THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Victory Is Hardly The Word

IN AMERICA, in May 1947, it is easy to forget that this is the second anniversary of V-E Day. Two years have wiped the signs of war from the countryside, if not from the headlines. For the illiterate, and for all those who have no wish to be reminded of things past, the illusion of peace is complete.

But only in America, in May 1947, is it easy to forget this anniversary. Elsewhere the scars still show — in shattered masonry and in the faces of the people. Silence has replaced the sound of guns, but silence is a reminder of failure, of wasted months, of hopelessness. A war has ended, but peace has not yet begun.

And this is the bitter dose. While the guns still sounded there was an easy, automatic, acceptable explanation for everything. Did children starve, old women suffer, men die? *C'est la guerre* — a madman was loose in the world, and free men everywhere had joined hands to destroy him. This was the thing that had to be done, the thing that couldn't wait, and human suffering could be accepted as part of it. But now the madman is two years dead, gone, lost forever beneath the rubble of Berlin. The guns are cold, the soldiers have gone home, grass grows over the pitted fields. And still children starve, old women suffer, men die.

The careful calculations of diplomats, the plausible words of publicists, the involved excuses of politicians—these may explain the great void of these two years, but they can never justify it. Two years after the military decision was gained half the world still rots in misery—this, truly, is beyond defense, the black, shameful record of human failure.

We need a new title for this anniversary. Victory has no place in it.

How High Were The Flames?

ONE of the greatest difficulties faced by debaters on both sides of the prohibition question is the absence of accurate statistics covering the period of the Noble Experiment. Drys are likely to recall those fourteen years as a blissful, golden era of law, order and universal Godliness, while wets can remember only the sound of submachineguns in the streets and the gnawing taste of bathtub gin.

A final verdict as to whether there was more or less drinking under national prohibition can never be handed down. There are, of course, the records of the various law enforcement agencies which demonstrate that some enterprising citizens continued to sell and/or consume the stuff. But these list only the unwary and uninfluential ones who were caught. How many escaped the law? There are no statistics on that point, only the memories of individual observers, and these are colored by prejudice and hazy with time.

One such turned up, almost irrelevantly, in a column Hal Boyle wrote from the campus of Indiana University where he has been delivering a series of Ernie Pyle memorial lectures. We don't know what Mr. Boyle's convictions are in the matter of prohibition, although we assume that he doesn't think highly of it. We do know that he is an unusually perceptive reporter, as he has demonstrated frequently since he stepped into Ernie Pyle's shoes. He is, therefore, as competent as the next man to testify to the difference between the contemporary campus scene and that of his own day. Casting his memory back some fifteen years, Mr. Boyle wrote:

> About the only thing the moral beagles were right on was their contention the college boys were drinking too much. I do believe that at the average Saturday night dance the blood content of most fraternity men contained more than the 3.2 per cent alcohol then allowed by statute.
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> Today the college students both men and women—seem to drink much less than in my time. Alcohol no longer is an adventure or a forbidden lure. Much of the fun of college drinking went out when you no longer had to buy it illegally behind a taxi stand at $2 a pint—stomach-shattering stuff that aged a freshman into a senior overnight. Or so he felt the next morning.

We offer this only as the observation of one who, so far as we know, was not attempting to prove anything in particular. Let it be entered into the record and weighed, as it will be, against the concurring or dissenting memories of all those who grew up in the era of flaming youth.

Assist From The Picket Line

COOPERATION between management and labor deserves high praise always, and we are pleased to note two indications of it in the current run of the news.

The National Federation of Hosiery Workers (CIO), in convention assembled at Durham, solemnly passed a resolution pledging the union to support the hosiery manufacturers in its nation-wide campaign against bare feminine legs. Women, the delegates proclaimed, lose a great deal of their glamour when they abandon their stockings. Not only that, but the practice has resulted in a serious reduction in the nation's consumption of full-fashioned hosiery.

