THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Soviet Bluff And Bombast For '48

FROM PARIS come reports that the Communists are preparing a co-ordinated offensive in France, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Austria, timed for next March. From Moscow comes a review of the year by *Izvestia* declaring that the capitalist countries made no gains in 1947 while the glorious Soviet and its satellites made spectacular economic advances. The Communist claims for 1947 and the Red threats for 1948 have the sound of propaganda designed to cover up the fact that the last year wasn't so good for the Marxist cause in Western Europe and the Soviet position for a new offensive is steadily deteriorating.

In the Mediterranean, the Soviet position has been weakened by American military and economic assistance to Greece and Turkey, by the united front which the United States and Britain have presented against Soviet penetration in that area and by creation of UN's Balkan watch commission.

In Austria, Soviet occupation tactics have arrayed the population and Government solidly on the side of the democracies.

France has turned definitely against Communist Russia and the French Communists have lost heavily among the people and the labor unions as a result of the recent Comintern-inspired disturbances.

The same trend is pronounced in Italy, which has shown unexpected strength in meeting the leftist attacks in strikes and other demonstrations.

Britain and France have instituted bold "austerity" programs to deal with inflation. Production in Britain has made substantial gains. Holland, Belgium and several other nations on the continent have made encouraging progress toward economic recovery. America, at the peak of its industrial power, is heading into another boom year.

Sixteen European nations have joined the United States in a bloc for broad collective action on the solid economic foundation offered by the Marshall Plan.

In the United Nations, Russia suffered three setbacks in the resolutions creating the Balkan watch, the "Little Assembly" and the Korean independence commissions.

In the Western Hemisphere, the isolation of native Communists advanced all along the line from South America to Canada and a great bulwark for the New World was erected by the Inter-American Treaty for Reciprocal Assistance, creating a security zone that extends from pole to pole.

As we approach the dawn of 1948, Soviet bluster and new Communist activity should not blind us to the fact that the Western world made long strides toward revival in 1947. At the same time it is clear that the "cold war" has not yet been won and that final victory for the West depends on no relaxation of vigilance and no interruption in the policies which have thus far proved so successful.

Vittorio Emanuele's Legacy

IN THE tragedy of Vittorio Emanuele, the onetime king of Italy who died in exile Sunday, there is a moral for our times. However, it is not the moral that is drawn by Dewitt Mackenzie, Associated Press foreign affairs analyst, who writes that Emanuele "brought about his own downfall by trying to combat a great evil with appeasement. Instead of fighting Mussolini's totalitarian creed in 1922, the monarch ignored the advice of his ministers and handed power to the Fascist leader."

The historical fact is that the king handed power to Mussolini not to appease the Fascists but to suppress the Communists in Italy. And the moral of his life, as we see it, is that disaster all around is the inevitable consequence when men and nations turn to rightist dictatorship to oppose revolutionary change and totalitarianism from the left. As a result of Emanuele's experiment with a strong-arm "protector" against the Reds, Italy was led down the road to complete reaction, war and defeat, the king lost his throne and the Reds multiplied in the resulting chaos.

Both Mussolini of Italy and Hitler of Germany rose to power by the same route, selling themselves as foes of Communism to powerful reactionary interests in their countries. They arose to end "appeasement" of the left with violence and terror. Their anti-Communist crusades were the spearhead of a drive against all liberal parties and democratic institutions, against labor unions and civil rights. Parliaments were reduced to assemblies of stooges. Castor oil, the rubber truncheon, the headsman's ax and the concentration camp replaced the free ballot. Nations were turned into military states to serve the unrestrained economic nationalism of the financial, industrial and commercial powers that supported the dictatorship. War was the unavoidable result, and no one gained except the Communists.

