THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Invitation To Violence

Senator Bailey's mail, he reports, overwhelmingly supports Congress and condemns President Truman's reconversion program. Oh, there are one or two people who think maybe the President's plan has some merit, but most of the Senator's correspondents echo the plea of the minister who wrote, "Do all you can to save us from the rule of Philip Murray and John L. Lewis and their kind," and the banker who fears the Administration is rushing the country into bankruptcy.

With this staunch backing, and with his health repaired by a long rest at home, Senator Bailey is preparing to answer Mr. Truman's demand that Congress accept his fact-finding plan for settling strikes or propose one of its own. The Senator is readying a piece of legislation designed to bring loud hosannahs from the minister and the banker.

He proposes that the National Labor Relations Board be abolished, and that collective bargaining be promoted by outlawing the closed shop. "We must establish the open shop and we must put the employer and the employee on the same footing," he said.

We might have given the Senator a slightly higher grade for frankness if he had simply proposed that labor unions be outlawed, or that workers be allowed to join fraternal organizations but forbidden to strike. These proposals would do no more to insure a wave of skull-cracking than passage of his open shop legislation.

Now, the Senator is one of the more scholarly gentlemen on Capitol Hill, one who refreshes himself by dipping into Plato and Aristotle, and it would not be amiss to remind him of a little more recent history. There was 1919, for instance, when there was no Wagner Act and most shops were as open as the employers, with the assistance of professional strike-breakers, could keep them. The background paralleled 1946—a war had ended, prosperity was at hand, wartime restrictions were removed. In that year 4,113,000 workers were involved in strikes and lockouts, a figure that makes today's total look piddling. And the struck industries were far more essential than the automobile plants—coal mines were shut down, and railroads and steel mills. The wage demands of the day were considerably less restrained, too; the coal miners wanted a 60 per cent increase and a six-hour day. In 1919 the sort of court orders that halted picketing in the recent telephone strike went unheeded, and the Government found then, as it will now, that there is no legal method of forcing men to work against their will.

The open shop didn't cure the strike fever in 1919; in fact it only contributed to the disorder and promoted the physical violence that has been conspicuously absent in the current disputes. Employers in those carefree days could legally import gangs of armed scabs and there were pitched battles across the land—a right smart one in Charlotte, as the Senator may remember.

There should be a lesson in this for Senator Bailey, who depends upon history for a guide. His plan to emasculate the Wagner Act, instead of strengthening it by increasing union responsibility, would restore the labor-management relationship of 1919, producing, we think, the same degree of violence. Also—and this, we think, is the moral of the story—it would insure the continuation of unrest until natural economic forces operated to end it. And the Senator, we are certain, will recall the natural force that brought industrial peace after World War I—the short, sharp depression of 1920 that shattered the great wave of prosperity that could have carried the country through its reconversion. It was peace, certainly, but, then, a graveyard is the most peaceful spot on earth.

The Symphony Society

We confess that there are moments when we find the cultural yearnings of the community questionable (they come, usually, when we realize that the local radio programs normally offer only a choice of jive or hill-billy) and we are particularly gratified that the Charlotte chapter of the North Carolina Symphony Society is doing reasonably well in its annual membership drive.

It's been a rather quiet campaign; no local citizens have found a flutist on the doorstep asking for a handout, nor have the newspapers published any pictures of shapely violinists brandishing tin cups. With a great deal of dignity, the committee has been selling memberships in the Society; for five dollars you may join, and you are thereby entitled to attend without further charge any of the twenty major concerts to be offered in North Carolina this season. Or you may, if you care to raise the ante, buy in as a Donor, a Patron, or a Memorial Member.

The Charlotte campaign comes rather late, and other sections of the State have already gone over the top in raising their quotas. The campaign is particularly significant this year, for the Symphony Society is looking beyond the current season and building for a great future when it can become, in fact, a People's Orchestra.

With its children's concerts, and its frequent regular performances, it is already on the road toward attaining its stated goal, to bring to all of North Carolina the "chance to hear and to create good music . . . to give our homes, towns and cities the vitality of cultured taste and continued inspiration."

In time, and with sufficient popular support, the Society will be able to establish serious music as a community of interest for all North Carolinians. We have no doubt that Charlotte's quota will be met, but we hope that the bulk of the funds will come from the five-dollar memberships, not from the heavy checks tossed in by a well-heeled few. Money is important, of course, for the orchestra cannot continue without it, but it is even more important to broaden the base of the audience, to make serious music the property of all the people. Charlotte's interest in that worthy cause will be measured, not in the total contributed, but in the number who contribute it.