Fashion being the unpredictable thing it is, we doubt somehow if much will come of this labor - management crusade. We note, however, that it is based on sound psychology. Nobody is attempting to persuade the girls that stockings are warmer, cooler, more hygienic or more moral than bare legs. They are being reminded simply that their legs look better clothed, an argument that ought to turn the trick if anything can.

A more immediate benefit to management afforded by a labor union is reported in New York, where a group of dance instructors (female) pulled a brief strike against the Arthur Murray studios. The dispute, whatever it was, was quickly settled, but not before the lovely pickets had formed a conga line and snaked back and forth in front of the studio, shaking maracas, among other things. They had a chant, too, that went like this: "Two, four, six, eight — Mr. Murray, negotiate. One, two, three, kick — Papa better sign quick." It appears that Mr. Murray had to grant a check-off as a result, but it is a small concession in return for the free advertising provided for his six easy lessons.

There will be more of these incidents, we suppose, before the Spring is over.

Another Voice

The Strength Of Democracy

"THE most powerful force to uphold democracy lies not in tanks and ordnance, but in the conviction of the men who, when conflict finally breaks out, will drive the tanks and fire the cannon."

Thus did President Miguel Aleman of Mexico, in addressing a joint session of the United States Congress in the mellow idiom of his native Spanish, re-emphasize the verity that the real strength of democracy anywhere and everywhere is the faith which men have in it.

This faith is not something that can be won by the sword. It is not the faith which is mothered by fear or gained in awe. Faith in democracy which is akin to the connubial love commanded by the shotgun wedding or to the religion stemming out of death-bed repentance is worse than useless as a preserver of man's free societies.

Handsome is as handsome does is an old saying which contains much pertinence today. It is equally true that democracy is as democracy does. A sane society will not leave the championship and defense of democracy merely to its orators and writers, its professional pointers-with-pride who are never able to detect any flaws in it. It will not be content with a democracy which forever assumes a defensive role. Such a so-called democratic order sooner or later betrays its own principles and sacrifices its own freedoms by attempting to prohibit and suppress—by saying "don't" when it should be saying "do"—by standing against something when it should be moving onward in a determined fight "for" something eminently worth while.

It is as true now as it has always been that you cannot beat something with nothing. The only democracy that can succeed in the modern world of movement and perpetual change is a democracy with a program. American action of the positive, progressive sort is the only salvation of the traditional American way.—*Winston-Salem Journal.*

It turns out only now that Truman is a bowler. Later, we may learn if our Harry shoots for any particular pin, or just thinks of the Russians.

Baseball's old master, Cy Young, is 80. For 22 seasons he pitched a swell curve, little realizing that *Life* magazine would prove this impossible.

Threatened with extinction by a bill which unifies the armed services, the U. S. Marine Corps can be expected to fight to a finish, as always—from the halls of Montezuma to those of Congress.

The Hutchins Commission issues its report on what's wrong with the press. For the working newspaperman it contains no surprise, except the $215,000 expense account, which he would like to see broken down.

The resurrection of Burton K. Wheeler to probe charges that the Navy pays too much for oil can well dismay any malefactor concerned, as Burt is twice as tough when he's right.

People's Platform

The UN Laboratory

CHARLOTTE

Editors, The News:

AS it is evident that no co-operative agreement can be had now with Russian which would permit joint action in stabilizing the world and adjusting it to the atomic age, the United Nations, as at present constituted and implemented, is a hindrance if we rely upon it to compose conflicting interests and avert war.

We must consider the activities of the United Nations only as test tube experiments conducted in a laboratory where the scientists are seeking for a catalyst that will promote the formation of a world-organism compound having characteristics acceptable to the whole world yet differing in many respects from the original components

It may be a long time before the efforts of the researchers are rewarded But we can be thankful that the laboratory exists, and that the scientists are working on the problem.

