THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1947

The Critic Is Criticized

THE American press, which loudly defends its right to criticize public and private institutions, has had its own tender feet held to the critical flames. Thirteen distinguished citizens, most of them scholars of the first rank, have reported the results of a two-and-a-half-year, $215,000 survey of American newspapers, radio, movies, magazines and books in a slender volume called *A Free And Responsible Press.*

The Commission on Freedom of the Press, headed by Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins of the University of Chicago, set out first of all to determine the proper function of communication media in our highly industrialized society. The membership agreed, finally, upon this:

> Today our society needs, first, a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent accounting of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning; second, a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism; third, a means of projecting the opinions and attitudes of the groups in the society to one another; fourth, a method of presenting and clarifying the goals and values of the society; and fifth, a way of reaching every member of society by the currents of information, thought, and feeling which the press supplies.

The Commission then undertook an extensive research program to see how well the press (radio, magazines, books as well as newspapers) is meeting these basic requirements. Its method was largely that of the Congressional investigating committee; it sent its own trained investigators into the field, studied pertinent documents, and called before it several hundred expert witnesses, most of them members of the profession. It found that the press has made impressive technical progress and will probably continue to do so. But it also found that the fundamental needs of a free society are not being met.

> The news is twisted by the emphasis on firstness, on the novel and sensational; by the personal interests of owners; and by pressure groups. Too much of the regular output of the press consists of a miscellaneous succession of stories and images which have no relation to the typical lives of real people anywhere. Too often the result is meaninglessness, flatness, distortion, and the perpetuation of misunderstanding among widely scattered groups whose only contact is through these media.

The Commission then proceeded to a consideration of ways and means of correcting these shortcomings. Its prescription, remarkably enough, calls for no major alteration in the present system of private ownership; indeed the Commission reiterates its fear of Government ownership and of excessive Governmental interference to the point of dullness. The role of the Government, it finds, should be to discourage monopoly of communication media, to provide more immediate redress to victims of libel, to encourage technical development in all fields, and to safeguard the freedom of expression of minorities (even revolutionary minorities). It recommends establishment of a Government press only if its agencies find it necessary to go outside the private means of mass communication to explain its policies to the people. The press itself, the Commission recommends, should accept full responsibility as a common carrier of information and discussion, finance experimental activities in its own fields, engage in vigorous mutual criticism, increase the competence and independence of its staffs, and place radio advertising on the same basis as that established by the best newspapers, i.e., complete separation from program content. The public, the Commission feels, could help elevate the standards of the press by promoting centers of advanced study at the universities and establishing an independent, privately-financed agency to appraise and report annually upon performance of the various media.

None of this is revolutionary, certainly, but it has drawn a quick and violent rebuttal from the press—or at least from the newspaper portion of it. Some editors have dismissed the study as inconsequential and even Time-Life, Inc., which financed it, objected to the Commission's vagueness and to the esoteric language employed in *A Free And Responsible Press.*

Specific criticism has ranged all the way from a Gannett columnist's complaint that the college professors are getting out of hand again to the rather absurd charge by President Wilbur Forrest of the American Society of Newspaper Editors that the report is based on left-wing thinking and will only help to destroy the prestige of the press. Mr. Forrest apparently suspects that, despite their frequent denials, the members of the Commission are really trying to make out a case for more and better Federal regulation.

Nothing, it seems to us, could better sustain the considered indictment of the thirteen assorted college presidents, lawyers, bankers, economists, poets, anthropologists, historians, philosophers, political scientists and theologians than the press reaction to their restrained criticism. For what the Commission was really saying was what a great many thoughtful newspapermen have said before it—that the trend toward monopoly, inevitable though it may be, is also the trend toward hardening of the arteries of communication.