One-Sided Argument

It is unfortunate, if understandable, that the AF of L, the CIO, and the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, chose the vehicle of a mock trial at Durham to present their case in favor of raising the minimum wage to 65 cents an hour. Any courtroom proceeding involves the presentation of both sides of a case, and, as Dean Hoover of Duke, cast in the role of judge, remarked, "This is like playing with loaded dice."

Of course, in the view of the long list of "witnesses" who testified in favor the Pepper-Hook Bill, and of extending its provisions to employers in intra-state commerce by action of the State Legislature, the question has only one side. It is the duty of Government, they feel, to guarantee subsistence, at least, to every worker, and nothing less than the $26 for a 40-hour week will do it.

We agree with the theory, although we might be inclined to question the amount. There isn't any valid reply to the worker who proclaimed that an hour's work ought to buy at least a dozen eggs, except, perhaps, to point out that there have been times, and please God there will be again, when the present 40 cents per hour would buy two dozen eggs. But, even though inflation creeps into this discussion, just as it does into everything else these days, it is clear from the record of the past that minimum-wage legislation is the only method that will guarantee the worker against exploitation in this imperfect world.

The emotional arguments presented in Durham are, we think, sufficient answer to the arguments customarily arrayed against the minimum wage theory. A wage floor, established at subsistence level, does not destroy initative, for it is adequate only for those workers who have none. Incentive still exists, and the only thing lost is the opportunity for unscrupulous employers to pay starvation wages.

The economic plaint of the low-wage manufacturers is, however, not so easy to waive, and certainly it deserves a hearing. A worker who arises at a stacked meeting and proclaims that a man who can't pay 65 cents an hour oughtn't to be in business isn't particularly convincing, nor is the flat and unsupported claim that North Carolina's textile, tobacco and furniture manufacturers could elevate their minimum wages by 62 1-2 per cent without raising prices.

There is more to it than that, considerably more, and, although we believe, along with the "witnesses" that general prosperity in North Carolina depends upon wiping out the North-South wage differential, we are convinced that it can't be done by waving a wand. This is certainly the moment to make a step forward, and an honest examination of the profit structures of the low-wage industries would indicate, we believe, that it could be a long one, but we don't think it can be measured off the cuff.

The trouble is that both proponents and opponents of the 65-cent minimum wage approach it in the spirit of the Durham "court"; the manufacturers convince each other that their freedom is at stake, and the union people convince each other that the economic structure of the South will collapse without it. This is easy convincing, and we'd like to see somebody undertake the far more difficult task of selling the general public the idea that it has a real stake in determining how far the North Carolina wage level can be permanently elevated in this period of full-production, and in supporting legislation that would accomplish that end.

Revelations at Nuernberg affirm a strange one-sidedness of the Hitler personality. When power brought out the worst in his nature, there was nothing left.

Drew Pearson

Fairless And Murray Agree On "S" Men

WASHINGTON

WHEN Phil Murray and U. S. Steel President Ben Fairless sit down at the White House today in another effort to head off a steel strike, they will at least have one thing in common — a very poor opinion of Harry Truman's three "S" men — Snyder, Schwellenbach and Steelman.

When Fairless and Murray left the White House after their long wage battle last Saturday, the steel executive invited the labor chief to get into his limousine. Then the two men rode around the block a couple of times chuckling over the way Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach seemed jealous of John Steelman, Truman's personal labor adviser, and how both joggled elbows with John Snyder, the St. Louis banker who is supposed to be the war reconverter.

At that particular moment, the two men who had been at the opposite ends of the argument for weeks seemed closer together personally than the three Truman negotiators — though actually the day's dickerings had not budged them by many fractions of an inch.

PLAY-BY-PLAY ACCOUNT

Here is the play-by-play account of what happened.

When Fairless and Murray were first invited to the White House, they expected to see the President himself. However, Saturday morning, both received orders to report to John Snyder's office. When they arrived, they found the three "S" men—Snyder, Schwellenbach and Steelman — waiting for them. Snyder informed them that the President would not see them at once, but would be available if he were needed. (He had spent an hour that morning posing for a family photograph.) A short time later, the entire conference moved from Snyder's wing of the White House to the Cabinet room.

Snyder began by asking the two men if either had changed his position since their conference broke up the day before in New York. Both Murray and Fairless said there was no change. Fairless said U. S. Steel had gone as high as it could go by offering an increase of 15 cents an hour.

