

TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1947

'Tut Tut—Drive On'

Marquis Childs

Western Land Grab

The Question Is Before The Voters

THE citizens of Mecklenburg will go to the polls on Saturday, June 7, to determine whether Alcoholic Beverage Control stores shall be established in their county.

There were reasonable and sincere objections to the method of calling the election, but they are now behind the point. The vote will be taken, the election will be held, and the people's decision will be binding. This is the only practical method of settling the controversial and divisive issue of whether the Mecklenburg politics for a decade.

There are already signs of that personal bitterness which has marred prohibition campaigns in the past. This is the unfortunate as it is unpleasant, for it tends to obscure the real issue. Personalities are irrelevant. So is the argument that the issue is between two vast conspiracies—liquor interests on one side and bootleggers on the other. It goes without saying that distillers would prefer to see liquor sold legally in Mecklenburg County. It also goes without saying that the bootleggers will support prohibition. But it does not follow that either group will or can determine the outcome of the election. Certainly no special interest can carry much weight if the voters turn out in sufficient numbers to guarantee a genuine expression of sentiment.

To this newspaper the issue posed by the ABC stores is not a moral question and the question is not whether liquor shall be sold in Mecklenburg, but whether the sale of liquor in Mecklenburg shall be controlled. Statistics, court records, personal experience, all these indicate that liquor is now readily available here at any price one cares to purchase it. Experience indicates that it will continue to be available regardless of what laws are on the statute books.

Not liquor (or drunkenness) the entire problem. Under prohibition Mecklenburg has seen the growth of an enormous bootleg racket with annual profits running in the millions of dollars. Crime has increased to a criminal population out of proportion to its size; our crime rate in all departments—from homicide to petty thievery—has risen to one of the national list. In our view, demonstrates the utter

failure of prohibition. And, more importantly, it demonstrates how prohibition actually encourages the growth of major crime.

We do not believe establishment of ABC stores will decrease drunkenness in Mecklenburg. We do believe establishment of ABC stores will decrease crime in Charlotte. Bootlegging will continue, of course, but it will become a small-scale operation for the obvious economic reason that no bootlegger can possibly compete with the State stores. The big crime syndicates cannot survive, for their primary source of income will be gone.

The practical aspect of ABC operation cannot be ignored. City and County Governments would derive more than a million and a half dollars annually—funds that can be used for a variety of constructive purposes. Perhaps the most important multiplied by the abnormally high rate of bootleg profits, now goes into the hands of criminals who use it for the systematic corruption of our society.

The ABC system is imperfect. But it seems to us infinitely preferable to the bootleg system now in operation here. True temperance, we believe, is a matter of education and ultimately the ABC system may even help to achieve it.

These are the reasons we have for some years advocated an ABC system for Mecklenburg. Our advocacy, however, does not indicate any lack of respect for the sincerity and the high purpose of those who do not share our view. We shall continue to strive, within the limits of human frailty, for objective and impartial presentation of the conflicting arguments in the news columns, and for fair and judicious editorial interpretation.

We insist only that there is high moral ground on both sides of the question and therefore for honest disagreement. The ultimate objective of the sincere advocates of the ABC system is no different from that of the sincere prohibitionists: to secure the peace, order, and protection of the welfare of the community. Unfortunately, the voters on June 7 cannot be offered a choice between good and evil, but only a choice between two evils, each with its own merits and demerits, and each with all agree is a deplorable situation.

Mr. Wallace's excessive have cut him off from a sympathetic hearing at home and can and will be dismissed by Democrats and Republicans alike.

This means that our developing foreign policy shall continue without benefit of full debate or public criticism. The appearance of national unity is created when critics are silenced, or silence themselves, but that can be the most important illusion of all. For it must be conceded that the questions raised by Henry Wallace have not been properly answered. Nor can they be answered properly by the press, support and reading him out of the party.

Mr. Wallace Saves Off The Limb

WE doubt if anything Henry Wallace could say to his British audiences will alter the course of world affairs. It is a single degree, and the great cry of alarm that has gone up in this country is hardly justified. Mr. Wallace, at the British well known, speaks the language of the American opinion. Even the most conservative London newspapers have passed upon him with only mild editorial comment.

His speaking tour, however, does seem likely to destroy the political effectiveness of Henry Wallace at home. He hadn't done badly with the role of martyr thrust upon him after the historic broadcast to the President Truman. However, from his reasoning, he had come to stand as the most effective critic of American foreign policy, a one-man substitute for the party opposition. The Republicans have abandoned in favor of bi-partisan co-operation.