The flyleaf of *A Free And Responsible Press* is adorned with a quotation from John Adams: . . . "philosophers, theologians, legislators, politicians and moralists will find that the regulation of the press is the most difficult, dangerous and important problem they have to resolve." The labored language that follows indicates how difficult the Commission found the problem; the generality of its conclusions indicates its own failure to resolve it. But it has stated a challenge and sounded a warning, and alongside it the automatic protestation that the American press is the best of all free institutions in the best of all free societies sounds even hollower than usual.

The Day Of The Resurrection

FANCY hats and colored eggs are a side issue. Easter remains a religious holiday, the most joyful holiday of the Christian calendar, marking as it does the end of a period of mourning and remindful of the miracle of resurrection.

All week in Charlotte the churches have marked the special days of Easter Week, each in its own way and in accordance with its own creed, but all united in rededication to the ideals of Jesus Christ who so spectacularly demonstrated the theory of immortality.

It is a celebration in which those of all faiths may join, as they did yesterday at a three-hour service at the First Methodist Church. Seven ministers — Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, Moravian, Methodist and Christian—shared a service based on the seven sentences spoken from the cross on the day of Crucifixion. Ministers of all faiths will join again at dawn tomorrow to conduct traditional sunrise services.

All of this is in the spirit of Easter, a reaffirmation of the unity of mankind, a reminder that all men are equal in the face of the miracle of death and rebirth which all must share. This is the ultimate promise of the Christian religion, the concept that arises above the divisions of creed and dogma.

The first strains of Easter music will sound in the streets in the early morning hours, summoning the faithful to unite in the bonds of common faith and give thanks for the miracle of resurrection. The response is the most inspiring manifestation of the religious life of the city; the thousands of upturned faces greeting the Easter dawn is a comforting minor miracle in its own right.

The Lessons In Chicago

BEFORE the ballots were counted in the Chicago mayoralty race, Republican Chairman Reece said the contest had great significance as a sort of preview of 1948. After the Democratic landslide which put Martin Kennelly in office, however, Mr. Reece dismissed the event as another case of a Democratic city going Democratic.

The correct estimate of the Chicago campaign, we suspect, lies about midway between Mr. Reece's pre- and post-election statements. It is doubtful if a national trend could be spotted on the basis of a purely local election in a single machine-ridden city. There are indications, however, that the mistakes the Republicans made in Chicago could be fatal anywhere.

The Republican organization there relied on the temper of the times rather than on the quality of its candidate. Confident that it could win with anybody, it put up an obscure organization man and conducted an essentially negative campaign on his behalf. The Democrats, alerted to the possibility of defeat, selected as a candidate an extremely able man with no prior political connections. Although accepting his support, Martin Kennelly denied any direct affiliation with Boss Kelly and proclaimed himself free of any obligation to the old Democratic machine. And, perhaps most important, he ran on a platform of civic progress.

The most significant thing about the Chicago election may be that it attracted the largest number of voters in history. Certainly this is the most encouraging thing about it, for it may be taken as an indication that the widespread apathy the Republicans exploited successfully in the 1946 campaign is on the wane. The people, it appears, may still be aroused to vote *for* something, and they will respond in much greater numbers than when they are simply given an opportunity to vote *against* something.

There seems to us to be a pointed lesson in this for both parties. It may be that the people have had enough of second-rate men, regardless of their party label.

Washington, at long last, rules on what is not loot, when brought home by a colonel. If it is worth less than $5,000 and can be lifted by a 20-ton deck crane it's a momento.

For thousands of Free-India agitators the specter of unemployment looms in '48, at which time heartless Britain threatens to plunge that tumultuous nation into independence.

Stung to action by Dr. Lee De Forest's blast that it had sunk to a moronic level, radio immediately arranged to feature "Open the Door, Richard" on 7,128 programs.

Sweet, Sweet Music

People's Platform

A State Of Mind

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS

IN recent issues you have had letters from readers condemning the action of some local veterans' group, in their demand that the opera singer, Kirsten Flagstad, be denied Armory use for a concert.