Murray pointed out that he had cut his demand from 25 cents an hour to 19 1/2 cents. He also pointed out that the steel workers were still engaged before the War Labor Board in a year-long argument over a 5-cent an hour increase still undecided, but certain to go to the union. He urged Fairless to throw that increase into the current negotiations to stave off the strike. Murray said he was willing to yield 2 cents of the 5 due to the union in the War Labor Board litigation if Fairless were willing to yield on his present proposal of a 15-cent increase.

Fairless, however, did not yield. He explained that his company had a rough time getting the other steel companies to go along with a 15-cent increase and that several had done so under considerable pressure. Both Bethlehem Steel and Tom Girdler's Republic Steel are among those who bucked U. S. Steel hardest on this.

Meanwhile, Snyder, Schwellenbach and Steelman sat together pleading for someone to yield. Several times Snyder tried to put the heat on Murray to cave in. Steelman and Schwellenbach failed to join with the reconverter on this. They sat silent.

SEE TRUMAN

Finally, after more than two hours of argument, the three "S" men trooped out of the Cabinet room and into Truman's office. Ten minutes later, they came back and escorted Fairless in to see the President.

Truman then gave Fairless a straight-from-the-shoulder lecture. He pointed out that the national interest was at stake, that the Administration was being generous to the steel corporations by offering a $4-a-ton price increase, and that the country couldn't afford to let the strike start.

Fairless pleaded that he had no authorization from the industry to go any higher than 15 cents an hour. This, incidentally, is what Truman had warned Fairless would say.

Shaken by Truman's tough attitude, Fairless asked for time to talk the situation over further with his colleagues in New York. He said he needed until Wednesday to get this done. The three "S" men then entered and escorted Fairless back to the Cabinet room.

While Fairless had been talking to Truman alone, Steelman and Schwellenbach both talked to Murray separately, trying to convince him that they were supporting his case.

Then the three Truman aides escorted Murray in to the President. Truman asked Murray if there was a chance of settlement. Murray told him that the only chance rested in the steel company's making a decent offer which would restore some of the lost take-home pay to the 70,000 members of the union.

Murray had informed the White House before the meeting that if the steel strike was settled, then all CIO unions would delay their planned walk-outs until there could be further negotiations. Murray told the President that the steel corporation was the piper that played the tune for all big business; that if "Big Steel" made a reasonable agreement, the electrical appliance producers, the meat packers, glass makers, the auto manufacturers would follow suit.

Quote, Unquote

The veteran who learned in war that moral and physical strength was to be gained from being one of a closely knit team . . . can and will provide an additional source of energy for community action.

—**Dr. Edwin Sharp Burdell, director, Cooper Union.**

A Good Trick, If He Can Do It

Marquis Childs

We're Too Hard On The Brass

WASHINGTON

THE last time that General Eisenhower met with his friend Marshal Zhukov, they had a heard to heart talk about the military problems of occupied Europe.

Having met often before on a friendly basis, the two could speak more frankly than is the custom when Russian and American officials sit down together. General Ike and Russia's No. 1 fighting man got down to cases on Europe's future.

The growing discontent within the ranks of America's army of occupation was no secret to Zhukov. The evidences of it even then, long before the current flare-up, could not be missed. Finally Zhukov said:

"You Americans are too peace-loving. It is all very well to love peace. But you carry it too far in your country."

This was shortly before Eisenhower was to return to Washington to take over what he knew would be the extremely difficult and unhappy assignment as Chief of Staff. The contrasts between the Soviet Union and the United States in the matter of military training and military preparedness must have occurred to the American as he said goodbye to his Russian friend.

RUSSIAN CONSCRIPTION

In Russia all youths are conscripted at the age of seventeen for a minimum of three years of military training and a maximum of seven years. They are subject to call at any time.

The line of attack on our own military that finds the most immediate response is the suggestion that the brass hats want to keep as many men in uniform as possible so they can maintain their present high rank. Our tradition is so anti-militarist that we are immediately suspicious, when a war has ended, of the peacetime ambitions of military men.

FIGHT FOR RANK

Of course, there's a fight to keep rank. It happens after every war. And it may be related to estimates of the size of our forces overseas. In both the Army and the Navy some high-ranking officers have done a lot of foolish talking about the bases we are to man in various odd corners of the world.

But before we stampede in mad pursuit of the wicked "brass," we ought to remember that we—meaning the elected representatives of we the people in Congress—have never provided an adequate peacetime army for a nation with our world responsibility and world power. While the Navy has got more consideration, the Army has been treated in times of peace like a defective stepchild who must be kept out of sight.

