EDITORIAL PAGE

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 1945

On These Terms

The Mecklenburg Bar's endorsement of Judge John J. Parker for the vacancy on the Supreme Court was quite in order and a tribute, as well, to a distinguished citizen and jurist. But it is the sad fact of politics that worth and ability are not always the ruling considerations in Presidential appointments. They are essentials, usually, but they come no better than third to political considerations, such as geography, and the potency and insistence of a man's backing.

It is supposed that President Truman had given no thought to the Supreme Court vacancy before he left for Potsdam. Meantime, a boom has been building up for Senator Warren Austin of Vermont. In Senator Austin's favor is his membership in the "most exclusive club in the world," with which ex-club member Truman is eager to maintain friendly relations. In his favor is his Republican affiliation, for Truman is expected to break with the precedent established by President Roosevelt and recognize the existence of a second party.

In Senator Austin's disfavor is his age (67) and the lack of any judicial experience except, way back, as a prosecutor in Vermont's state court system.

On a simple basis of qualifications, Judge Parker could give the Senator, who is conceded to be a man of, eminence, cards and spades and jokers and right and left bowers. And beside Judge Parker there are elsewhere in the United States, in all probability, a score or more of jurists who would become the Supreme Court. But there is no one other than he about whom it could be said with greater certainty and less difference of opinion that he belongs and has belonged on the Supreme Court. Everyone concedes that in simple justice, as otherwise, he has a claim on the place.

He has been the logical nominee for a vacancy every time one appeared which might with reason go to a Republican. He has received such nominations previously, but only by general acclamation, not, after the one humiliating time years ago, by Presidential message to the Senate. And that very circumstance serves to embarrass the friends of Judge Parker, among whom are many as highly-placed as need be. They are wary of offering his distinctions once more to be overrun by political expediency.

The resolution of the local bar is not at variance with this attitude. Its sponsors know that local bars everywhere are endorsing local favorites, and that only an avalanche of resolutions in behalf of the same person would carry much weight. The resolution, let us say, is simply a going on record, an unobtrusive reminder that here is a man for the office. For the rest, let the office seek him.

A Couple H'isted

Next month, if the Atlanta Federal Reserve Board keeps up its pace, we are looking forward to a treatise on How To Make Baby's Diapers Outlast the Textile Shortage.

This month the Board, as stuffy and stodgy as most, we guess, went plunging into the textile labor shortage and came up with such suggestions as cafeterias, day nurseries and better mill housing. These notions are not so irrelevant as they may sound. Dr. George Heaton, local minister who has for long taken an interest in labor relations, is fond of an illustration which oversimplifies that awe-inspiring term into a question of whether a worker shall have a hook on which to hang his hat and coat or shall pitch them in a pile on the floor. Somebody to look after Baby, and hot food, are equally important.

What's happening in the textile industry, the Reserve Board reports, is that demand is going up while production is going down, with the output for civilian consumption caught between Army needs (well, call it Army orders) and increased exports. Production is going down because (a) there are not enough workers and the workers don't work as long or as regularly as they might.

A prerequisite to attracting workers, the Board believes, is OPA's consent to raise ceiling prices in order that the mills may take advantage of "permissive wage increases." It is highly doubtful, we believe, that such wage increases as have been authorized, which many mills have put into effect already, would divert the labor supply away from more lucrative employment. The fact is that, even with these increases, textile wages remain at the bottom of manufacturing wages in the country. In comparison with war-industry wages, they are not likely to turn any tides.

Indeed, the Atlanta Board tacitly admits, without actually saying so, that only limited relief is to be expected from the suggestions which it passes on. It recognizes that the industry, at a time when it could afford to pay far better wages, is caught because the Government, with one hand, allows war-spawned industries to pay wages that approach the fanciful, and with the other holds established wage scales to moderate increases over pre-war standards. And with the industry, of course, is caught the South.

Holding Corporation

It would be a great mistake, with a war still to be won, most of it yet to be fought, if the nation should suddenly throw General Marshall and Admiral King overboard and start basing its military plans and strategy on the notions of Senator Johnson of Colorado. That gentleman's demand of the Army that it discharge 5,000,000 men instanter—for the reason that the maximum we can use "on the Japanese front" is 3,000,000 men—may be uttered with more regard for the gallery than the field. But it is equally plain that the time is approaching, or has approached, when the Army and Navy in Washington should be asked to produce facts and figures to justify their manpower policies.