This matter is greater than the mere appearance of one who went back to Nazi Europe at the height of the war and who at least showed no inclination to fight Nazism, if her role were entirely passive, and we have some reason to doubt that too.

The matter is one of our state of mind. First the singers, then the lecturers, and soon the Germans would lapse back into the calf-like silence for which they are so famous between wars, and soon we will look upon them again as happy frolicking folk who keep their kitchens spotlessly clean, and resulting again in our boys storming the bridges of the Rhine twenty years from now.

One of your correspondents as well as her press agent make much of the fact that Mme. Flagstad "rushed back to her family" as the reason for her return to Europe while the Nazis stood bestride half the civilized world. I wonder how many unsung and unsinging thousands in the undergrounds of France, Belgium, Holland, Greece and other countries, fought the Nazis with their bare hands, with never a hope of ever seeing their wives or husbands or children. Let us look back upon another opera singer of another generation—an opera singer who was born a German, and who did not rush back to her husband in Europe while America was fighting Germany. Mme. Schumann-Heink had more than a husband in Europe while she was in America—she had a son fighting in the ranks of the enemy, and that son died on the battlefield, at the same moment that Mme. Schumann-Heink toured all the American Army camps bringing cheer and song. No one who heard it will ever forget the Christmas eve of the announcement of her son's death for Germany, when Mme. Schumann-Heink sang "Silent Night, Holy Night" to the millions of American soldiers then standing in the trenches on the Western front.

Mme. Flagstad may not have been on the side of the Nazis actively, but she was certainly not on the side of the Americans in this great struggle and it would be better to wait till the bodies of the six or seven millions whom the Nazis destroyed are actually cold in their graves before we listen to her voice.

—JAMES TAYLOR JONES.

Great Artist

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

THANKS to you personally and orchids to your stimulative paper for the first practical and common-sense appraisal of the Kirsten Flagstad affair since Walter Winchell began his bitter and seemingly endless campaign against this great artist.

Your "summing-up" of the entire situation is completely logical and so completely American that it makes Mr. Winchell's attacks upon the great soprano seem like the best efforts of a Nazi propagandist—in reverse.

I hope your splendid editorial will do much to allay the damage to Mme. Flagstad's reputation that Mr. Winchell's vicious attacks may have created in Charlotte and pave the way for a beautiful concert in our city, satisfactory and beneficient to both artist and audience.

After reading this tolerant and understanding assertion that THE NEWS is the "livest and most editorial I am quite prepared to agree with your wide-awake newspaper" in the South.

And I am happy to add, in the USA.

—FRANK HOWELL.

By The Sword

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS

GERMANY being defeated goes to show that the Bible is still supreme. They who live by the sword shall perish by the same. At the present the nations ponder as to whether any life should be restored to Germany, and already we hear of and read of many fascists who rush head-on into a third war with Germany by worshipping at the shrine of the German.

To destroy a nation that brags of being the master race is the only way. Any German treaty is worthless. Let all the heroic allies keep Germany down. Nazism has nothing to do with it—all Germans have according to science a bohunk head. The truth is the master race is the most stupid in God's reality.

—J. M. SHIELDS.

Loyalty

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS

PRESIDENT TRUMAN has called for an investigation of disloyal Americans. He might begin with a check of the draft records.

He should check on those who practice discrimination because of creed, color or class. He should check those who evaded the American national service law during the war. He should check on those who deprived our country of a work-or-fight law.

All the records are available, Mr. Truman, if you want to know who's loyal and who isn't.

—MRS. J. D. BIGGERS.

The People's Platform is available to any reader who cares to mount it. Communications should be less than 300 words, typewritten if possible, and on only one side of the paper. Libel and obscenity will be deleted—otherwise anything goes. Each letter must be signed, although, in exceptional cases and upon request, we will withhold the writer's name.—Editors, THE NEWS.