Human nature is human nature in uniform or out. Before the war many of our generals were stuck in dreary Army posts on tiny salaries. The little woman was doing the washing herself. Overnight they were rocketed into positions of authority over men and money.

The way out of the present mess does not lie in stripping ourselves of all our power in order to punish "the brass." A sane approach will not be based on anything so petty.

Dorothy Thompson

Beyond The G. I. Demonstrations

NEW YORK

THE right to gripe is the privilege of Americans, and to gripe en masse in public demonstrations an ancient habit. The American people are hardly panic-stricken about the vociferous G. I. demonstrations occurring wherever there are occupation armies, nor would they support punishment of soldiers, exercising the right of "free speech" and "free assembly." The army chieftains, in immediately deciding against punishment, are doubtless acting wisely.

Nevertheless, the demonstrations are extremely serious, not only for what they reveal to us, but for what they suggest to others. This is a world in which great powers are out for themselves, and in which spheres of power are being extended and consolidated. Since all power is relative, every extension of the power of one is at the cost of the power position of others. It is a world in which smaller states are falling into the power-complexes of the larger voluntarily or by coercion.

CALCULATED RISKS

Every action taken by great powers is taken on calculation of risks. Observing the behavior of our armies, from Manila to Frankfort to Paris, no power will be discouraged against greater boldness, and the weaker states will begin to count the U. S. as completely out of the picture.

There is, for instance, Soviet pressure on Turkey. Russia might restrain herself there and elsewhere, if unilateral action seemed in any way dangerous, but when large bodies of American soldiers are jeering publicly and unreproved at their officers, Russia, and the rest of the world, will consider us a negligible element.

Our diplomacy, which has staged little but a series of defeats, is still trying to secure some measure of independence for the Eastern European States, exert influence in Latin America, frame a policy toward Spain, and persuade Great Britain to modify certain imperial policies. But neither Communists, Fascists, nor Imperialists need be responsive to American suggestions or pressures, under present conditions.

SOVIET THEORY

The disintegration of western individualistic societies fits into Fascist and Soviet theory and policy. Communist calculations have always been that war in "capitalist-imperialist" nations hastens the disintegration of their social systems, and international comintern agents are standing ready, to fan any sparks of discontent that show themselves. The American Communist line that "the Yanks aren't coming," which continued until the attack on the Soviet Union, is now "the Yanks aren't staying."

The conception that the Soviets are opposed to American isolationism—now that participation is no longer a necessity of Soviet defense—is most naive. There is nothing they wish more warmly than our withdrawal from the Far East and from Europe. The idea that they insisted on the U. S. A. as the seat of UNO in order that American interest in world organization should be sustained can only be entertained by those who have not been closely watching Soviet and comintern moves. The Soviets want UNO as far removed from Eurasia as possible, for in Eurasia they are steadily building their own United Nations system, which, as Molotov candidly said, is the only form of multi-national state or federation which will work.

OPEN HOUSE

Meanwhile, since UNO has no power whatsoever over Soviet policy, either to influence or restrain it—let it babble as it will—in Hyde Park or anywhere else sufficiently remote from the places where real actions are occurring. So let the United States as host keep open house to all who come and go with diplomatic passports.

The rumbling among G. I.s is the inevitable result of creating a class army, in which thousands of young men were commissioned out of universities over experienced veterans; in which political education has been all but non-existent; in which the peace program is, from an American view, unintelligible as either realism or idealism; in which cushy jobs in UNRRA, OWI, WPB, and many other agencies won all the privileges of an officer with none of the dangers; in which discipline and decorum once the war was over were hardly better maintained by officers than by men, as the grab for villas, girls, champagne, cameras, sifted downward into open black market operations all within the concept that conquerors who owe nothing to an enemy people, owe nothing either to their own honor.

Add to these confusions and inausterities the immediate cause of the demonstrations: This country has undertaken commitments, which will require for many years the maintenance of larger armed forces than any previous army of peacetimes, and although this has been known for years, and although the war has been over for months, no one has yet any notion of how the Government intends to raise those forces. The G. I. fears therefore that he is stuck for years, if not for life.

DISCREDITED UNIFORM

Universal military training, it is safe to predict, has been shelved. Certainly G. I. reactions abroad will not aid it now. And if the Government does not quickly propose the recruitment of occupation forces from volunteers, under a program offering equality of opportunity to men of all social origins, as well as education, good pay, and regular furloughs, even that will be difficult. For when the uniform of a country ceases to be a high distinction, few wish to wear it.