One of the weaknesses of any establishment so large and so authoritarian as an army is that no man and no organization can possibly account its exact needs. The military knows this, whence its custom of always providing against any possible shortage by grabbing everything in sight. The GI knows it by the amount of his time that was wasted standing around or going somewhere on the double in order that he might wait a spell after he arrived. Another notorious weakness of the military is its reluctance to part with anything for which, by the furthest stretch of the imagination, it might conceivably have need again.

What looks like a shining example of this hold-everything attitude is to be found in the Army Air Force's disposal of its manpower. On V-E Day, with two wars on its hands, the AAF had 2,300,000 men. For the war in the Pacific, where a huge Naval air force, both land and ship-based, is loathe to share the enemy, the AAF estimates that it will need 2,130,000 men, although in the same breath it announces that 80 per cent of its combat veterans (both airmen and ground crews) will be assigned duties within the United States.

It amounts to downright hoarding of manpower, not to mention the scanty consideration it shows to officers and men who, now that they are done with warring, would like to be going home from the wars. With no derogation implied, the military should be held strictly to showing what it needs and for what. Otherwise the young men of the nation will be kept in uniform for the rest of the decade.

Though victorious Soviet generals are awarded rent-free apartments in Moscow, it cannot be said that the paths of glory in all cases lead but to the gravy.

As tax reform is a thing we always need, and legislators seem none too intelligent about it, would it help to send them to tax reform school?

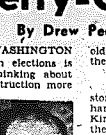
Police were called to quell a domestic brawl in a taxi on the Niagara Peace bridge. The offending pair were told there is a time and place for everything.

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON

ONE conclusion drawn from the British elections is that the people in England were thinking about peace-time prosperity and post-war reconstruction more than the military achievements of their wartime leader.



Likewise in the USA, all the political soundings of Congressmen, all the reports of political experts, indicate that the American public is beginning to worry about what's going to happen here at home after the war. The many letters pouring in on this writer, especially from GI's, substantiate this.

In view of the above, Harry Truman may have pulled his first important domestic boner when he suddenly jerked Judge Fred Vinson out of the War Mobilizer's Office to make him Secretary of the Treasury, replacing him with the St. Louis banker, John Snyder.

Actually, the Office of War Mobilization has come to be the office of war demobilization and reconversion, and it is one of those delicate cogs in the Governmental machine which, if it gets out of gear, can smash just about every wheel in the shop. Versatile Judge Vinson, even after his many years of experience, was finding it a nerve-racking, back-breaking problem—and he will be the first to admit it.

Therefore, to put John Snyder, almost fresh out of St. Louis, into this intricate job is like transferring a product of the sidewalks of New York into a submarine and asking him to operate it.

This is meant as no reflection on Snyder. He is a hard-working, conscientious gentleman, an able banker, and faithful to his good friend Harry Truman, with whom he trained every year in the Missouri National Guard. But it just isn't fair to put him on such a hot spot.

No man not previously steeped in the complex reconversion, demobilization picture, as Judge Vinson was, can expect to step in cold and do the job. Result is that John Snyder sits in meetings, his ears literally flapping, as curved balls fly at him from every direction. He doesn't even know the terminology of various reconversion problems.

Meanwhile, if the Japanese peace should come suddenly—as it may well do—this country might be in for a sudden stoppage of war orders, disastrous unemployment and the worst economic dislocation since 1930.

Loves Them All

Mrs. Truman is certainly careful to protect her husband regarding the small niceties of life, which sometimes can be important.

When she and the President visited in Independence, Mo., he was entertained by Mayor Roger T. Sermon. And just before entering the Mayor's home, at 701 Proctor Place, Truman was met by a hundred or so old friends who had waited to see him on the lawn of the Sermon home.

He shook hands with everyone.

Next morning, one of the local papers carried a story about the reception and told how in shaking hands with the seven-year-old daughter of J. Marcus Kirtley, assistant counselor for the Jackson County Court, the President had said:

"I'm particularly happy to meet you."

Reading this quote in the paper next morning, Mrs. Truman went to the telephone and called up many of her friends who also had children. Knowing that they had probably read what her husband had said to the Kirtley child, she told them:

"I just wanted you to know that the President was happy to meet your children too."

Miscellany

Every mother's son west of the Mississippi River—and some east—are making moves to get the Cabinet job of the toughest, most fearless member of the FDR Cabinet—Harold Ickes. Jim Patton of Denver, head of the Farmers' Union, is one of them. Another is genial Governor Bob Kerr of Oklahoma, who led the switching of delegates to Truman during the Chicago convention. . . . However, "Harold the Ick" may fool 'em. . . . Over 2,000 Spanish Loyalist families are now stranded in France, unable to return to Franco's domain, their men killed in an anti-Fascist war where they never admitted defeat. Governor Lehman's UNRRA finally has decided to help them, though it will be on a small scale.