So long as Mr. Wallace contented himself with pointing out what seemed to him weakness in American foreign policy he was performing a valuable function. But he now insists on reading, with his peculiar brand of mysticism, strange and malignant legends in American foreign policy. He no longer contends that the Truman Doctrine is an honest, if mistaken, effort to meet a genuine crisis in foreign relations. The whole thing, so Henry Wallace is telling his British audiences, is a product of American imperialism.

Football Isn't The Only Competition

THOMAS L. WILSON'S job as director of the University of North Carolina Press was a short but fruitful one. He carried on the tradition established by his able predecessors and even embellished it. The titles brought out under his direction are indicative of the diversity of his interests and the soundness of his instinct; they range from Rupert Vance's *All These People* to the Air Force history with the graphic title, *One Damned Island After Another*.

Now Mr. Wilson is leaving Chapel Hill. He goes to Cambridge as director of the Harvard University Press, which means that he has reached the top of the career in university publishing. His colleagues at Chapel Hill are delighted to see Thomas Wilson so honored, of course, but they are also relieved by his departure with only a year and a half.

It seems clear that Mr. Wilson, a native

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of Chapel Hill who had previously made his mark with two of the better commercial publishers in New York, didn't find the fields sufficiently green in North Carolina. When the offer from Harvard came he could stay at Chapel Hill only at a considerable personal sacrifice—in money and in reputation.

This, of course, is the problem Chapel Hill eternally faces. It stands at the top of the competitive heap among the educational publishers in the South, limited though its finances are its reputation is sufficient to attract first-rate men. But when one of the great universities of the South has a candidate with as much money, more glory, and a greater opportunity for service, Carolina cannot meet it. We can only take comfort in the ironic fact that one of the downcast states of the South has produced, in Chapel Hill, a sort of intellectual seed-bed for the nation.

Another Voice

Our New Hepcat Diplomacy

BENNY GOODMAN, the inimitable paragon of hot clarinet, has been named as the new Kremlin emissary to the United States. His special mission in the State Department is to "jam up" the Voice of America broadcasts beamed to Soviet Russia. Excuse us, we were not listening.

We think of Mr. Stalin as an old man and has lived an active life which inclines him to shy from loud noises. As he is so old, we cannot understand the State Department's desire to make him so noisy. It is a pity that the United States, per-

haps he listens to the State Department broadcasts. Consider: What will Mr. Stalin say to the Voice of America? He will say, "Beat me, Daddy, rightly to the bar!"

Advance notice should be sent Mr. Stalin of the new protocol to the Voice of America. Perhaps a sketch of a new great seal with the eagle holding, not olive branch and arrows, but a clarinet and a pair of headphones. —St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

People's Platform

Like A Serpent ...

Editorial: The News

PROV. 23:32—'At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.'

Would any man or woman take the first drink, if the Devil told them, 'I am going to make a drunkard of you, take away your wife's love, the respect of your children, the power to hold a job, your wealth. I will bury you in a pauper's grave, and you will wake up in Hell'?

Any person would take a drink under those circumstances—but the Devil is a liar, John 8:4.

He will tell you alcohol will warm your body, make you the wisest conventionalist, make strangers friends, no conscience troubling you, life is more gay, you will have a wonderful time.

Headache, a broken heart, an empty pocketbook, your conscience telling you you have broken your solemn oath, your wife and your honest respect, your children, your wealth, your job, your health, your life, your body, mind and soul, and a devil's product, all these things will be yours if you take the first drink.

When you vote a wet ticket you are saying by your vote that you are willing to let the Devil take your wife, daughter and son to drink whisky. You also are inviting the wrath and curse of God.

—WARREN W. WOODS.

For Flagstad

Editorial: The News

LIKE a limited vocabulary reporter, Walter Winchell continues to denounce Madam Flagstad through the expedient of calumny slanders from a pool of rumor, innuendo, lies and half-truths, delivered in a tone of moral indignation. The method of defamation: 'I am naming individuals by associating their names with those suspected of disreputable activities.'

Omitting facts and substituting disgusting innuendo, Winchell's words are a deliberate and malicious attempt to portray Madam Flagstad in an erroneous caricature, conforming to a personal bias against her. He is not naming individuals because of alleged ill-reputed associates.

In determining the decision in the Flagstad controversy, let us permit honesty and fairness to take precedence over prejudice and bear in mind that Madam Flagstad is a woman of high character and a devoted and innocent of any connivance with the Nazi regime, and upon the strength of this and her own defense, the American Embassy in Oslo granted her a visa to return to the United States which was officially admitted to the United States by the Immigration authorities. Noteworthy is the fact that the United States Department of Justice has found no cause to protest her admission. From these facts and subsequent information published in reliable sources of this nation it would appear that the at-

tribute and patriotism of Madam Flagstad remained loyal during the war. And certain it is that the keynote peering, hate-mongering banishment of the air-waves has not proved otherwise.