Although they may never make the great discovery, the history of many discoveries supports the expectation that means will be found to loosen many of the tensions that now separate some nations.

In the meantime a new United Nations organization is forming about the United States and the British Commonwealth. This is not a research foundation, or a debating society. It is a powerful instrument designed to protect the interests, in every part of the world, of all the nations who join with us and share our objectives.

This organization may be expected to establish and maintain a line beyond which no communistic governments will be tolerated. Russia, no doubt, will continue being obdurate concerning reciprocal agreements, but, lacking the atomic bomb, cannot afford to cross the line separating Russian hegemony from the rest of the world.

The danger of war with Russia will depend primarily upon how we respect the line that we establish. Once we halt the communists, it will be hard to resist the temptation to push them back. Perhaps it would be in the interests of world-peace if a few countries on our side of the line remained potentially communistic. It is hard for the powerful to be humble.

Let us hope that our United Nations will be content to only hold the line until the old United Nations evolves a magic formula Upon such forebearance may depend the life of your son or grandson.

—LEWIS AYER SMITH

First Stone

CHARLOTTE

Editors, The News:

SEVERAL friends of mine have told me that my letter, editorially captioned 'The Central Question', left them wondering whether I was a Wet or a Dry. I had to admit to them that, after reading the letter a couples of times as it appeared in The News, I was a little in the dark, myself.

The truth of the matter is, I got so carried away with my subject that both the length and (chuckle) strength of the letter rendered editorial deletion necessary; the deleted portion, I believe, might have rendered the whole a bit more intelligible, but I suspect that 'twere better thus.

I should like to say here, though, that I am a WET—a Wet that doesn't use alcohol in any way, shape, form or fashion, a Wet that doesn't own a single liquor store— a Wet, however, who believes that a non-drinker has no more moral right to dictate to a drinker when, where, how and for how much he will buy his liquor than a vegetarian, has to ditto regarding a meat-eater. And I think that Mr. A. Z. F. Wood's rebuke of the scripture-quoters is right to the point. Mr. Wood did not attempt to clothe drunkenness in a cloak of righteousness, he merely asked, subtly, that they get back to the subject under discussion, that is, should Christ's followers force their will on their brethren in this matter?

Paul's advice to Timothy didn't justify drunkenness, but it is to be assumed that Paul didn't require that Timothy get it from a bootlegger. And, if it had been in accordance with Christ's plan, He had ample opportunity to gather his little group around Him and say, "When our movement gets a little stronger, we will make the wine-bibbers pay three prices for third-rate liquor."

But He didn't. He had every opportunity to make the law harder on harlots, but He didn't. "Go thy way," He said. He had opportunity to make the law harder on thieves, but He didn't. "Give him thy cloak, also," He said. When Christ said, 'Let him who is without guilt cast the first stone", He did not mean him who was not a harlot—He meant him who was without guilt of any kind. And can any say that the surrendering of the alcoholic sinner to the tender mercies of moonshine liquor is not casting a stone at that unworthy?

Sam Jones used to say that too many Christians are eager to be a hammer, and strike for God; very few of them are so eager to be the anvil, to be struck for God. If they can just be the hammer in this case, and let the poor alcoholic be the anvil, then everything will be just lovely. 'All that and Heaven, too!

—A. E. BASSETT.

Service

MORGANTON

Editors, The News:

A YOUNG fat boy delivers The Charlotte News to the State Hospital here. He is a curiosity. He makes his appearance slowly about 4 o'clock. From "R" ward here he can be seen like the morning sun rising with the bag of papers swinging on his side. He is about as regular as clock-work, but it seems an effort for him to make his rounds.

Recently he told me of the contest for The News carriers of which he was in high hopes of becoming eligible for the trip to Charlotte. He made it alright. When telling me about it he emphasized especially about how he would eat at the finest restaurants in Charlotte and he said, "Boy, we'll get the best food they've got." His expression beamed. Maybe he eats so much at home and at the stores that it keeps him puffing in order to get The News delivered. Anyway, like the "turtle" he gets here. Better slow than never. He gets here soon enough.