Generals of the services of supply were having a special meeting at Camp Grant, Ill., special training center for the medical corps. While Gen. Virgil Peterson, former Inspector General now director of personnel, was speaking, he suddenly sank to his seat, victim of a stroke. Gen. Norman Kirk, Surgeon General of the Army, and his deputy, Gen. Raymond Bliss, were at hand and took care of him. They summoned an ambulance. But imagine their chagrin when the Army ambulance supplied by the medical corps at its own chief training center contained no stretcher. . . . The British Embassy staff in Washington is going through its most drastic shakeup since 1939. Jock Balfour, who served here seventeen years ago, has been transferred back to Washington from the British Embassy in Moscow. Following him will probably come Sir Archibald Clark Kerr to replace Lord Halifax as Ambassador.

Attention Ernest Bevin, new British Minister of Foreign Affairs: Take a good look at the British black list and the way your predecessors in the Churchill Government were trying to keep a director of I. G. Farben off that list. He is: Arpad Plesch, who not only was a director of Hitler's largest cartel, but attempted some interesting financial transactions in Switzerland. For some reason, the Churchill Government removed Plesch's name from the black list, though the U. S. Treasury vigorously opposed. It's worth looking into, Mr. Bevin.

Kami-Krazi

Army In The Manger

By Marquis Childs

WASHINGTON

WHAT the Senate War Investigating Committee said in its latest report about the urgent need to get back civilian controls over the Army is what most Senators have been wanting to say for a long time.

That report lived up to the high standard set in the days when Harry Truman was its chairman. It pulled no punches. It stated the frank conviction that the Army is setting up huge reserves of manpower in the Pacific which cannot possibly be used except in the event of an almost disastrous military setback," and that doesn't look very likely at this moment.

The report pointed out the serious delays in reconversion. And it put the blame, by implication at least, on the two popular political figures who have headed the Office of War Mobilization & Reconversion during the past three years—James F. Byrnes, now Secretary of State, and Fred M. Vinson, now Secretary of the Treasury.

As a cure, the Mead Committee proposes that the new war reconverter, John W. Snyder, supervise the operation of all Government agencies concerned with reconversion. At first glance, that looks like a good idea.

What it would mean, however, is expanding the Office of War Mobilization & Reconversion to enormous size. It would have to be as big as the War Production Board if it did the supervisory job recommended by the report.

Neither President Truman nor reconverter Snyder will take kindly to that idea. To set up a vast new agency at this time—and that is what would have to be done—seems like a move in the wrong direction.

He does not now have the power and the prestige he does not have it because he has almost no cooperation from the War Department. The chiefs of heads of the War Department simply will not be asked on what are considered the minimum requirements of reconversion.

Not one manpower but machine tools are being hoarded. Several times the reconverter office has had to fight the delaying tactics of the War Department where, plainly, machine tools could not reasonably be used for this war.

Much more transportation has been forthcoming from the Navy Department. Secretary Forrestal has worked out a reasonable system of cutbacks which takes into account the changeover to a one-front war and the fact that naval strength has been so greatly augmented in the Pacific that it cannot possibly all be used against the Japs.

This is a situation which President Truman cannot ignore when he returns from Potsdam. Two months time on it. As the Mead Committee points out, an sudden end of the Pacific War could mean total disaster for us. Then there is Europe, faced with anarchy unless a minimum of coal is sent abroad as a result of increased production in this country.

Three Concessions

According to reports that seem reliable, Secretary of War Stimson wants to resign. His successor will have an overwhelming responsibility. Above all, he must be able to start civilian controls and to work in co-operation with Snyder.

At least three steps are of vital importance. Working with Snyder, the new Secretary must:

1. Provide a minimum of manpower for transportation by release from the Army of men with experience in this field.

2. Differ for coal, where manpower is even more critical than in transportation.

3. Proceed as quickly as possible to survey the Army's manpower necessities.

The present stalemate, and that is what it is, can only work harm all around. In the past, the military have had the best of reasons to grab and hoard. Several times the reconverter office has had to fight the delaying tactics of the War Department where, plainly, machine tools could not reasonably be used for this war.

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The Top Dog

When the President discussed the job with Snyder, his old friend, it was in terms of a policy-making role in which the reconverter would have the power to

SIDE GLANCES By Galbraith

"With all the great engineers this war has produced, wouldn't you think they could figure out some way to do away with these traffic lights!"

