THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

69th Anniversary Year

THOMAS L. ROBINSON.....Publisher
J. E. DOWD.....General Manager
B. S. GRIFFITH.....Executive Editor

SATURDAY, DECEMBR 18, 1948

TAX REVALUATION MAY BE SHELVED

LATEST report from East Trade Street, where the City and County Fathers do business, is that the proposed revaluation of all property in Mecklenburg County will be delayed indefinitely. The reason is the same one which has been intoned over and over with the monotony of a broken record: they can't decide how the survey is to be paid for.

There's no argument about the desirability of the enterprise, both the Council and the Commission agreeing that it is badly needed. And no one has raised any serious objection to the cost, a whopping $400,000.

The only argument is over a division of the bill. The County wants the City to pay half the $400,000; the City wants the County to pay the entire amount. Neither side is willing to budge from its position.

It would seem that the City has the better side of the argument. Seventy-two per cent of all taxable property in Mecklenburg County now lies within the city limits. Even if the County Government were to assume the entire $400,000, city residents would still pay 72 per cent of the bill, or $298,800.

If the County Commissioners have their way, however, the City of Charlotte would pay, first of all, a flat $200,000. On top of that, the City would pay 72 per cent of the County's $200,000 share, or $144,000. That would make the City's total share $344,000 while the rural residents would get off with a mere $56,000. (The cost to the City would be even greater after the perimeter areas are taken in January 1.)

The taxpayers have been strangely disinterested in the whole revaluation matter, perhaps because the intricacies of tax listing and collecting are beyond the ken of most of us. We generally holler about high taxes, and growl and grumble when the statement arrives in the mail, but that's about the extent of it. We pay up, though reluctantly, with no questions asked.

Yet every taxpayer in Mecklenburg County should be interested in the revaluation, for it will be an improvement over our present system in several respects:

1. It will correct injustices and inequalities. The unfortunate souls who have built, or bought, property in this high-price era are paying a disproportionately high tax because their assessments are higher.

2. It will catch a lot of tax-dodgers, mainly in the County area where, because there is no building permit law, it's easy to improve property without getting caught by the tax lister.

3. It will put City and County listings on a more equal basis. The average residence immediately inside the city limits is on the books at a good deal more than its counterpart just across the County line.

4. It will generally lift all assessments and bring them into line with present day values. That will bring a considerably lower tax rate to produce the same amount of revenue.

Despite these advantages, the project is being shelved, and it may never be brought out again unless public opinion forces some action. It may be that the consolidation survey now in progress will clarify the legal responsibility for tax listing. If so, the taxpayers will have something more than the financial double-talk they're now getting to help them decide who's right and who's wrong.

POSITIVE ACTION AT SAVANNAH

POLITICIANS — who are inclined to look with suspicion on educators—wrestled jointly with regional education problems in Savannah, Ga., this week, and the net result was what may be an extremely significant development for Southern education.

Meeting in the miasmic D'eember weather of the Georgia lowlands, eleven Southern Governors put their heads together with 150 Southern educators (white and Negro), and out of their conference emerged the first definite steps toward setting the South up in a regional education scheme.

Details of the plan make rather dull reading — like most educational matters —but the over-all project promises interesting things for a region forced to run quick-time to catch up with its better-heeled neighbors to the North and West.

Several factors make the program of more than passing interest:

(1) In the first place, many Negro educators in the South agreed with the practical effects of the program because they see in it prospects for better Negro education opportunities in the South than we now have. The NAACP has been against the regional education idea, but Negro leaders closer to the South realize that better education now may be worth more eventually in their fight for equal opportunity than stubborn opposition to a plan which would help continue Southern segregation practices.