The moral of Vittorio Emanuele's so-called appeasement of Fascism, as Dewitt Mackenzie reads it, is beware of appeasement of Communism. As we read it, the moral is beware of the Red scare as a smokescreen for reaction from the right. The Communists themselves are deliberately aiding and abetting that movement, hoping to frighten the Western people into another experiment with authoritarian rule. They have good reason for believing it would bring on the final collapse of the capitalist world. The hope for peace and recovery rests in the survival of the democratic center, which would preserve the liberties of the common man and defeat Communism by removing the social and economic conditions which make men bitter and hopeless.

GOP Hears Inflation Rumbles

THERE ARE signs that the Republicans don't feel so good about their "anti-inflation" program. They were highly pleased with it and with themselves when they jammed their bill through the special session of Congress, attaching to it a few grants of power that would induce President Truman to sign the measure. It then looked like a dandy scheme to sidetrack the Administration's program and shift some of the inflation blame to the President. Now the GOP masterminds are beginning to display some doubts.

Senator Taft didn't have an immediate comeback when President Truman assailed the GOP plan for a voluntary system of rationing and price regulation as "feeble" and "pitifully inadequate." At the same time that he was preparing a relatively mild retort to President Truman's statement, Mr. Taft let it be known that several additional "anti-inflation" measures will be laid befor the GOP policy group which he heads early next week. Senator Flanders, Vermont Republican, announced that he had reached the "reluctant conclusion that we will have to institute statutory rationing on meat" and that higher living costs justify wage increases. Senator White of Maine, GOP Floor Leader, speaks up for more co-operation with the Administration on measures to check inflation.

Senator Ball, Republican, asserts that the President's statement "smells a bit of politics." However, the man on a modest salary and the housewife are apt to find that Mr. Truman used understatement in describing the GOP voluntary program as "feeble" and "inadequate." It provides for self-control on a hit-and-miss basis, depending on whether certain industries are willing and able to reach agreements. If some agreements don't work out to the public interest, there is no remedy in the law. The bill sets up a cumbersome "conservation" system, which provides that Congress shall pass on Administration proposals for rationing of critically scarce commodities. That device seems to have been designed expressly to delay and frustrate orderly, effective rationing.

If the buying public gets the idea that it has been sold a bill of goods in the name of "inflation control," as seems likely, the howl of rage over high prices soon will carry an ominous sound for Taft & Co. Many observers have predicted all along that the Republicans will encompass their own defeat in 1948, and they seem to have made a good start in that direction on the price spiral.

From The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Sad Story From Wyoming

"SAD" IS the word for describing the appointment by the trustees of the University of Wyoming of a committee to read several hundred textbooks in use in the Laramie school to determine whether any of them contain anything "subversive or un-American."

There is in this action a gratuitous insult to the good sense and patriotism of the faculty—especially the teachers of the social sciences—which is properly resented by the student body.

And because the university's trustees did not define "subversive and un-American," there also is an affront to intelligence. Under these circumstances—and especially because of the threat to make this inquisition an annual affair—this looks like a witch hunt pure and simple.

As usual, the economists, the sociologists and the historians get special attention. If it is found that their books mention Karl Marx or in any way suggest that any other people have taken a way other than that of a narrowly conceived free enterprise capitalism, there is likely to be a banning and burning of books.

But are the Americans of the future to be brought up in ignorance of rival philosophies and economic systems? If so, how are they to judge the American way when experience suddenly confronts them with alternatives? What standards of judgment will they have, what knowledge will buttress their belief that the American way is the better way?

And what happens to that freedom of inquiry, that right to examine, to criticize and to propose reforms which, in the past, has kept our democracy fresh, vigorous, resilient, always adapting itself to new conditions and new times? Is our way—and the defense of it—henceforth to be blindness?

That is the way of the totalitarian propagandist—be he dead Nazi or live Soviet commissar. And look at the end-fruits of German book-burning! But there's more involved here than good sense. There is also high principle at stake—the constitutionally-guaranteed freedom of thought and expression.

They Can't Do That To Us?

U. S. Decision Wise

Our Disagreement With Panama

By SUMNER WELLES
Former Under Secretary of State

NEW YORK

THERE has been much misunderstanding of the underlying reasons for the unanimous rejection by the Panamanian National Assembly of the agreement for defense bases.