Unfinished Business

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

THE impossible is impossible again. During the war in Europe, the impossible was easy, and we did it all the time; and, during that war, we had found it necessary to ship 25,000,000 tons of coal to the Continent to win, we would have dug it and done it somehow. But we will not do it to win the end of the shooting, we have sublimely lowered our sights. Europe needs 25,000,000 tons of American coal to survive the coming Winter, and America turns out its hands, palms upward, and says it cannot be done. We are again in a period in which things cannot be done.

We will not concede that sometimes you have to do the impossible to win a peace. War, to us, is a matter of shooting only, we will not recognize it as a social convulsion, of which shooting is only a symptom. To far too great a degree we feel that Europe is now in order; we have stopped the shooting. We have not stopped the starving, we have not stopped the freezing, but we have stopped the shooting and we are going home. Our conception of war and peace has all the profundity of a Wild West thriller; the war ends when the villain lies quivering in the dust.

A sure sign of the slackening of our intensity can be seen in the fact that, with such awful messes as the above hanging fire, Congress has decided to go home for two months.

NO JURISDICTION

It might be supposed that Congressional conservatives particularly, with their deep concern about the "leftward drift" in the world today, would want to stay in session and do something about the fact that Northwestern Europe is going to have a cold and idle Winter. The decision as to whether to let Europe freeze or not this Winter is a decision of first-rate political importance. But it is not even being made as a decision; we are just letting it happen, like a storm or an earthquake.

Congress could properly ask whether America, which is capable of producing more than 700,000,000 tons of coal a year, and which is going to produce only 570,000,000 tons, could not squeeze out 25,000,000 tons for Europe. It could consider the War Department's refusal to release 30,000 coal miners from the ranks, as requested by Secretary Ickes. But the long, thin line of Congressmen is streaming toward Union Station. They will be back in October, when it begins to get cold.

If there is disorder throughout Europe this Winter, they will not feel that they have any connection with it; it will be something they will read about in their papers.

VACATION VETO

Of course (as the Mead Committee has hinted) the war with Japan might end during the interim period, too, leaving us with the most startled of expressions on our faces; though really, when a nation is in a war, it ought to consider the end of same as a reasonable possibility, and it ought to do something to prepare for it. But President Truman's request for unemployment insurance of $25 a week, to tide our war workers over when the end comes, has never been met; it remains on Congressional desks as unfinished business.

The adjournment is, in fact, an implicit "no" vote on the President's request, and through all of this, as though Congress' indifference to Europe's plight, one feels a deep and bitter Congressional disdain for the problems of transition. To admit that there are such problems is to accept a certain responsibility for human happiness, and warmth in Winter and jobs, and Congress has voted a great no against this whole area of trouble by simply going home. The villain died, and everybody lived happily ever after; that is its story. It refuses to check to see if it is really so.

People's Platform

The Loudest Sound

By H. L. GOLDEN

POLICE officials reported that the sound of the ovation given to Gen. Dwight Eisenhower by the million New Yorkers could be heard on the other side of the Hudson River in the State of New Jersey, about three miles away.

When Gen. Montgomery opened the counter-offensive at El Alamein, the sound of this greatest of all artillery barrages in history was heard by the inhabitants of Cairo, about 90 miles away.

But these man-made sounds were like the faint chirp of a little sparrow compared with the loudest and resounding incident cooked up by Mother Nature.

It happened in the year 1883 in the Sunda Strait channel between Java, Dutch owned, and the long, hot, humid islands of Java and Sumatra in the South Pacific. In this strait was an island similar to Manhattan Island, but it had grown and vanished during the past few years. The name of this 30 square miles was Krakatoa, on which there was a dormant volcano rising 2,000 feet above the level of the sea.

The island was inundated by earthquakes and overwhelming volcanic eruptions and overshadowed by dark streams of live steam vapor, which created a temperature far higher than which human life could exist and bake.

On Aug. 26 1883 the live steam volcanoes burned into full blaze and seen in sufficient mass volume to have darkened the day for people in the city of Batavia several hundred miles away. But a more terrifying development was only a mild prelude to what was to happen the following day. At about 4 A. M. South Pacific time on Aug. 27 Krakatoa exploded with the loudest crash of sound ever recorded in all human history. It was as though the entire surface mass of fire and flow in the bowels of the earth were trying to emerge skyward through the 50-foot crater on the top of Krakatoa.

The island island island