sforza, on the ground that he is hostile to Premier Bonomi. The British are not concerned with the form of the government, but with the substance of the government.

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