THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Better Outlook For Labor Code

BECOMING fully operative this week, the Taft-Hartley law, officially the Labor-Management Relations Act, 1947, enters its great testing period under circumstances that are somewhat more hopeful than seemed possible two months ago when the act went into effect. At least, it is worth noting that no labor leader arose to denounce the U. S. Chamber of Commerce yesterday for declaring that talk of the act as a "slave labor law is absurd." The AFL and CIO kept silent, the Associated Press reported.

During this two-month interval we have had a heartening demonstration to the effect that the law itself may be much less painful to organized labor than many doleful prophets led us to believe in June of this year. We have also had many positive indications that management, on the whole, and in particular Big Business, intends to proceed cautiously and reasonably in application of the law. Further, we have had numerous reminders of the fact that the American system provides ample means of relief from repressive legislation.

Finally, there are growing signs that the law may not produce all the political disturbances which some union leaders have predicted and which many of them still are encouraging.

The main lines of labor's defensive strategy already have been defined and major interest now centers in three measures being taken to knock out features of the law or modify its effect. These are the attempts to safeguard union treasuries from damage suits based on unauthorized strikes, a move of some unions to boycott the National Labor Relations Board, and a test of the constitutionality of the law, particularly with reference to the prohibition on political expenditures.

Unions already have made substantial gains on the first point, through the negotiation of contracts that give them protection against damage suits over wildcat strikes. At the same time there has been what may prove to be a corresponding gain for uninterrupted production and public peace, in the form of guarantees which the unions have given employers in return for no-penalty contracts.

Prospects grow that the union effort to boycott NLRB will have rough sledding. American Federation of Labor unions are discovering the new Labor Board set-up offers them enticing opportunities to advance their craft unions in competition with CIO unions. This rivalry is not the only thing that may defeat or greatly weaken the CIO effort to bypass the Board. Employers also have rights which may bring the Board into action against CIO unions. And, by avoiding NLRB the unions would lose some important advantages which were granted in the new law at the same time that machinery for more regulation was established.

A major part of the test is yet to come in wider use of the new Labor Board machinery, in operations of an Independent Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, and in court actions. Two years passed before the Supreme Court fully sustained the Wagner Act of 1935 and employers filed nearly 100 suits against enforcement efforts. It is obvious that much time must elapse before a final verdict on the Taft-Hartley Act is possible, but it seems to have made a relatively good start on its rocky voyage. One of the things that has served most to brighten the outlook for fewer storms than expected is the changing political picture, which finds John L. Lewis moving closer to the Republicans, labor's third party hope virtually abandoned, and the public exhibiting no interest in "revenge talk" before the law has had a fair trial.

Who Trimmed The Federal Budget?

THERE is little comfort or entertainment for the public in the lively dispute between Republican and Democratic leaders over the question of who trimmed the budget, how much, and why the taxpayer got no relief.

We were "robbed", roars Sen. Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, on hearing President Truman's announcement that we will have an estimated surplus of nearly $5 billion next year. Representative Taber, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and other Republicans take up the same tune, asserting the surplus shows Truman was wrong in vetoing the two Republican-sponsored bills for a $4 billion tax cut.

As the debate warms up, the Republicans revive their claims that they trimmed $6 billion from the budget, the Democrats again report that the Republican slashes were "phoney" cuts and the only real savings were those made by the Administration. The only point that is clear to the taxpayer in all this uproar is that Federal expenditures for the current fiscal year are now estimated at $37 billion, close to Truman's original budget figure of $37.5 billion, and that we are just about where we were when we came in.

Actually, it appears that the Republicans and Democrats together managed to trim the budget $2.8 billion at the outside, and these savings are being offset by factors that were "unforeseeable" when the 80th Congress was laboring to bring forth the giant-size economy package.

That the economy drive actually is having some effect in Washington is shown in several ways, including the evidence that decline of Federal employment from its peak of 3,769,646 in 1945 is continuing. The number of Federal jobholders was down to 2,722,031 in 1946 and the Civil Service Commission reported that 2,131,161 were on the Federal payroll on June of this year, a drop of 68,285 in a month and a fall of 590,862 in a year. However, there still is no cause for great cheer over this trend, when you consider the size of the present load and the distance to go, comparing the present job army with the force of 926,415 which operated the government services in 1939.

The resistance of this massive bureaucracy and the tone of the present political debate over the surplus and taxes give the public little reason to hope for substantial relief from the crushing tax burden for some time. President Truman has made a strong case against a tax cut on the basis of present government income with his emphasis on the need to use most of the surplus for payment on the public debt, his assertion that the remainder should be maintained as a "standby" fund for domestic or foreign emergencies, and his reminder of the growing bill for foreign aid.