Reaction in this country has varied from the angry and intemperate charges of "ingratitude" heard in some Congressional circles to the repeated assertion by the press that the action of the assembly was due to Communist influence or to rank Yankeephobia.

It is true that Communist agitators played a part in exciting mass protests against the agreement. It is equally true that recent policies of the Canal authorities by which the Panamanian people have been deprived of legitimate commercial opportunities in the zone, and which have discriminated against Panamanians in the matter of employment, have stimulated anti-American feeling.

But the issue which is primarily responsible seems to be wholly overlooked.

The treaty of 1903, which gave the United States the right to construct the Panama Canal, contained provisions which relegated Panama to the status of a protectorate. This treaty not only gave this government the right to intervene in the republic, but it also gave it the power to establish military lands within the territory of Panama that it might unilaterally declare were needed for the defense or maintenance of the canal.

For thirty-three years this right of expropriation was exercised with little consideration for the susceptibilities or legitimate interests of the Panamanian people. It was not infrequently enforced with no real justification.

It is hard enough for a sovereign people to have their country divided by a corridor under alien jurisdiction. But the inevitable problems which the canal raises were greatly aggravated so long as no Panamanian citizen could be sure that his land might not be taken from him by American dictate, and so long as the Panamanian people saw a continuous extension of American jurisdiction over their territory.

ROOSEVELT TREATY

The treaty of 1936 was negotiated by the Roosevelt Administration in order to eliminate such treaty provisions as these. It ended a host of injustices. It placed the relationship between the two countries on a basis of partnership. Both partners assumed responsibility for the adequate defense and maintenance of the canal. The new treaty laid the foundation for friendly co-operation.

Panama was one of the first American republics to declare war upon the Axis after Pearl Harbor. The Panamanian people carried out their obligations under the treaty of 1936 in spirit as well as in letter. Before the end of 1942 they had leased 134 bases in every part of the republic to the United States for defense purposes. Their only insistence was that when the war was over these sites should be promptly returned.

DELAY GIVING UP BASES

Unfortunately after V-J Day the United States delayed unduly in returning these bases. After protracted legalistic quibbling 120 were handed back, but fourteen were still retained. The Government of Panama finally agreed to negotiate new leases to cover the bases still in American hands. The United States first demanded a ninety-nine year lease for the large aviation base at Rio Hato, then thirty years, and finally twenty. When the agreement was at length signed the tactics employed by this Government had necessarily created the impression throughout Panama that the United States was reverting to the practice of those prerogatives it had foreswom in the treaty of 1936.

Dr. Harmodio Arias, one of the new world's ablest statesmen, was president of Panama when the treaty of 1936 was negotiated. He recently declared that Panama has "the right and the duty to delegate to the United States the necessary authorization to establish defense bases in case of any threat of aggression that endangers the security of the republic or the neutrality or security of the canal." He expressed the opinion that world conditions today create a situation in which every necessary measure must be taken to protect the canal. But he expressed with equal frankness his conviction that a lease giving the United States the right to hold Panamanian bases for so long a period as twenty years, solely because of present conditions, was "unreasonable and unwarranted" and therefore "incompatible with the letter and the spirit of the treaty of 1936."

I believe a great majority of Panamanians share these opinions. It is not that Panama is unwilling to comply with her obligation to co-operate in the defense of the canal. It is merely that the Panamanian people object to an alienation of some of their territory for a period of time longer than that which the existing emergency would seem to justify.

OUR ACTION WISE

In view of the rejection of the proposed lease by the Panamanian Assembly this Government could have reached no wiser decision than to return every one of the bases immediately to the jurisdiction of Panama.

The action taken will do much to create confidence in the good will and in the good faith of this Government and to counteract the misunderstandings which have arisen. There is no reason to suppose that an agreement for the lease of such bases as may be necessary cannot be negotiated if this Government is prepared to consent to a shorter term than that previously fixed, or that the Government of Panama would not be disposed later to extend the lease should it then be demonstrated that world conditions made it necessary.