(2) Secondly, the regional plan, although concerned, in part, with segregation, would be highly significant even if racial problems weren't involved. It proposes the designation of regional schools for veterinary and general medicine and dentistry as starters. Governor Millard Caldwell of Florida, an outstanding Southern leader, told Governors it would cost his state ten million dollars to build a medical school. It will cost his state a fraction of that amount to participate in the regional plan whereby both white and Negro students will attend medical schools in other parts of the South under Florida's sponsorship.

(3) The plan will save Meharry Medical School, a Negro institution in Tennessee, which provides excellent medical school training for young Southerners. The school needed financial support.

Concrete action of the Southern Governors implements the South's policy of "gradualism" in racial matters. States are committed to spend almost two million dollars in seeking better education for their citizens, and although the various State Legislatures must make the final appropriations, the enthusiasm showed in Savannah indicates the Governors' project will be approved.

Southern Governors first organized their forces in the mid-thirties to fight for equalized freight rates. Much of their activity since that time has been negative rather than positive, and there is still that atmosphere when Southern chief executives gather (i.e. the new project against civil rights). But their action in Savannah on education was positive action in a field where Governors usually tred with trepidation. They deserve commendation for it.

TV, WE'LL LOVE YOU!

TV, the article reads. Or "video" or some such term. You are expected to know all about this sort of thing. You know about washing machines and automobiles, you know about airplanes and radios. Why shouldn't you know all about TV or video?

It's television, of course. The word comes from the Greek "tele-" meaning "far off". The "vision" portion is relatively familiar.

The citizen crouched alongside his prewar radio, listening to the snap, crackle, pop, may well consider the name apt. Television appears indeed far off. Visionary, you might say.

The situation is a strange one. Here, in the heart of a thriving industrial area, we beat about in an electronic backwooda. Think of all the disadvantages, how our big city neighbors sneer at us out of the corner of their mouths: "Peasant, rube. Think of it! Never even glimpsed TV! Backward provincial!" And not only are we on the receiving end of insults, we miss — oh, crowning blow! — the point of all those video jokes on radio comedy shows.

Jokes about the man who stared at the little window in the Bendix washer for hours before he found out that it wasn't a televised version of "Souls at Sea", jokes about the capitalist who had a television set installed in the back seat of his car and had to take it out because he didn't have room for the bartender and all those bottles.

But patience, citizens. The information now circulates that Charlotteans will be able to see second-rate re-runs of motion pictures, hashed over vaudeville acts and kitchen demonstrations to their hearts' content next Summer. (Three rahs and a tiger for video or TV!)

Trouble now is that the Federal Communications Commission, which keeps its collective finger on every little molecule of ozone, can't quite determine whether or not television waves bounce. It seems at first that scientists believed television waves went hurtling off into the wild blue yonder when they passed the horizon; now they aren't sure. Maybe the waves go up a piece and then come down and bounce around. That, they figure, could cause no end of trouble on video screens because it would televise (another word) two images at one time, maybe.

Think of it, a vaudeville magician pulling a live rabbit out of a pot of chicken cacciatorre being prepared by Mary Margaret McBride or Ma Perkins or whoever it is that gives cooking demonstrations.

But despite all its uncertainties, Charlotteans love TV — or will, if they get half a chance. Come on video, time's a-wastin'.

A Hollywood property man "ages" a suit of clothes in two hours, or six days faster than wearing it coast-to-coast on a bus.—*Washington Evening Star.*

Now that the country is safe for Democracy, we must all hope that Democracy is safe for the country. — *Little Rock Arkansas Gazette.*

The man who reads all day relaxes by chopping down trees. The man who chops down trees relaxes by reading.—*Pittsburg (Texas) Gazette.*

An ocean liner is said to be one of the safest spots in the world. It's at your own risk if you stay home. — *Tallahassee (Fla.) Democrat.*

Poem in Which Is Contained a Timely Reminder of an Approaching Event:

Finish shopping early, dear;
Christmas Day will soon be here.
—*Atlanta (Ga.) Journal.*

To Be Buried Alive?