It is clear that there is great room for more economy in Federal Government but it is equally apparent that we must have something more than "phoney" cuts in the budget before we obtain any real tax relief.

Good Samaritan Comes Calling

CHARLOTTE'S Good Samaritan Hospital, the oldest private Negro hospital in America, has launched a campaign to raise $100,000 for an expansion program. In the 56 years since the hospital was opened under the sponsorship of the Episcopal Church, which no longer provides complete financial support, Good Samaritan has never before staged an organized drive for funds. This demonstrates quite graphically, we think, that the current campaign to expand its badly overtaxed facilities merits the attention of all Charlotteans.

Good Samaritan's present rating is excellent; it is a member of the American Hospital Association and the North Carolina Hospital Association, and the nursing school can boast a Grade A rating.

The quality of service is so high, in fact, that out-of-town patients attracted by Good Samaritan's specialists have made it impossible for the hospital to render an adequate quantity of service to Charlotte Negroes. Mecklenburg County, with a population of 50,000 Negroes, needs at least 200 hospital beds for them, yet there are only 90 beds at the present time, of which twelve are set aside for children. Only one emergency room is available for Negro patients in the county, and a wait of from six to eight hours for emergency operations is often necessary.

With the funds which the hospital is now seeking, it plans to erect a modern 60-bed home for nurses and resident physicians, thereby releasing 30 beds for patients, and a new heating plant for the entire institution; two emergency rooms will be added. Thus Good Samaritan will not only be able to expand its facilities for treatment of local patients, but of out-of-town patients as well.

The Negro citizens of Charlotte will, of course, not be unresponsive to the hospital's appeal, for they are all too familiar with its needs and potentialities. However, an improved health program for Charlotte is the responsibility of all its citizens. The Good Samaritan Drive offers the Queen City an excellent opportunity to prove, by enthusiastic support of it, that we do not restrict our efforts in the Negro's behalf to the expression of hopeful platitudes.

A report that retail shirt prices are down in Kansas City, $1 under the figure asked during OPA control, is an item that may hold the eye of Harry Truman, the former haberdasher. He remembers vividly that the big bust after the 1920 postwar boom manifested itself early and painfully in Kansas City shirts, ties and suits. It compelled him and his partner, Eddie Jacobson, to close their Twelfth Street haberdashery, leaving Mr. Truman with about $20,000 in debts which he was years in paying off.

A Russian thinks he has found a new kind of gravity—but who hasn't? Consider what we have discovered in the matter of prices—that what goes up must go up.

"A boy, up to the age of 18, eats $3,200 worth of food." But those were last year's figures. At prevailing prices, it would scarcely spoil his appetite.

For the best results, says a cosmetics counselor, place the dressing table between two windows, as nothing looks more improbable than a blonde in radiant health on only one side of the face.

'Aren't You Kind Of Running It Into The Ground?'

Life In Soviet Union

Food Price Gouge

This is another of Paul W. Ward's articles in the series, "Life In The Soviet Union," reprinted from The Baltimore Sun.

By PAUL W. WARD

WHILE President Truman and his advisers worriedly were watching the retail prices of food in American cities climb at the rate of a little over three per cent a month, Generalissimo Stalin and his henchmen recently engineered an overnight rise of about 180 per cent in the food bills of Muscovites.

With the same stroke of the pen, they slashed ration allowances for some groups of Soviet citizens and cut others entirely off the ration rolls.

They also boosted the pay of most Russian workers by 20 per cent on the average. But the wage increases they ordered fell so far short of balancing the food price rise that many Soviet workers cannot now pay for even their full basic rations out of their wages.

Take the case of a mythical Boris Leonov, citizen of the Soviet Union. Boris was, before the recent decree affecting all prices and wages in the U.S.S.R., the sole support of his wife and their two children, one 5, the other 7. His wage was 900 rubles a month. Taxes, union dues and Government bond-purchase deductions reduced his "take home" pay to 800 rubles.

BIG STRETCH

He had to use only 321 rubles to buy all the food to which his family was entitled under the ration system. His own basic rations as a "worker" cost 187 rubles; his wife's as a "dependent," 36 rubles; his children's 49 rubles each, or 98 together. After he had paid for the family's rations, he still had 479 rubles left with which to pay the rent, buy "open-market" milk for the children and purchase clothes or other essentials.

That wasn't much of a surplus. To be sure, the single room in which the family lived would cost only 100 rubles a month. But the basic rations bought for 321 rubles would be slight.