—FRANKLIN HAMRICK.

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.

Marquis Childs

Voice Of America

WASHINGTON

THE President's committee to study universal military training is completing a report soon to be made public. They have heard many witnesses, for and against, and their report will reflect a careful and thorough review of an issue that stirs intense feeling.

Some of the military witnesses were frank in their appraisal of the value of military training. They conceded that, under conditions of modern warfare, its value was debatable. But they almost always added that it was necessary to impress the world, particularly Soviet Russia, with our intention to keep order and live up to our international commitments.

The program would cost a minimum of $2,000,000,000 a year. If the value of mass armies is debatable, then this conceivably becomes a very costly gesture to impress the peoples of the world. Yet it is contemplated and it may be adopted.

At the same time the House Appropriations Committee, with the House promising to follow suit, cuts out the entire State Department information program for reasons of economy. In that way they save $31,000,000.

MODEST EFFORT

The information program is a modest attempt to tell the world the truth about this country. It is an effort to correct the distortions and the deliberate lies about America that are being circulated by powerful agencies of mass propaganda. For the program's radio phase known as the Voice of America, the State Department has asked for $16,100,000. Of this amount, $6,100,000 would pay for putting up transmitters, and this expense would not recur.

Substantial evidence is accumulating that, even inside Russia, people are listening to the Voice of America. One sure sign is that the broadcasts have been savagely attacked by Ilya Ehrenburg, propagandist-in-chief in the Soviet corps of intellectuals.

The hope is that the Senate, on mature consideration, will restore all or part of the fund for this information program. Apologists for Chairman John Taber and his axemen on the House Appropriations Committee are using the following excuse. They say that we can cut out the broadcasting program now, and then if there seems to be a need for it, we can revive it later.

There is a major flaw in this excuse. The Voice of America is at present broadcasting on 56 international frequencies. It was very hard to get those frequencies. Thirty-four nations are now broadcasting and they all have legitimate claims to the less than 200 wavelengths available. If the United States gives up her frequencies, they will be snapped up at once. And the possibility of our ever getting them back will be extremely remote. This is the test that determines whether we shall or shall not have a voice on the world airwaves.

FREQUENCIES ASSIGNED

Before 1939, international frequencies were assigned under an international convention. A total of 233 frequencies were registered at Berne, Switzerland, but 40 per cent were unusable for one reason or another.

During the war, part of the battle was to grab off the enemy's frequencies and he grabbed yours. The result was chaos in the ether.

Two preliminary international conferences have sought to untangle the snarl. A third is to be held at Atlantic City in July. If we have surrendered our frequencies at that time, the conference is likely to confirm their allocation elsewhere. The Voice of America will be silenced.

It is impossible, too, to hold together a competent information staff with the axe always hovering in the air. That has been difficult enough in any event. With public servants treated as though they were a species of criminal, the scramble to get out of Government and back into private business is not surprising.

DOWN WITH RFD!

The Tabers could, of course, go much further. They could cut out the postal system. That would save a great deal of money. In the distant past, there must have been Tabers who considered rural free delivery as a wicked device to communize the country.

The Voice of American delivers news and information to people who live on no postal route that we can reach. As the nation that has developed radio technically to a greater degree than any other, we shall look pretty foolish if we decide to mute the small voice that is ours today.

Stewart Alsop

England And Peanuts

LONDON

IT is at first surprising to find large numbers of stolid British Labor Party officials talking excitedly about "groundnuts." Even after it develops that what they really have in mind is peanuts, it is difficult at first to understand why so much enthusiasm centers on the lowly goober. Yet this widespread fascination with peanuts is one symptom of a momentous change in British policy which has been taking place almost unnoticed. For slowly, ponderously, the whole weight of British imperial policy has been shifting, and there are signs that a step or two behind, British strategic policy will shift with it.

