

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

Mayor Investigates Possibility Of Other Sources

Court Blocks Use Of Tax Funds

By TOM FEFERMAN  
The Mayor today expressed disappointment to the State Supreme Court's ruling that tax money could not be used for recreation purposes, but a public vote started investigating the possibilities of making an appropriation to the Park & Recreation Commission from funds derived from sources other than taxes.

The Mayor pointed out that the City Government has a considerable amount of money which comes in by other means, such as in the form of profits made by certain enterprises.

He said that he and some associates had been doing some morning and afternoon work, and that he felt certain such appropriations would be considered legal.

Mr. Baxter indicated that, unless some unforeseen barrier prevented it, money could be turned over to recreation projects under the 1947-48 budget.

"It's my opinion," he said, "that we can find ways of expanding the recreation program, and that this method can be used."

DISAPPOINTED OVER RULING  
The expressed disappointment over the Supreme Court's ruling against the City of Charlotte in its attempt to appropriate funds to the Park & Recreation Commission.

This ruling was based on that section of the State Constitution which declares that "tax money can be spent for necessary expenses" and that "no money shall be expended for the maintenance of the State."

While Mayor Baxter began his search for another method of financing public recreation facilities, Chairman Charles H. Stone of the Park Board called for action to be taken to maintain the recreation program.

A friendly test case on Charlotte's planned appropriation of \$10,000 was started by John R. Purner in the Supreme Court.

L. L. Ledbetter and the Park Board from spending certain funds for recreation purposes. Superior Court Judge William H. Robbitt had refused to grant Mr. Purner the request.

SEE MAYOR SEEK on page 11-A

From A Blind Soldier

A Letter To Santa Claus

PHOENIXVILLE, Pa.—(AP)—Capt. Chester R. Perkins, hopelessly blinded by a land mine in Germany and a patient in Valley Forge Hospital for 21 months, has written his first letter to Santa Claus.

"If God chooses, let me find beneath my Christmas tree two bright, shiny blue eyes—so that the memory of the last Christmas I saw may be blotted forever from my mind."

"After many examinations, I doctor asked: 'Soldier, do you want it straight?' 'That's the way I want it,' Perkins replied. 'You'll never see again.'"

Perkins, a former Indianapolis high school athlete, wrote to The Indianapolis News that he planned to study Journalism at Butler University, and enclosed the following letter, which The News copyrighted:

Dear Santa Claus:  
Aren't we all children? Can't all of us, though some of us are adult in mind, ask for the things which we want most in life? I can't remember ever writing to you before, but I have found it so increasingly difficult to obtain this thing which I want, that I thought perhaps you could help.

As a small child, I can remember wanting playthings and candy, as a teen-aged youth I wanted smart clothing and athletic equipment. Now, I want something entirely different. I'm not as childish as a plaything or as temporary as a piece of candy; yet it is as odorous as smart clothing, and as energetic as athletic equipment. It is something which people would think it is a necessity, it isn't. The person who doesn't have it can understand that. He knows it is a necessity.

In asking for this, I have to think of you as an intermediary between God and me, for I have already said that it is God-given. He gave it to me once before, when I was born, but I lost it. I have missed it so much, and would like to have it back.

Dear Santa: If God chooses, let me find beneath my Christmas tree two bright, shiny blue eyes brimming over with good health and true love. I can place them in my head, then let me look out through the window at the snow falling deep and crisp and even, as far as those beautiful eyes can see. Let me drink in the looks of joy on the faces of those who love me, who have seen me groping and stumbling in the dark for so long. Let me hold those eyes and smile the Christmas after the next night, and forget the true meaning of Christmas. Let me see all these things so that the memory of the last Christmas I saw might be blotted forever from my mind. Replace the screaming of shells, the rumbling of tanks, the sound of tired marching feet with the singing of hymns, the laughter of little sisters, and the voices of thankful people. Replace the filthy, smelly mud of battle with the clean, white snow of a winter night. Replace the feeling of fresh clean sheets and the hopeful faces of men born anew.