These rations amount to only 2,160 calories a day for a "heavy worker" and 1,454 for an "employee" in contrast to the 4,500 and 3,000 calories a day the National Research Council figures are required, respectively, by a "very active man" and a "moderately active man."

GOING UP

Boris, accordingly, would have had to buy additional food for his family in the "commercial" stores which the Government has operated since 1944. He would also have had to pay 20 to 100 times the prices charged by the Government in its "ration" stores for the same commodities. But even so he would have been able to break about even.

The price decree of September 16, 1946, changed all that. It raised Boris's basic wages to 960 rubles a month and his "take-home" pay to 870. But it also raised food prices so that the Leonov family's basic rations, which the day before had cost 321 rubles a month, now cost 808. Boris's own rations jumped to 469 rubles, his wife's to 95 and those of his children to 122 rubles each.

Boris was left with only 62 rubles, or less than enough to pay the rent, to say nothing of buying of milk for the kids or clothes for the family. Furthermore, the Leonov family was left with less of its principal food to eat than it previously had had. The decree that boosted prices also cut the Leonov family's bread ration from 115 1-2 pounds to 88 pounds a month.

ONE AIM

Mrs. Leonov could restore the family's bread ration by going to work in a factory and thereby qualifying for a "worker's" ration card. That, in fact, was one of the purposes of the September decree—to drive Russia's Mrs. Leonovs into the factories. She could earn there a "take-home" pay of about 630 rubles a month and thus restore her family's standard of living to its pre-September level.

People's Platform

'Bitter Pill' In Bus Facts

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

REPLYING to Mr. L. A. Smith's letter of Aug. 19, I would remind Mr. Smith that the purpose for which I wrote my letter has been accomplished but since you are a fair-minded man, I'll go a little further with you.

Of course you wouldn't expect me to be a stockholder. Neither have I any relatives who work for Duke Power Co., nor am I paid by a few people of Charlotte or from any other source for these writings.

You say, Mr. Smith, I implied the fifteen new busses promised in November could have been obtained sooner. You get me wrong there. What I said was "fifteen new busses promised some time in November, which will not much more than replace the wornout ones, no relief there."

You say every city in the United States is clamoring for busses. That's true, Mr. Smith, and what's more they are getting them too, except Charlotte. Norfolk had bought 27 un to June 1 this year.

And look at Knoxville. Their charter had teeth in it. The city went out and covered up their old outmoded car tracks, and told the power company it was up to them to haul the people. What happened? The company got in touch with General Motors, and got 24 cars on the spot, and twice that many more to follow soon.

If it should come to pass, Mr. Smith, that Charlotte could use the same tactics, you'd see Duke Power Co. buying busses very quickly, in spite of their claim of having lost $80,000 the first six months of this year.

Did you read the story of Duke bus franchise by Mr. Young in THE NEWS? Did you read it closely, let it soak in good, Mr. Smith? Then maybe your good common sense will lead you on to a better understanding.

Since you brought up the Communist question, I'll say this—that complacency is one of the chief causes why our country is in such a mess. It is one of the reasons why too many Communists have already infiltrated into our country.

Too many people, Mr. Smith, are afraid to speak out for their rights, for fear they'll trample the toes of some one else. To heck with such an attitude. When I spend my money I want my money's worth. When I pay for a seat on the bus I have a right to expect it, regardless of the toes of Duke Power Co. or anybody else.

With reference to your sarcastic proverb at the close of your letter, I'll remind you, it's a fact that the facts sometimes make a bitter pill for some people to swallow, and you have all the symptoms of a very sore throat.

—C. M. CHASTAIN.

Hoover's Warning To Ministers

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

THERE is a radical left-wing organization using Christian terminology as a cloak for radicalism, and professing to speak with authority for Protestantism in this part of the world. It calls itself the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

This organization is controlled by a handful of men who promote a constant propaganda bombardment of pronouncements attacking such traditional doctrines as free enterprise, the profit motive and private ownership. They have been severely criticized by the Navy Intelligence for activities favorable to Russia.

The left-wing forces have become deeply intrenched in this organization while the unsuspecting remained asleep at the switch. And certain it is that strong medicine will be required to cure the disease and retard the decay; hence Christians of all denominations and of no denomination at all, should give careful thought to the following statement of J Edgar Hoover, of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, released June 9, 1947:

"The churches of America are threatened by Communism. Ministers of the Gospel desecrate their faith when they describe themselves as 'Christian Communists', and call for the overthrow of the 'Economic Oligarchy'; when they say 'Communism is a religion', and 'Religion is not so much about God, but about the nature of the world'.

"The churches of America should remember that the Communists' protestations of freedom of religion is a camouflage for their true thoughts.