Marquis Childs

Embattled Governors

WASHINGTON

IN THE charming old city of Savannah, Ga., the Southern Governors have been meeting. They stand embattled, in a state of siege, against the irresistible tide of change.

That is the real meaning of the concessions they have made to the shifting trend of opinion. If the step they took the other day had been made 10 years ago or even five years ago, and voluntarily, it would have been hailed as a major social advance.

What the Southern Governors Conference agreed to was a regional compact under which the Southern states will finance higher education for Negroes. The largest item approved was $600,000 to be contributed to Meharry Medical School for Negroes at Nashville, Tenn. The conference also recommended $355,000 for regional veterinary schools at the University of Georgia, Oklahoma A. & M. and Tuskegee Institute for Negroes.

The United States Supreme Court has held that the states must offer equal educational opportunities to Negroes when they ask for such opportunity. Obviously, each state cannot afford to set up a separate Negro medical school or a separate Negro engineering school. The regional school to be attended by Negroes from all over the South is a workable compromise.

The Southern answer to Federal legislation is always: You must let us do these things in our own way since you cannot understand our problem. But change seems to come only when there is the kind of pressure the Supreme Court has applied.

For the South this matter of timing is crucial. Southern states are at present on a kind of divide between the past and future. Great changes have occurred and even greater changes are about to occur.

Most significant of all is the shift in population that is taking place. During the war the Southern states barely held their own, population wise, while other regions were showing extraordinary gains. Reports indicate that the outward movement is continuing, particularly among Negroes who are migrating to the North to join friends and relatives.

A region cannot grow and develop without human resources. One of the reasons for the remarkable development of the West Coast, where population gains of 40 per cent and more have been recorded, is the high caliber of the new immigrants settling there.

Among them are many Negroes who have gone into areas where before the war they were scarcely represented at all. In general, this revolutionary population change seems to be working out satisfactorily in spite of the lack of housing and the resultant crowding.

MATTER OF TIMING

It is here that the matter of timing comes in. This is a late date to be complying with the Supreme Court ruling. The time now is to come forward with a broad proposal covering the whole civil-rights issue; a proposal that would be within the framework of the Southern way of life.

Failure to act will mean more Federal coercion. President Truman is reported to be determined to push the civil-rights program at the earliest opportunity. He is deeply conscious of the fact that the Negro vote in a half dozen states had a great deal to do with his re-election.

Perhaps a filibuster by Southern diehards in the Senate can block for a time at least the measures the South finds most noxious. That kind of deliberate obstructionism has worked, before.

But there is no kind of filibuster than can prevent the draining off of what has been one of the South's chief assets in attracting industry —a generous labor reserve. If the war between the South and the Federal Government grows hotter, that process may even be speeded up.

Congressional Quarterly Survey

What Women Want From Congress

WASHINGTON

WOMEN'S organizations are strongly backing the idea of economic aid to Western Europe, but are dividing on the inclusion of military aid as a part of the American program.

A Congressional Quarterly survey of twelve representative, national women's organizations shows the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the Women's Action Committee for Lasting Peace already on record for military aid, while the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom strongly opposes it. This lines up the first two groups with such organizations as the American Legion, Amvets, and the AFL, all favoring military aid well in advance of expected bipartisan proposals.

Two organizations—the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs—will work for a universal military training law. Both backed UMT in the last Congress.

Most women's groups surveyed strongly favored continuance of ECA and extension for at least three years of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. The Women's Action Committee for Lasting Peace wants permanent extension.

VIEWS ON DOMESTIC ISSUES

The women's groups surveyed placed themselves strongly behind public housing and Federal aid to education. Organizations which will work for national health insurance include the National Women's Trade Union League, National Council of Negro Women, National Council of Jewish Women, and the National Council of Catholic Women. The latter favors the use of existing voluntary health facilities in the scheme.

The civil rights bills have the outright support of the latter three organizations in addition to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The Women's Action Committee for Lasting Peace calls for domestic legislation to back up U. S. endorsement in the UN of the international bill of human rights.