Bring me those eyes for those purposes, and I will be grateful forever to Him who gave them to me. If, on Christmas morn., I should find them beneath my tree, I will be grateful to God, for haven't I still a good mind, a strong body, friends who love me, and a desire to justify the reason for my existence. After all, aren't these the important things in life?

So, Santa, there it is. That's what I want for Christmas. Please try, won't you?  
From a grown-up soldier, boy,  
CPL. CHESTER R. PERKINS.

Promoter For Contractors

Bilbo's Manager Figures In Probe

WASHINGTON (AP)—Maj. Gen. Thomas M. Robbins told Senate investigators today that A. B. Friend, 1940 campaign manager for Senator Bilbo, Democrat, Mississippi, was the promoter and "from man" for a group of contractors who won a \$1,731,029 contract to build an Army air field at Meridian, Miss.

Newly retired, Robbins is former Assistant Chief of Staff of the War Relocation Authority. He said that Friend appeared in Washington on behalf of the contractors.

The retired officer testified at hearings by the Senate War Relocation Authority that Bilbo received many gifts, including more than \$300,000 cash, from war contractors.

Another witness, Douglas I. McKay, special assistant to the Chief of Engineers, said he had heard "rumors" that Friend was to get \$1,000 out in the bill for his services for the construction of the air field.

McKay said that he had no personal knowledge of such an agreement.

The testimony capped the first morning's session in the inquiry which is expected to figure in a second session on Thursday.

Bilbo, apparently little impressed by the testimony thus far, seemed to be the great table and remarked that Mr. Friend was "one of the boys" of the Air Corps, and that he was a contractor who got the Meridian job.

"I know that, because he was a contractor," he said. "If it's wrong to recommend friends and constituents for jobs, then I disavow them. I'm a Senator and I'm a Democrat."

The McKay-Friend contract was awarded to a combination made up of Friend, the Valley Construction Co., the Rock Island Construction Co., and the Pitt-Morgan Co. The contract was for the construction of the air field.

Ministers End Session

By JOHN R. HIGHTOWER  
NEW YORK (AP)—Paced by a new round of concessions from Soviet Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov, the Big Five Ministers' Council agreed to finish its historic peace-making session in New York today after having completed plans for drafting German and Japanese peace settlements.

A final meeting was scheduled to clean up minor details of the five European satellite peace treaties and approve the draft of a six-point agenda for the Big Four conference in Moscow March 10 to begin work on treaties with Germany and Austria.

In a swift, surprise-moving session last night the Big Four agreed that the peace-making session of small nations would be given full opportunity to present their proposals for German and Japanese settlements to boards of great powers.

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Steelman President's Assistant Federal Offices Abolished

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Truman today revamped the entire war emergency set-up. He abolished the War Mobilization and Reconstruction Office and named John R. Steelman as Assistant to the President.

The President made public at a news conference an Executive Order under which Mr. Steelman, Gen. Philip H. Fleming as head of a new office of temporary control, will be carrying on remaining functions of OPA, OWAR, the Civilian Production Administration, and the Office of Economic Stabilization.

Steelman, the new Assistant to the President, has been Reconstruction Director and Economic Stabilizer.

Mr. Truman at the same time named Raymond M. Foley as Housing Administrator and Frank R. Croston as Housing Expediter. The two posts recently relinquished by William W. Fowler, a controversy with the RFO over loans for prefabricated housing.

In an Executive Order the President abolished the War Stabilization Board as of February 24, and the Economic Stabilization Board immediately.

The Chief Executive made it clear that he was not planning to abandon rent controls.

In response to reporters' questions on what he would do as Assistant to the President, Mr. Steelman said that he would be in order such as increase.

He added, however, that there was a possibility that some in-house might be under control.

OPA officials have said recently that no general increase in rent controls is contemplated by the price agency and an official said in response to an inquiry today that there would be no change in this policy.

He has been considering for some time removal of controls over transient hotel room rates and other authorized numerous adjustments of individual rent ceilings.

The President said that Steelman's duties as Assistant to the President would be to advise him on those he has had as Reconstruction Director when economic questions were involved.