The People's Platform

The Housing Shortage

By JOE W. McLANEY
Pres. Charlotte Wholesale Lumber Club

CHARLOTTE

The writer called a meeting yesterday of the wholesale and retail lumbermen of Charlotte to discuss action that might be taken to help relieve the housing shortage here and throughout the nation. The consensus of opinion was OPA's price control of lumber has broken down due to non-enforcement. There is already inflation of lumber prices through lumber bootleggers. Honest wholesale and retail dealers as unable to get lumber for legitimate distribution. The people that are getting lumber are paying above ceiling prices and taking lumber improperly seasoned and graded; the buildings they erect will never be satisfactory and will constantly need repair. The people that buy from lumber bootleggers are being defrauded twice—paying too much and getting low quality.

ANOTHER MEETING

We have suggested to our respective national organizations that an industry wide meeting be called and a resolution drawn that all may subscribe to stating to the President, reconversion director, OPA, and Congress that due to labor being unwilling to work in the woods and mills and a complete lack of enforcement of OPA regulations, there is already price inflation of lumber and that if OPA cannot put enough men in the field to obtain compliance they should remove all lumber regulations. This will allow the honest dealers to obtain lumber which they can grade and properly distribute so that it may be used in its proper place and serve a useful purpose.

If the people needing homes in Charlotte and throughout the nation will back the lumber industry in this effort by writing their Congressman to see that the above program is carried out, we feel that by the middle of the year there will be a vast improvement in the avialable supply of homes for those in such dire need. Unless some such action is taken by lumber manufacturers, wholesalers, dealers, builders, and those in need of homes, this situation will get much worse before there is any improvement. We can assure you that OPA will never move of its own power, but will have to be prodded vigorously and continually by public opinion and Congress before any action is taken.

Trusting that this letter may stimulate others to action in behalf of those in such dire need of homes.

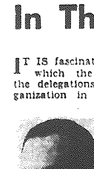
"Maybe you get a good tan, but it's a poor imitation of Nature—where the sun, the sky and men smile down on you!"

Samuel Grafton

Human Nature In The UNO

NEW YORK

IT IS fascinating to watch the manner in which the political characteristics of the delegations to the United Nations Organization in London express themselves.



The Russians behaved in an illuminatingly Russian way during the business of picking the President of the Assembly. The proceedings had hardly started when Andrei Gromyko, for the Soviet Union, rose and put the name of Trygve Lie, Norway's foreign minister, in nomination. This caused rapid shudders to run through the British and American delegations, since the Assembly's rules call for a secret ballot, and the Anglo-American delegates, with their strict, precise sense of law, did not see how any delegation's vote could be considered secret, once it had made a public nomination.

GROMYKO WAITED

But Mr. Gromyko had a promise of American support for Mr. Lie: at the end of his speech, he waited, apparently, for the American delegation to second the nomination. The Americans sat silent; they had been supporting Mr. Lie, truly enough, by rounding up votes for him; they had been campaigning, in the characteristic American political convention fashion, but they were not going to break their own interpretation of the Assembly's rules. The nomination was therefore seconded by Poland, the Soviet Ukraine and Denmark; after which the Russian delegation, seeing a chance to turn the meeting into a demonstration, in a manner familiar to it, proposed that Mr. Lie be elected by acclamation on the ground that there had been only one nomination, and also because Norway had been one of the first victims of German aggression.

Low moaning went on among the British delegates at this, for the British had been campaigning quietly for months for the election of Foreign Minister Spaak of Belgium; they had, in a way possibly also characteristic, been lining up a large vote for him, without nominations, speeches or demonstrations. This, to the Russians, smelled like a "western bloc;" but Mr. Spaak, whose name had not once been mentioned from the floor, was elected; the Americans voting secretly for Mr. Lie, then revealing afterward how they had voted, thus seeking to satisfy both the rules and the Russians.

TO PLEASE EVERYBODY

One can say what one likes of the incident; that it shows the Russians have a high-handed, materialist disdain of formal procedure; that the British are secretive and manipulative; that the Americans are nervous, and try to please everybody.

There the thing stands, and it is wrong to take severe moral positions regarding these wide political and national differences; for it is part of the spectacle that here, at last, have been brought together in one place the single-minded Bolshevik materialism of the Russians, and our own much more formal, legal, seemingly softer yet quite stubborn western approach; and the object is not to suppress this clash, but to see whether it can produce a third thing, new and useful to the world. A novelist would perhaps make the best reporter of what is now going on; one who can note differences in behavior without being frightened by them; one who understands that it is these differences which make this story great, and are, in fact, the best of the story and of its wonder.