The step now taken by the United States will clear the atmosphere. We may hope that the irritations and resentments of the past few months will now be forgotten and that a new agreement within proper limitations may rapidly be concluded.

Quote, Unquote

Another mystery is why the same woman who braves the Wintry blasts in sheer nylons also insists on appropriating 75 per cent of the bedclothes.—**Roanoke Times.**

The Southern six-year-old with the 40-inch waist measure is a living example of the consequences of becoming careless and swallowing one's bubble gum.—**Greensboro Daily News.**

He who dances now pays the fiddler and Petrillo, too.—**Elizabethtown (Ky.) News.**

Why doesn't some smart clothing maker make kids' clothing the same color as the corner lot?—**Tallahassee Democrat.**

Stewart Alsop

Vandenberg's Decision

WASHINGTON.

ALL THE evidence seems to point to the astonishing conclusion that Michigan's Senator Arthur Vandenberg actually does not want the Republican Presidential nomination. This is admittedly difficult to believe. As a major Republican figure who has a real chance for the nomination, and yet sincerely does not want it is as rare these days as a child who dislikes candy. Yet the odd impression exists in Washington that Vandenberg has been quite sincere in his disclaimers. And a final item of evidence is now available which inescapably suggests that if the Presidential bee ever occupied the Vandenberg bonnet, it has now been firmly expelled.

For there is good reason to believe that Vandenberg will soon bow out as Michigan's favorite son, thus destroying his own major political asset as a potential candidate for the Republican nomination. According to present plans, in the next few weeks Vandenberg will write a letter to Michigan's Governor Kim Sigler, and through him to the Michigan Republican organization. The letter will thank the Michigan Republicans for their past loyalty, but it will emphasize that he is not a candidate for the nomination. And although in the last three conventions Vandenberg has been Michigan's favorite son, the letter will suggest that this time Michigan's Republicans look elsewhere.

UNUSUAL DECISION

Dignified silence on Vandenberg's part would ensure a solid Vandenberg delegation from Michigan at the Republican Convention in June. Such a solid delegation might quite conceivably serve as a stepping stone to higher things. Thus the only reasonable conclusion is that Vandenberg has in fact decided that the White House holds no attractions for him. Certainly this is a novel decision when all other leading Republicans, and a good many not so leading, want the Republican nomination so badly they can almost smell it.

It is also an important decision. Vandenberg has already flatly asserted that he will never run for the Senate again. By firmly withdrawing from the Presidential sweepstakes, he will achieve the enviable position of a politician who will never again have to face an election. He will also be free of those nagging night-thoughts which enevitably disturb the rest of any would-be President. He will be spared by the possible political consequences of his every word and action, he will be able to devote himself entirely to the job of hammering out a sound foreign aid program. And this is significant. For now that the great debate on the European Recovery Program is about to begin on Capitol Hill, Vandenberg, as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is the key figure in the making of bipartisan foreign policy.

The hammering process will start on Jan. 7, when the hearings before Vandenberg's committee begin. It is Vandenberg's intention to use his committee as the central stage of the national debate on E R P.

A list is now being drawn up of important men, on all sides of the political fence, who will be invited, or if necessary subpoenaed, to testify either pro or con on the program.

HEAR ALL SIDES

Views of every stripe will be thoroughly and publicly aired, from those of Henry L. Stimson and Dean Acheson, all-out supporters of the program, to those of Jesse Jones and Joseph Kennedy, who are believed to oppose the plan in several basic respects.

Vandenberg is making no before-the-fact commitments on E. R. P. Yet it is reasonably safe to predict that although he will insist on certain changes in the Administration version of the program, the version which will eventually emerge from his committee will be sound and effective. He will certainly insist that the initial appropriation be for one year rather than for four. He will certainly use a fine tooth comb on the amounts requested. And he will probably support some proposal to make the administrator of the program more responsive to Congress.