Steelman, as chairman of the President's Scientific Research Board, will continue to advise him on those he has had as Reconstruction Director when economic questions were involved.

Foley will continue as Commissioner of the Federal Reserve and Fleming will carry on his work as Federal Works Administrator in addition to his new duties.

Clay Back in Berlin  
BERLIN (AP)—Lt. Gen. Lucius D. Clay, the American military Governor, returned to his headquarters today after spending a month in the United States.

Clay told correspondents he believed "very encouraging progress" had been made at the Foreign Ministers Conference.

Invest In A Share Of Christmas  
The Empty Stocking Fund

Little Mrs. Gibbs does not have enough money for her Christmas toys for her five children. She doesn't even have funds to buy them clothing. And she has to do a lot of scrimping to buy food.

Serves Until Mid-January Blum Is Elected Interim French Government Head

PARIS (AP)—Socialist Leon Blum, 74, was elected President-Premier today of the interim French government which will serve until mid-January.

Vote tabulators said the National Assembly gave Blum about 575 absolute votes.

Blum now faces the task of getting the parties to agree on a program and the whether the rightist parties should be included in the Cabinet.

His Cabinet, which is not expected to remain in power longer than 30 days, will be occupied chiefly with voting a budget for the first quarter of 1947.

Blum's most outstanding role since he was liberated from a German prison camp in May, 1945, was the negotiation of the United States Lend-Lease program.

The Socialist Party has announced earlier in the day that Blum would take the job on condition that he be unopposed.

The gravity of the situation was emphasized by the fact that there were only thirteen days left in which to solve a Cabinet crisis and vote a budget for the first quarter of 1947.

French political observers said that Blum's appointment would be a "revolutionary" move.

U. N. Group Acts  
Basic Arms Plan Principles Backed

NEW YORK (AP)—A United Nations subcommittee today approved the basic principles of a world-wide arms limitation program providing for inspection and control machinery free of the big power veto.

With unexpected speed, the 20-nation group went through a draft resolution paragraph by paragraph about the time the meeting place with only two amendments.

After the measure was approved in full, the United States sought to add another paragraph providing that nothing in the resolution would alter or limit the work of the Atomic Energy Commission.

RED OBJECTION  
A debate on this issue was touched off when Soviet Delegate Andrei V. Vishinsky objected to its inclusion, but most of the delegates felt that no major principle was involved and that their main task was completed.

As soon as the U. S. amendment was approved, the draft resolution was submitted to the 54-nation Political Committee of the Assembly.

The new provisions injected into the draft resolution were: 1. Added a requirement that the Security Council be kept informed of the progress of the 54-nation group.

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Many More Feared Dead In Debris Of Building Walls Topple In Wake Of Fire

NEW YORK (AP)—At least eight persons perished and many more were feared dead in the debris of a crumbled tenement building where 44 persons were trapped early today following a fire in an adjoining ice house. No sounds could be heard from the rubble as rescuers searched the scene fourteen hours after the tragedy.

A five-story ice house wall collapsed on the adjoining tenement building.

Police and firemen, digging frantically against time, removed four bodies from the wreckage and said they had sighted four more. Nearly by hospitals admitted more than a score of injured. Amputations were rushed to the scene and a third aid station was set up.

IDENTIFIED DEAD  
The identified dead are Frank E. Murphy, 37-year-old fireman; Anthony P. Pappas, 37-year-old fireman; and Thomas Phillips, 19, except the fireman were relatives.

Fire Marshal Thomas F. Murphy said the cause of the fire was not known. He said the fire had been burning for about five hours before the ice house was destroyed.

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Plane Hunt Hampered

SEATTLE (AP)—Flooded streams and washed out bridges hampered the search for a missing plane today in their efforts to comb a 50-square mile area immediately south of Mt. Rainier.

The National Park Service office at Longmire, reported good of the rapidly-shifting mud, said none of the 14-hour search parties, though they were expected momentarily.

Longmire is near the foot of the 14,400-foot mountain, where an unidentified plane was reported to have been heard last Tuesday.

After the plane was reported to have been heard last Tuesday, the search parties were expected momentarily.

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