National Women's Trade Union League and the International League for Peace & Freedom were alone among those surveyed in calling for Taft-Hartley Act repeal and for anti-inflation measures including price control and rationing of scarce commodities if necessary. The twelve groups are sharply divided for and against the proposed women's equal rights constitutional amendment.

OTHER RECENT LOBBY STANDS

U. S. Conference of Mayors went strongly on record for rent control extension and public housing construction beyond W-E-T provisions as the American Municipal Association considered housing recommendations at its Washington convention.

Methodist Board of Missions approved continuance of ECA as long as it does not become a military aid project. At the same time the National Federation of American Shipping called on the ECA Congressional "watchdog" committee to forestall a move to use more foreign ships in transportation of bulk cargoes.

Joseph & Stewart Alsop

The Hidden Joke

WASHINGTON

THE extreme oddity that sometimes marks policy making in the Truman Administration is being brilliantly illustrated at the moment. On the one hand, the President seems determined to demand from Congress strong economic controls and much higher taxes. And on the other hand, the President seems equally determined to enfeeble his whole foreign policy by cutting back the rearmament plans that were adopted with such drama and urgency last Spring.

There are hidden ironies and concealed contradictions here which deserve careful investigation. In the first place, the President's more conservative economic advisers, Budget Director James Webb, Secretary of the Treasury John Snyder and the chairman of the Economic Advisory Council, Dr. Edwin Nourse, are responsible for the rearmament setback. They persuaded the President to impose the $15 billion ceiling on defense spending, and it is this budget which is knocking into a cocked hat the services' plans for making America strong.

SOLE MOTIVE

The sole motive of Messrs. Webb, Snyder and Nourse was to avoid the necessity of strong economic controls and higher taxes, which would certainly arise from defense spending above $15 billion. But subsequent to the imposition of the $15 billion budget ceiling, the expected struggle over the President's fiscal and economic policies took place anyway. And this struggle has now apparently been won by the other portion of the President's advisers, with Dr. Nourse's colleagues on the Economic Advisory Council, Dr. Leon Keyserling, and the White House counsel, Clark Clifford, in the lead. They reminded the President that he had already twice publicly asked Congress for extensive economic controls, excess profits tax and other unpalatable measures. And the President decided to renew his former requests without much change, and to insist upon them strongly.

Thus precisely what the sponsors of the $15 billion service budget ceiling so much wished to avoid is now to be done after all. But thus far, as far as presenting the service chiefs, the President has given no sign of grasping that this ought to alter the situation with regard to the budget ceiling.

If the President does not change his mind, the outcome will be different from what it would have been at the time of the great seventy-air-group row last year. There has been a sharp reversal of thinking among Defense Dept. leaders, including Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal. This time, if the budget ceiling holds, air rearmament will be cut back less than either ground or naval rearmament. But there will still be some reductions in planned increases of air strength, and there will be very serious reductions indeed in planned increases in Army and Navy strength.

MIXED RECEPTION

The effect abroad, of course, will be to terrify all our potential allies, and immensely to encourage the Kremlin. In truth, such a rearmament slowdown, in this time of visible danger of eventual war sayors of British policy in the mid-thirties.

The effect at home, moreover, is likely to be just as drastic. The Congress will be about as eager to adopt the President's proposals for strong economic controls and much higher taxes as to drink his health in a flowing bowl of Mickey Finns. There is one ground, and one ground only, on which the President can hope to secure acceptance of these proposals. That ground, of course, is the existence of a grave world emergency.

What makes the situation odder still is the way strange political bedfellows have been brought together. Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal, the supposed banker-to-governments, began talking of the need for controls and taxes many months ago. The chief advocates of controls and taxes, the supposed left-wingers, have emphatically not participated in the drive to enfeeble defense plans.