But Vandenberg will undoubtedly fight the sort of cheeseparing flank attacks which would render the whole great project meaningless. If Vandenberg's remarkable achievement in steering the interim aid program through to almost unanimous passage is any precedent, the chances certainly are that the Senate will eventually, no doubt with many protesting groans, follow his lead. Clearly the real danger to E. R. P. lies in the House. There a number of Republican leaders, including the powerful team of Indiana's Charles Halleck and Illinois' Leslie Arends, are believed to be sharpening their axes to hack away at E. R. P. Yet Vandenberg's great prestige, both on Capitol Hill and throughout the country, may yet serve to blunt these axes.

Samuel Grafton

Year Of Confusion

NEW YORK

IT WAS the year when we finally realized that Roosevelt was dead. In Roosevelt's day, government didn't care much what you thought, but had a great interest in how you acted, what you sold your goods for, how much you ate, and where you got it. But this was the year in which government (taken as a whole, all branches together) took a great interest in what prices you charged, and where you slept, and how you were doing on proteins. And developed a wholly new interest in what you were thinking.

It was the year of a convulsive turn in the age-old battle between the individual and the State. It was the year in which price control ended, and our economy was set free on the theory that it could beat serve our needs if left uncontrolled and unsupervised. Score one for freedom. But it was also the year in which government began to look for dangerous thoughts in the minds of its employees, and in which Americans suddenly began to stare into each other's eyes, wondering about each other's loyalty. Score one for what?

It was the year of culmination of fourteen years of effort to reduce the power of the Federal Government. But, like all years of overturn, it was a year of confusion. The Federal "scapegoat" was pushed out of the butcher stores at last, but Hollywood was forced into a cataleptic state of fear lest some camera angle be interpreted as having a left slant, or a pink tinge.

It was the year in which we shouted (and it's the best and proudest argument in the world) that the great difference between ourselves and Russia was that here you could think what you pleased, and nobody cared; but it was also the year in which a number of persons showed that they cared very much. It was the year in which you could sell a chop for any price you liked, but in which you could join certain left-wing organizations only on pain of being denied, say, a Government job for the rest of your life.

It was as if the conservative swing which gave some men more freedom from economic controls had slopped over and created new political inhibitions for other men. It was as if a sad equation, reading liberalism = freedom, had to be balanced by the equation, reading liberalism = the effect that if you gave more freedom to Bill you had to take some from Ed, as if freedom was a limited quantity, sad and false equation, running counter to the principle of unlimited progress toward freedom for all, which is the glory of Western thinking.

It was also the Year of Big Fright; and that may account for some of it, for the American people are a reasonable people, and they would not have become so perturbed about Communism, real or supposed, at home, had it not been for Russian aggressiveness abroad. In addition, the year of the Marshall Plan, and this is one of the great changes of the year; for Americans who, a twelvemonth ago, were wondering about the danger of war are today talking about rebuilding Western Europe instead. Trade, the arts, science and growth; and perhaps in a similar way we can learn to handle the danger of Communism at home as an administrative problem, without going in for that repression which is on the domestic level, a kind of war.

It has been a year in a corridor, one bumpy and perverse, and lined with distorting mirrors which have on occasion falsely promised to be round. It has been a year of as much sideward motion as forward progress. Perhaps now we will come out of it, with our Westernness intact and our wonderful stock of freedom still in our hands—that rich and complex parcel with so much more in it, though all may not realize it than a dollar pound of beef.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

French Villagers Cheer Friendship Train

MARSEILLES

IT TAKES about ten hours for a fast train to travel from Paris across France to Marseilles. The French Friendship Train, however, took three days.

This was not an accident. The schedule was deliberately planned that way, in order to duplicate in reverse the American Friendship Train which required eleven days to travel from Los Angeles to New York.

Not only was the schedule purposely slow, but the French train even carried the same type of flatcar equipped with a loudspeaker as the American train from which we made speeches at railroad stations across the U. S.

Because the Friendship Train came from the American people, not the Government, Geoffrey Parsons, editor of the Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune was asked to accompany the train as chairman and master of ceremonies.