Joseph Alsop

Foundation In Danger

WASHINGTON.

THE fact is unpleasant but must be faced. The bi-partisan foreign policy, which is the foundation of American unity in the present world crisis, is in serious danger of being undermined. Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg's amendment permitting the United Nations to abrogate our aid to Greece was significant in itself, as a wise effort to clarify the issues in the national debate on foreign policy. But it was still more significant that Senator Vandenberg offered his amendment without consulting any of his Democratic colleagues.

This is the real reason for the curiously muffled response to Vandenberg's astute move, which ought to have been welcomed by everyone.

Being taken unawares, the White House and the Democratic leadership were decidedly upset. The Democratic Senate chieftains especially were caught between wind and water.

At the Senate Democratic Policy Committee meeting subsequent to Vandenberg's disclosure of his amendment, open opposition to the amendment was seriously debated.

BARKLEY COMMISSIONED

Several of the Senators present rather thoughtlessly advocated making an issue of Vandenberg's unilateral action. The upshot was that the Senate Democratic leader, Alben W. Barkley, was commissioned to discuss the whole problem in detail with Vandenberg.

This is symptomatic of the deterioration of the bi-partisan relationship as is the amendment itself.

Vandenberg's decision to offer the amendment without warning to anyone was made as a result of three elements in the situation which have been visibly troubling him. First, Secretary of State George C. Marshall has made no effort to establish the same confidential relations with the Republican foreign policy leader as existed between Vandenberg and Byrnes. Second, Senator Tom Connally, senior Democratic member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has shown little inclination to back up Vandenberg since the Republicans captured the Congressional majority.

Third, Vandenberg strongly believes there was truth in Harold Stassen's often-quoted remark. This was the statement that the Administration did not include the Republicans in the "foreign policy take-offs, but only in the crash landings."

ALL-EMBRACING

The phrase, "bi-partisan foreign policy," is all-embracing in its implications, yet the Republicans have never even been invited to discuss such vital aspects of foreign policy as the Chinese and South American problems. Feeling that he may later be asked to share responsibility for Chinese policy, as he has been for Greek policy, Vandenberg has felt an unconcealed disquiet.

The fact that the bi-partisan relationship was deteriorating has recently been called to the attention of President Truman by men whom he trusts on Capitol Hill. He has been urged, as the best remedy, to broaden the base and strengthen the structure of the whole machinery of bi-partisanship. But he has been reluctant to act, principally because he has his natural share of the same party feelings which are rising among the Republicans.

Meanwhile the deterioration is being furthered daily by the President's increasing political strength. It was much easier for the Republicans to co-operate with the President when they pitied him, than it is now when they begin to fear him.

Altogether, the situation has the makings of a first rate mess. If it is analyzed it will be seen to contain two main danger-promoting factors. Some purely personal relationships are unsatisfactory, such as that between Vandenberg and his old team-mate, Connally. And the impersonal, institutional relationship of the bi-partisan foreign policy is also unreliable.

MATURE PERSONALITIES

Fortunately none of the other personalities involved can be called immature or petty. The personal factor can be eliminated. But it can only be eliminated by removing the institutional factor. And the way to do this is to accept the obvious truth that the bi-partisan foreign policy is a major constitutional innovation, and will not last unless it is treated as such.

Samuel Grafton

Unrestrained Rage

NEW YORK

ALL bets are off, as they say, restraint has gone out the window, something not very nice has happened to the intellectual texture of our day. One feels this in small incidents as in large. The other afternoon, Senator McMahon of Connecticut, fighting for confirmation of Mr. Lilienthal as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, read a letter from the distinguished physicist, H. C. Urey, warning that atomic research could be crippled for several years if the Senate did not act quickly on the confirmation. "I say that is the bunk!" jeered Senator Styles Bridges. This is the kind of dialogue a Senator from New Hampshire makes these days with the winner of the Nobel Prize and the discoverer of heavy water.