To be sure, these men advocate immediate legislation for housing, aid to education, health insurance and power development. But the whole resulting addition to the budget will not run much above $1 billion, and this social effort is considered entirely consistent with a strong defense effort, always provided the right economic safeguards are adopted. And the sense of world emergency is as much the motive for the Administration Left's desire for economic safeguards, as it is in the mind of Forrestal. Altogether, the whole business would be comic if it were not tragic.

People's Platform

In Defense Of Mr. Scott

ST. PAULS, N. C.

EDITORS, THE NEWS:

MY 66 years have been about equally divided between the states of Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina. I have been personally acquainted with at least two governors of Georgia and one in Tennessee and each was "dignified" enough to raise the "prestige" of his respective state to the level of its sister state without resorting to outright snobbery. I find the people of the three states pretty well on a common level in morality and intelligence. So much so, that it is impossible to discern any change in their behavior in crossing state lines. Thousands of citizens of the three respective states enjoy "guitar" music, preferring it to the more "classical" stuff. Many more of them wear "red suspenders" considering them a badge of nonor as well as a sign that they have not got above their "raising."

However, I am proud to say that in my sojourn in the three states, it has been my good luck to find only a few people of the "L. Lindsay type, who would put "class" and "dignity" above common sense and personality.

I voted for Mr. Scott for Governor, preferring him to the "tailor-made, dignified" Ealeigh-Shelby combination that has been crammed down the people's throat throats lo these many years and regardless of his "recent shenanigins" I feel sure that he will cause none but the snobbiest of snobs to hang their heads in shame, during his stay in office.

J. L. WALKER.

Thank You Note

CHARLOTTE

EDITORS, THE NEWS:

ON behalf of the Charity League I want to thank you for your wonderful spirit of co-operation. Your generous publicity was indeed a great help in making our bazaar such a success. Again thank you for your kindness and goodness to our organization.

Wishing for you a joyous holiday season. May the spirit of Christmas be with you.

MRS. J. H. NORTHEY.

Central Coach Is Grateful

CHARLOTTE

EDITORS, THE NEWS:

I WANT to take this opportunity to thank you for your splendid co-operation this year and for the help you gave me. It was a most trying year and without your support and backing I doubt seriously that we could have survived it.

Again, thank you from the bottom of my heart and best of wishes for a happy holiday season.

BILL BRANNIN.

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. — Editors, THE NEWS.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

KKK Depletes Ranks In 'Spy Purging'

WASHINGTON

WHEN the Ku Klux Klan met in Macon last week, Grand Dragon Green held a press conference at which someone asked if he had caught "Drew Pearson's spy."

"He's within ten feet of me now," replied the Grand Dragon, staring straight ahead, "and we're going to 'get' him Monday night."

Last Monday night the Grand Dragon presided as usual over the meeting of Klavern No. 1, Atlanta, and one klansman asked him about Pearson's spy.

"You won't have to worry about him any more," replied the Grand Dragon. "I have 'attended' to this man."

If the Grand Dragon continues to banish klansmen suspected of being "Pearson's spies" he may soon be short of members. It also looks as if the Grand Dragon will have to do some more housecleaning because here is a play-by-play account of last Monday's meeting—after the "spy" supposedly was banished.

Klan Minutes

ONE hundred klansmen present, five new members, no reinstatements. . . . Sam Roper, Exalted Cyclops of Klavern 197, was a visitor, made a long talk on the Macon meeting, congratulated the Klan on the fine Macon attendance and the job they were doing for the South. . . . Grand Dragon Green urged klansmen to consult Klavern officers before taking the law into their own hands. Klansmen can call him at his house or office any hour of the day or night if "things need to be straightened out." . . . The Grand Dragon also told how he handled the boys of the press at Macon, said he had had one reporter from a Pittsburgh paper thrown out. (Obviously referred to Boyack of the Pittsburgh Courier though he pronounced the name "Bodkin.")