At each station, the local French Friendship Committee, together with the Americans accompanying the train, climbed on the flatcar and Parsons led off with a brief speech telling how the train was organized in the United States, how it had collected contributions from all walks of American life and was truly a spontaneous gesture from the American people.

Mostly For Children

FOLLOWING this, Robert Blake of American Aid to France explained briefly that the food was going chiefly to French children and told how it was being distributed through French schools, orphanages and hospitals. He also introduced representatives of the three American church groups—Protestant, Catholic and Jewish—which are supervising the distribution together with representatives of two French groups, the French Red Cross and Entre'aide.

I spoke next and, after a few words in very poor French, turned the microphone over to my brother, Leon, as a spokesman for me.

My mother used to tell the story of how my brother and I, at the ages of 8 and 10, kept chickens and sold eggs. According to her, I would ring the doorbell, then push my small brother forward to greet the housewife and do the talking. Some senators say that of recent years I have got over this reticence. In France, however, my brother—who has spent some years here for the International News Service and the National Broadcasting Company—did a beautiful job of explaining the Friendship Train to the French people.

He told various stories about the schoolchildren, the labor unions, the businessmen, the churches, the farmers and the different towns which contributed to the train and he did it so graphically that it brought cheers from the crowds at the railroad stations.

The local mayor then responded, followed by the prefect. The former is elected by the people of the city, the latter is the representative of the French Government, appointed from Paris.

In every city, the railroad station was packed with people—children lined the platform for a couple of blocks.

The station at Valence, just two weeks before our arrival, had been the scene of a bitter railroad strike. Four men had been killed. Bullet holes still marked the walls. The strike, Communist-inspired, was partly against receiving American aid under the Marshall Plan. But on the walls alongside the bullet cracks, when the Friendship Train arrived, was a huge banner reading: "Welcome et merci!"

Incidentally, one thing which has made a great impression in France is the fact that many American railroad workers contributed their salaries for one day to help haul the Friendship Train across the U.S.A. The fact that the CIO steel workers union in Pittsburgh gave a carload of milk and the steelworkers and coalminers in Windber, Pa., gave a car has greatly impressed left-wing French labor leaders. To some extent it has taken the wind out of their argument that it's only American capitalists who want to help the French and for purely imperialistic reasons.

At Valence, scene of the recent bitter railroad strike, several Communist members of the City Council came to the Friendship Train reception in the City Hall. They stayed in the background and seemed more curious than hospitable. But other Frenchmen remarked that public opinion was so strong for the Friendship Train, the Communists obviously thought it was smart politics to be present.

At American railroad stations, the Friendship Train remained only 45 minutes. But because nothing like this had ever come through France before, the French insisted that the stops last longer. Our minimum stop, therefore, was two hours and in some cases we spent the entire afternoon and evening being feted by these hospitable people.

French Merry-Go-Round

GEN. HENRI GIRAUD, leader of the French forces in North Africa who co-operated with U.S. troops, came to visit the Friendship Train at its first stop—Dijon . . . At the Friendship Train reception in his honor, the local grand rabbi took the local grand mufti in tow, introducing him to the Americans. "The Jews and the Mohammedans in Lyons are already practicing the spirit of your Friendship Train," the rabbi said. "We believe in getting along together." . . . The mayor of each French city insisted that we visit his town hall—usually a beautiful building of ancient architecture.

A dozen French newsmen and women rode on the Friendship Train from Paris to Marseilles, all of them young. French newsmen generally are young—the explanation being that most older newsmen collaborated with the Germans and a new crop of youngsters has taken their place . . . Remarked a French electrician who operated the loudspeaker for the Friendship Train: "During the war my automobile was machine-gunned by an American airplane; my chauffeur was killed and I was wounded in three places. Since then, I haven't liked Americans. However, the Friendship Train has made me realize that when they shot at me it was only a mistake that friends sometimes make. For the first time since the war, I have got over being anti-American."