SHRIEKS REND AIR

According to sober reporters, "shrieks" tore the Senate air, when the Senators heard that nuclear scientists would quit the atomic project in discouragement if Mr. Lilienthal were not confirmed. "They're sit - down strikers!" screamed Senatorial voices. It is not recorded whether any Senators also cried, and stamped their feet.

These sullen rages will remain in the record, no matter how the confirmation vote on Lilienthal goes; and they represent an issue in themselves, apart from Lilienthal. The issue is a lack of restraint, a kind of political unbuttonedness. The proposals, made by those who see Communists everywhere, that Mr. Lilienthal's name be sent back to committee to give the FBI a chance to work him over, are typical. I can remember way back to when it was a quiet serious matter to suggest that a reputable public servant and prominent citizen be investigated by the police. Now that is just passing the time of day.

Nobody holds back any more; the hot vapors and the sullen humors have possession of us. Senator Byrd's proposal that we put our Greek program up to the United Nations and that, if Russia vetoes it, we organize a new United Nations without Russia, fits well into our new intellectual atmosphere; it carries all the characteristic marks, extremism, pessimism, verbal violence, the preemptory manner.

SOMETHING CATCHING

It sounds at least a little bit like the kind of note one customarily leaves behind before jumping from a height into a place not filled with water. We have stumbled into a kind of competition with each other in the making of these remarkable remarks, and we have reached the stage where they have to be pretty sensational to attract any notice at all. There is something catching about all this, and it makes one think vague, formless thoughts, about how one would not like one's estate, for example, to be administered by an angry man, and how these angry men are, in a sense, administering an estate that belongs to all of us.

The sultry fires flicker, and more and more of us are caught up in the dance around them. The FBI has become the greatest of our certainties, if not our only one, and in the feverish market-place of today it counts for very little to have won a Nobel Prize, or to have discovered heavy water.

CAUTION COUNSELED

Strongly, it is the strongly anti-Communist New York Daily News which, suddenly concerned, runs an editorial called "Careful, Please, Gents" warning that some of the conversation and chatter heard today might be heading us toward a calamity. That the New York Daily News should be our current counsel of moderation is, of itself, a wonderful comment on the extreme intellectual mood of today, and its wild tendency to seek a new farthest north.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round : New Greek Monarch Is Worse Than Old

WASHINGTON

THE first Athens flash on King George's death made some State Department officials believe momentarily that divine providence had gone to the rescue of the Greek loan program. King George, a notorious reactionary, had been a serious obstacle to the Truman program.

When the first news of George's death reached the State Department, therefore, Near Eastern officials proposed making a diplomatic suggestion to the Greek Government that the throne be declared temporarily vacant. Had the Greeks accepted this, the prospects for forming a new, more democratic government would have been greatly enhanced. So would the chances for passing the loan.

The State Department planned to urge restoration of the regency under Archbishop Damaskinos, and was also considering the possibility of placing liberal-minded Greek Prince Pierre on the throne—if the Greeks insisted on keeping their monarchy.

However, before the State Department could even get off a cable to Athens, word same that George's brother, Prince Paul, had been swiftly seated on the throne. In fact, it later leaked out that the royal family hushed up the news of George's death so as to give time to Paul to take the oath.

The new King is even more thoroughly hated in democratic circles than his brother. Paul's ascension now gives Greece a German queen, Frederica, who made no bones about her split loyalties during the war. Two of her brothers fought in Hitler's army. In her Cairo home, Princess Frederica displayed autographed pictures of Nazi officials in her living room. Paul himself headed the Fascist Greek Youth movement under the late Greek dictator Metaxas. In his capacity as leader of the Fascist Greek youth, Paul sent a foreign office official, C. Papadakis, to the United States during the 1939 New York World's Fair as a personal representative of the Greek youth Fascists. When Papadakis arrived at the Fair's Greek Pavilion, he shocked officials by giving the Hitler salute publicly.