What has happened is that Africa has been slowly replacing India and the Far East as the focal point of the British Empire Moreover, an attempt is being made to export the limited British version of Socialism to the British possessions in Africa. Any good doctrinaire Socialist knows that Socialism and Imperialism are mutually contradictory terms. The British history is a history of somehow making inherent contradictions work. From the tentative beginnings now under way, of which the "groundnut" scheme for East Africa is the most ambitious, something new under the sun—a Socialist empire—may yet emerge.

TVA PRINCIPLES

The groundnut scheme will be an attempt to apply the principle of the TVA (an experiment which has had a profound effect on British Socialist thought) to East Africa, with peanuts substituted for electric power. An initial outlay of about 25,000,000 pounds will be used to establish a corporation for the production of peanuts on a grand scale. Any profits will be plowed back into further developments. Thus it is hoped first, to raise the miserable standard of living of the East African natives. It is hoped second, and by no means incidentally to correct the most serious deficit in the present English diet—the shortage of fats and oils—to which some dieticians attribute the low rate of production in British industry. In this way it is planned to eat the Socialist cake and keep the benefits of empire too.

DIVISION ON STRATEGY

These new factors have led to a disagreement (in less dignified circles it would be called a row) now in progress among the makers of British strategic policy. The sides are almost exactly divided according to age. The older admirals and generals still think primarily in terms of British communications with the Far East. Hence they emphasize the need for strong positions—in Palestine, Cyprus, Egypt, and elsewhere—for the protection of the Suez Canal.

The younger men believe that the canal would be closed on the first day of hostilities, and that the strategic objective must therefore be, not to keep it open, but to prevent its use by a potential enemy. They thus lay the main strategic emphasis on two points; East Africa, to be developed both as the paying proposition in the new Empire, and as a main strategic base; and Middle East oil, which the main African base would be designed to protect. For this purpose, it is believed that control of the Arabian Peninsula in case of war, and total control of the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, will be necessary. There is also some belief that a main forward base at Basra in Iraq is essential.

ENEMY AND ALLY

Two facts are of interest in this strategic assessment. First, the only potential enemy which the plan envisages is the Soviet Union. The younger school of British strategists inclines to the belief that Russian logistic difficulties in case of a thrust south would be so great that given overwhelming air superiority to balance against the massive Russian manpower, the Russians could be contained and the essential positions saved. Second, it is obviously a basic assumption that the world commitments of the United States, and more especially the American commitments in the Near and Middle East, are such that in case of a Russian attack south, the United States and Great Britain would inevitably be partners in the war which would immediately ensue.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round • V-E Day Compared With Lethargy Of '47

WASHINGTON

NOTES on the Anniversary of an Armistice—San Francisco May 8, 1945: The United Nations being born. . . . Simultaneously, the end of the war in Europe. History in the making. . . . Delirious people, dizzy people, happy people. . . . Auto horns and ticker tape. . . . Senator Tom Connally saying, "The war is over." . . . American Legion vets in uniform, older vets in gold-blue uniform: "Remember 1918 when you and I did this in Paris? We never thought it would happen again." . . . Soldiers singing. Secretary of State Stettinius beaming. . . . A new union of nations. The United Nations. . . . The end of our traditional isolation, the end of war. . . . We won't make the same mistake we made after 1918. This time America will stick with the other nations, stick and pitch for peace.