"Lenin taught: 'We must combat religion—this is the A B C of materialism, and consequently Marxism'. 'Down with religion'."

The American clergy has been, for years, exposed to the most deadly forms of poison propaganda—their mail flooded with left-wing literature. A constant drip of water will wear a stone.

—A. W. BLACK.

'Well Done' For Piedmont

GASTONIA

Editors, THE NEWS:

THE special section recently published by THE NEWS, "This Is The Piedmont Carolinas", is a very fine edition.

As one of those who, while being fully aware of the splendid development of industry in this section over a period of years, is keenly interested in the new development of latent resources of this wonderful area, I want to say, "Well done."

For this commission, I wish to congratulate THE NEWS and its staff for the comprehensive coverage and initiative in behalf of the Piedmont Carolinas.

—SARAH MASON WHITE,
Executive Secretary, the
Gastonia Industrial Diversification Commission.

Joseph & Stewart Alsop

Russian Pincers

WASHINGTON

A PINCERS movement initiated by the Soviet Union is now in progress. One end of the pincers is closing in again on Iran. The other is well into Greece. As a result, there is serious speculation that Congress may be asked, perhaps in special session, to send American troops to Greece. Every responsible official in Washington is praying that no such decision will be necessary. But the tempo of the Soviet assault is such that the American policy makers may be left with no alternative.

After high level conversations, the hard-pressed British have agreed to keep their few thousand troops in Greece till the end of the year. But the British have warned that their troops will then probably have to be withdrawn. The United States may then have no choice but to fill the vacuum.

ASSAULT MOUNTED

Meanwhile a major assault has been mounted in northern Greece by Communist General Markos, who last week announced in a broadcast from Yugoslavia the formation of a "free Greek government." What lends a sober significance to Markos' announcement is that fact that the Russians have withdrawn their diplomatic representatives from Athens. The Soviet embassy is now in the hands of caretakers and janitors. Yugoslavia has obediently followed suit. What is feared, of course, is that Russia and her three satellite states on Greece's northern border will soon grant de facto recognition to the Markos regime. They could then proceed, under the color of legality, to give Markos open, all-out support.

If this happens, it will be the culmination of a carefully planned campaign. It is now known that within the last few weeks the three satellite leaders—Yugoslavia's Tito, Bulgaria's Dimitrov and Albania's Hocha—not only conferred among themselves, but journeyed to Moscow. From the Kremlin, they received their instructions. These instructions are now being carried out.

OTHER END

At the other end of the pincers, wiley old Ahmed Qavam, Premier of Iran, is under the fiercest pressure Soviet Ambassador Smirnov, who left in a huff some time ago, is back. He has told Qavam that the Soviet government will hold him personally responsible for Iranian acceptance of Soviet terms for an oil contract in northern Iran.

At the same time Qavam is under severe pressure from within the Iranian Parliament to resist Sadjkov. There is no doubt that the Parliament will vote the Soviet oil contract down. On purely commercial grounds, this is quite understandable. The proposed oil contract is similar in terms to an already existing Iranian-Russian contract for the exploitation of Iranian fisheries. By means of this contract the Russians have so arranged things that the Iranians are obliged to pay them about half a million dollars a year for the privilege of allowing the Russians to take away the Iranian fish. But no one believes that the Russian motives in regard to the oil contract are purely commercial. Last year the Soviets made a determined attempt to capture the Iranian government, but failed. They now want a base, which the oil contract would provide for them, to try again.

U. S. STANDS FIRM

When the Iranian Parliament refuses to accept the Soviet contract, a violent Soviet reaction of some sort is expected. The heat will be turned full on. But the heat already is full on in Greece. Herschel Johnson's speech before the Security Council last week, which was reviewed at the highest level in the State Department, firmly committed the United States not to abandon Greece. To abandon

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Monty's New Book Leaves Much Unsaid

By ROBERT S. ALLEN
(For Drew Pearson)

WASHINGTON

THE Washington Merry-Go-Round this week awards its brass ring—in reverse.

Recipient of the bob-tailed decoration is Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery. Occasion: The distribution in the U. S. by the British Information Service of Montgomery's amazing post-operational report of the war in the ETO.

Bearing the quaint title of "Despatch," the report is an astounding concoction of misstatements of fact, half truths, innuendos, omissions, and self-glorification.

That Montgomery should compose this kind of a document is not remarkable. On the basis of past performances, the report is wholly in character. What is remarkable is that the British Government should not only permit the report to see the light of day, but to distribute it in this country at this time. Its publication is a blunder as offensive and provocative as Montgomery's extraordinary opus.