So, now long-suffering Greece is saddled with a new and more terroristic monarch.

Blackberry-Cordial General

SEEN and heard at the gala Kremlin reception given by Foreign Minister Molotov to Foreign Ministers Bevin and Bidault and General Marshall:

Gen. Mark Clark, efficient former commander of American forces in occupied Austria, sat down to reminisce with Marshal Koniev, who commanded the Red Army in Vienna. Koniev called a waiter and ordered large, full glasses of vodka for Clark and his American friends.

"Nyet!" remonstrated Clark politely, but Koniev insisted, and Clark decided he could not be rude.

"We've had so much of this poison in months past that Koniev is giving me his ulcer," said Clark in English, which the Soviet Marshal, of course, did not understand.

But looking over at Koniev's glass, General Clark discovered it was empty.

"Here, none of that," said Clark.

But Koniev refused to take the vodka. In the end, he let the waiter fill the bottom of his glass with a little blackberry cordial.

The great, tough soldier who liberated Berlin and Prague, the hero from the Siberian wastes who bears, not one, but two stars as one of the great military men of the Soviet Union, not only didn't toss down his vodka in one gulp, but took no vodka at all.

Mine Safety Rollcall

AS its own contribution to mine safety, the Merry-Go-Round today lists a summary of the latest mine inspection reports of the Bureau of Mines.

Caudill No. 2 Mine, Betsy Lane Coal Corporation, Betsy Lane, Kentucky: Employs an average of 50 men, working two shifts. Safety violations cited by Federal mine inspector Russell Shaw included: (1) improper air measurements, (2) lack of methane checks in abandoned workings, (3) faulty air fans and (4) underground tobacco smoking and the use of open-flame (carbide) lamps by miners. The last two are the fault of miners, not the management.

H and H Mine, H and H Coal Co., Paris, Arkansas: A Government-seized mine, employing 40 men on two shifts, this colliery has been guilty of numerous and repeated safety violations, according to inspector C. F. Kahre. A recent report by Kahre lists such violations as (1) accumulated coal dust and open electrical equipment, which constitute a fire and explosion hazard; (2) unsafe timbering and loose roofing; (3) only 2,000 cubic feet of air a minute pumped in, instead of the standard 6,000 cubic feet; (4) weekly air readings not made; (5) weekly gas tests not made; (6) dry, instead of wet, rock drilling—a dust-explosion hazard; (7) inadequate first-aid and fire-fighting equipment underground.

Riverton Mine, Denkert Coal Co., Riverton, Illinois: A recent report by inspector T. C. Higgins showed the following conditions: (1) matches and cigarette lighters carried underground, also open-flame lamps (the fault of the miners); (2) inadequate underground fire-fighting equipment; (3) abandoned workings—which often become gas pockets—not sealed or ventilated; (4) no telephone service to working stations in mine; (5) insufficient air pumped into crosscuts; (6) no warning device on air fan to signal when it slows down or stops.

Maryland No. 2 Mine, Berwind-White Coal Mining Co., Wilmore, Pennsylvania: Though this Government-seized mine has, on the whole, a good record of complying with the Federal safety code, its 105 underground personnel still work in danger of falling objects and lack protective footwear and goggles, according to Federal inspector V. D. Null.

Miners At Fault Too

AS indicated by the above, mine safety is not always a one-way proposition. The miners also are sometimes at fault. It is hard to get them not to carry matches and to smoke underground. And despite the fact that they are required to use rubber-sole shoes, they sometimes come in with hobnailed shoes, which strike sparks and ignite gases. Also some miners still wear nonregulation caps—sometimes the fault of the mine operators who fail to make modern caps available.

On the other hand, mine owners have difficulty these days in getting new power fans to suck the air in and out of mine shafts. New fans have been ordered by many mines, but delivery has been slow because of curtailed war production.