Sailors kissing pretty girls, strange girls. . . . Texas Tom shaking hands, slapping backs, pumping hands. "The war's over in Europe. Hitler's finished." . . . Senator Vandenberg beaming. . . . Ed Stettinius grinning. . . . Back on my desk, a letter from an old school mate, his son missing in action. . . . But now there'll be new hope—through the new United Nations. . . . No more boys missing in action. . . . The Russians, it's true, acted strangely at the armistice, holding up the final announcement. But they've suffered a lot. Gone through hell. You have to understand them. . . . Then there was that story of mine which everyone denied—the story of how Stalin ordered American troops out of Potsdam, back to the River Elbe. . . . We were practically in Berlin, trying to help win the war as quickly as possible. But the Russians wanted us out. . . . Well, if they wanted to waste their own men, taking Berlin themselves, that's their business. Peculiar people, the Russians. . . . Meanwhile, let's get ahead with building up this new United Nations. Because peace is here to stay.

Washington, D. C., May 8, 1947: Seems a long time since war. The anti-aircraft guns are gone from Potomac Park. The grass is reseeded and greener than ever. Nothing to remind you of war—except the Wave barracks. And a sailor with an accordion serenading a Wave. . . . Willow trees dipping low over the Potomac. . . . Lovers lounging on park benches. Skies reaching down to caress the horizon. Pansies preening themes in gaudy, prideful glory. . . . War seems long ago, very long ago—but not quite forgotten.

Studying Next War

ACROSS the Tidal Basin under the willows sits the War College. Dull, unimaginative brick buildings. Inside goes on the imaginative business of moving troops, guns, ships, planes on checkerboards, planning the possibilities of war. . . . George Kennan, crack student of Russian affairs, lives in that building; brought back from Moscow to lecture Army-Navy officers, tell them what to expect from Russia in regard to war . . . Across the Tidal Basin, girls riding on bicycles. White-faced clerks drinking in the sunshine. . . . An ex-GI strolling with his new bride. They may be living in a shack or a trailer or with a mother-in-law, but along the Potomac all outdoors belongs to them.

Times change. Even nature changes. . . . There was a time when my father-in-law, strolling through these same fields with Teddy Roosevelt, was dared by Teddy to swim the Potomac, cold with the thaws of March. Both swam it—over and back. . . . And the new cultivated parkland with its cherry trees and pansy beds was then such a deserted swampland that they were able to walk to the back door of the White House, dripping and half undraped, unseen even by Mrs. Roosevelt. . . . Yes, times change. Imagine President Truman getting away with that in teeming, thriving Potomac Park today! . . . My father-in-law believed in war, believed in war's inevitability. He was sent by TR to Germany to study the Kaiser's military machine, brought back to the U. S. Army its present system of indirect artillery fire—then considered revolutionary. . . . Now atomic bombs make artillery as out of date as bows and arrows. . . . Even war changes—at least its methods of killing. The only thing that doesn't change is the fact that we keep on—killing.

Chained Women

ACROSS the park surrounded by cherry trees sits the Jefferson Memorial. . . . Once women chained themselves to cherry trees along the Tidal Basin in protest against chopping down the trees to make room for the memorial. . . . They were fanatics against change. . . . But now the memorial basks in the sunlight, and new trees, planted around its base, look as if they had been there forever. . . . Jefferson wouldn't particularly like that. He believed in change.

The only thing that hasn't changed is war—and methods of preventing war. . . . In Moscow, London and Paris we still talk about preserving peace by establishing boundaries. For 2,000 years men have been drawing up boundary lines, and for 2,000 years invading armies have rubbed out those boundary lines. . . . This week the Senate is considering a peace treaty for Italy. Months were spent surveying, charting, arguing about a boundary line around Trieste, separating Italians from Yugoslavs. . . . Yet for decades those two peoples have lived so close, so mixed up that no boundary can ever separate them. . . . Their only guarantee to peace can be human intercourse, culture and friendship. . . . When I was in Fiume after World War I, I was arrested by Italian officers because they thought I was Yugoslav. . . . Among the top brackets, hatred was that intense. . . . Not far away, in the Serbian mountains, 100 Bulgar prisoners were helping me rebuild devastated villages, and the Bulgars with their Serbian guards and conscript Albanians sat around their campfires every night, talking about peace and home and the futility of war. Peasants, there was no hatred among them.