It is traditional that high-level post-operational reports are not noted for complete candor. Frequently, they are more illuminating in what they omit and gloss over than in what they actually relate.

The reports of Generals Marshall and Eisenhower, published last year, displayed marked symptoms of this occupational disease. Hanson, Baldwin, veteran military analyst of the New York Times, sharply criticized the Eisenhower report on this score. Baldwin particularly ridiculed Eisenhower's bland claim that everything in the ETO had gone "according to plan."

But, while tainted with considerable mumbo-jumbo lily-gilding, the Marshall and Eisenhower reports were dignified and restrained. They were meticulously accurate on the details that were covered, all participants were studiously given full recognition, and the perpendicular pronoun was used sparingly and modestly. As far as the reports went, they were gentlemanly and soldierly.

Mr. Fix-It

MONTGOMERY'S report is inaccurate, vainglorious, petty, and mischievous.

On the very first page is an extraordinary misstatement of fact. Montgomery declares "Headquarters Twelfth U. S. Army Group were formed in London . . ." that is not so. Headquarters Twelfth U. S. Army Group did not come into existence until just before the jump-off of the Third U. S. Army's epic break-out of the Cotentin through the Avranches corridor. The U. S. Army group headquarters set up in London was the First (FUSAG). Months later, when this headquarters became operational under Gen. Omar Bradley, it was secretly redesignated the Twelfth for deception purposes.

Immediately on the heels of this misstatement of fact, Montgomery, on the next page, makes an even more extraordinary pronouncement. He lays claim to sole and complete authorship of the assault plant of Operational Overland. "My plan," he says flatly and unequivocally.

The basic outline of this plan was agreed upon before Montgomery reached London in January, 1944. A number of senior commanders participated in working out the details of the plan. A large part of the first chapter of Eisenhower's report consists of a detailed account of the evolution of this plan. Eisenhower makes it crystal-clear that the report was the result of many lengthy conferences, in which Montgomery was only one of a number of participants, and that changes were frequent and far-reaching. Eisenhower repeatedly uses the expression "our decisions," as it was only decent and honorable for him to do under the circumstances.

In striking contrast, Montgomery not only lays categoric claim to full authorship of the plant, but, in keeping with his self-proclaimed proprietorship, makes only three fleeting references to Eisenhower in the first 44 pages (one half) of the "Despatch." And only one of them is by name. In the other two instances, Eisenhower is referred to merely as the "supreme commander."

Passing The Buck

THERE is another very significant, and characteristic, aspect to the references to Eisenhower in Montgomery's report.

The first time the "supreme commander" is singled out for marked attention is on page 45 in an italicised precede summarizing the operations beginning with Sept. 1, 1944. This was the beginning of the tragic period of the war in the ETO. The period that started with the order, at Montgomery's vehement insistence, halting Patton on the Moselle, when his Third Army had in front of it only a decimated and disorganized enemy and an unmanned Siegfried Line barring the way to the Rhine.

Nazi Germany could have been conquered before Winter if Patton's blasting tankers and slashing doughboys had not been sat down so that Montgomery could launch his costly and abortive offensive in the North. This ill-conceived and bungled campaign was a defeat surpassed only by the Ardennes disaster. And it was this period, also, that witnessed the bloody Hurtgen Forest battle, against the protests of Eisenhower. According to his report, he was in personal command of all army groups from the jump-off of the invasion.

Amazing Omissions

THERE is much more of this sort of thing in the "Despatch." But the most amazing feature of the report is its omissions and half truths. The report is filled with them from start to finish. The following are a few of the more outstanding:

Not one mention of the heroic role played by the Marquis in the liberation of France and not a single word about the eleven French divisions that fought so gallantly on the Southern flank of the Western front.

The ridiculous statement that "The battle of Normandy was fought exactly as we had planned before the invasion." The real facts are that Montgomery suffered a crushing defeat at Caen, losing the bulk of his armor when he attempted to drive head-on through the densely hedge-rowed "bocage" that was heavily fortified with massed German artillery.

The amazing omission of any mention of the immortal Battle of Bastogne, where Third Army paratroopers and tankers broke the back of Hitler's counter-offensive.

The omission of any word about the destruction of an entire German army group by Third and Seventh U. S. Armies in eight days in the Palantinate; a victory that broke the back of German resistance on the Rhine and shortened the war by many months.

There was plenty of glory in the war in the ETO to cover all participants with acclaim and decorations from head to foot. Yet Field Marshall Montgomery considered it necessary to be niggardly in his official report is something only he can explain. But that kind of "tidying up" does not foster good will and understanding.