The ultimate decision rests with the citizenry of Charlotte. If there is anything detrimental to the conduct of Madam Flagstad, disqualifying her as an artist, the people are at liberty to express their disapproval by desisting from patronizing. But they agree that the lady has been grossly maligned and they will accept her for what she is, the most talented Wagnerian soprano of the world.

—A. W. BLACK.

The Answer

Editorial: The News

I HAVE read the following open letter to President Truman, and I am in perfect agreement with the Truman doctrine that 'government of the people by the people for the people must not be permitted to perish from the earth. To permit Russia to control Europe would be fatal for this country. The time to stop it is now. Later it would be impossible without a general war in which Russia would have a condition of all aid from us. It is Man-churia all over again.'

While we must save Turkey and Greece in order to save ourselves, they are not the only ones. We must fortify all not under Russian control to fully protect the world. If they are prepared to fight, they can be prosperous unless they practice free enterprise. Therefore it is absolutely essential that we maintain a condition of all aid from us. We cannot run around in a circle of bolstering up countries who operate under a bankrupting economy. It is a desperate plea.

When Mr. Herbert Hoover was Sec. of Commerce he said that the average value of the American production per operative in this country was \$3,500 while the comparative figure for Europe was \$1,500—a difference of \$2,000 or 66 per cent.

Allowing that half of Europe's 400,000,000 work and multiplying 200,000,000 by \$1,000 gives us an astronomical sum of \$200,000,000,000 per annum of lost wealth which Europe enjoys by merely existing.

In order to save European welfare, and, incidentally, our own, we must mention our getting paid out of the great American surplus. Europe's sinking ship, we must require that Europe should pay for the great American surplus. It is a simple matter. Otherwise we all sink together to Russia's level where proachments are in no wise borne out by her results in human welfare.

—ANDREW FROST.

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Drew Pearson's Depression Is Seen Merry-Ground

Editorial: The News

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However, that was only part of the story. During the last quarter of 1946, profits were mounting at the rate of \$14,000,000,000 for the year and during the first quarter of 1947 they increased at an even higher rate.

During this same period wages were tumbling from a 1945 high of \$1.10 to 106 cents in 1946 and still going down in 1947. That was why Mr. Truman made his state-

Egyptian Realities

Editorial: The News

HERE in Cairo it is less difficult to see the wood for the trees than in the rest of the Middle East. Egypt is the center around which the Middle East revolves. It is crystallizing, and Egypt is the bridge between Africa and Asia.

The Middle East is a Sudanese question now agitating Anglo-Egyptian rivalry. The British are determined to maintain their position in the Middle East, and the effects of the British are everywhere among the Arabic people.

NEW YORK

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An Aroused Public Opinion

AN AROUSED public opinion seems to have checked, for the time being, the drive to hold the rawest grass that has been proposed in many a year. That is to hand over to cattle and sheep the public lands administered by the U. S. Forest Service. They get this from the Government at a rate considerably less than the commercial grazing rate.

Sensate what is involved to be a drift back to the political life. These stockmen decided to improve on this situation. They would take over the lands outright, and then they could graze many cattle and sheep as they saw fit. If that destroyed the water supply and started large areas of the West on way to becoming desert, then future generations would have to worry about this.

PROFAGANDA LINE. An organization called the Joint Livestock Committee on Public Lands took a high-powered propaganda drive. Agriculture was the line they took. Why? It was ready-made for the Public ownership of control lands and the propaganda for the stockmen is a supply of common sense. It is wicked and un-American.

Shades of Theodore Roosevelt and Clifford Pinney Federal administration of public lands has been a success. It was this program, pushed with all the drama and the vigor of Roosevelt's passion, that saved the last of the American heritage. This Summer thousands upon thousands of Americans who visit the national parks and state universities are reminded of the reason to be grateful to those who fought the conservation battle.

Public reaction to the stockmen's little deal was immediate and violent. Organized opposition and conservationists, public lands, and newspapers condemned it. The

stockmen are the wood for the trees. Here in Cairo it is less difficult to see the wood for the trees than in the rest of the Middle East. Egypt is the center around which the Middle East revolves. It is crystallizing, and Egypt is the bridge between Africa and Asia. The Middle East is a Sudanese question now agitating Anglo-Egyptian rivalry. The British are determined to maintain their position in the Middle East, and the effects of the British are everywhere among the Arabic people.

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