Grand Dragon was boiling mad over the fact that "some sorry, lowdown scoundrel" hung up an effigy of a klansman in full robes. He was having the robe examined for laundry marks or any telltale clues that might identify the owner. . . . "If necessary, we will have all robes called in and each Exalted Cyclops check to see who is short of a robe in his Klavern," said the Grand Dragon. . . . Exalted Cyclops Roper described Drew Pearson as "such an obnoxious liar he wouldn't believe him on his deathbed." . . . Cliff Vittur attacked Methodist ministers who passed resolutions critical of Chief Ellis of the county police force for allowing the Klan to parade Dec. 4. "They are so-called preachers who are trying to condemn everything except Methodists," said Vittur.

There will be a Christmas party Monday night (Dec. 20). But because the Grand Dragon was presiding, the boys were careful not to say anything about the present they have ready for him and his secretary.

High-Flying Senator

THE Wilmington, N. C., Chamber of Commerce which gave a free hospitality to Tom Dozier, Pa., smog victim, has written the Civil Aeronautics Board asking why Senator Brewster of Maine was able to get free airplane transportation, while the smog victims couldn't. Capitol Airlines wanted to give the poison-gas sufferers a free flight to Wilmington, but the CAB said no.

At about the same time, however, Maine's high-flying Senator Brewster got a free ride in a CAB plane to San Antonio, Texas. CAB's official excuse is that the first part of the trip (to Indianapolis) was an inspection flight with other Congressmen along.

However, the CAB can think up no good excuse for sending Brewster the rest of the way to San Antonio (plane NC212, pilot J. Chester Shimp) to accommodate the Senator in delivering a paid lecture before the Automobile Dealers Association.

Brewster even had the gall to ask the CAB to send a plane all the way to Dexter, Maine, to pick him up at his home, but at the last minute he changed his mind, and left from Washington, D. C., instead. After delivering his lecture in San Antonio, Brewster also got a free ride back to Washington.

McKellar Won't Yield

TENNESSEE'S never-say-die Senator McKellar won't step aside for anyone else to become president pro tem of the Senate as long as he has strength enough to swing a gavel.

In fact, the Democratic dean is privately campaigning for the office which he is supposed to inherit under the Senate's seniority system. When he heard that dapper Millard Tydings of Maryland might take the job away from him, McKellar promptly dictated an appeal to his colleagues.

"Some have asked me," he wrote, as tactfully as possible, "whether I will be an applicant before the Democratic caucus for the position as president pro tem of the Senate.

"Should my colleagues elect me to the place, I would esteem their action very much."

NOTE—When an unsuspecting newsman innocently asked Senator McKellar his age the other day, the Tennessean flew into a rage and actually beat and kicked the startled reporter.

"What are you newspaper men trying to do," he shouted, "put me in my grave? You keep calling me a tottering, ailing old man beeause you don't want me to become president pro tem!

"Why," he added, "I haven't been in the hospital for over four months."

Merry-Go-Round

BOB HOPE, who is never too busy to do his act before a veterans hospital, is taking time off to do a USO company this Christmas to entertain American troops. . . . Bob has an excellent chance of getting the Louisville radio stations that the Courier-Journal wants to sell. . . . Mississippi's sporting Congressman John Rankin staged quite a tirade in his private office the other day. "Before I get through with Drew Pearson," he screamed, "I'll tie him in knots and hang him in the same noose as Alger Hiss." . . . President Truman's friends say they are trying to find a suitable Christmas present for ex-Congressman Slaughter of Kansas City. Though a Truman-hater, Slaughter contributed more individually than anyone else in the USA to Truman's election. (He lobbied through Congress the ban on the Government's renting of more grain elevators; so the Government couldn't pay parity prices.) . . . Some Truman friends say the Justice Department is most ungrateful for indicting Slaughter instead of rewarding him. . . . I. F. Stone's new book, "This is Israel," is the best account yet of the new republic's fight for independence.