THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Truman And The Party Crisis

NOW that the Democratic National Convention has decided to take its bitter medicine, it is time to credit President Truman with giving the Democrats a salutary lesson in party responsibility.

The politicos who chased off after Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower should have been the first to realize that the rules of the game require that the Democrats nominate a recognized Democratic leader, either Truman or someone who stands on the party's record and platform. If President Truman has failed it is better for both the country and the party that the voters repudiate him than that his party be given a new lease by shifting to a popular outsider at the last moment.

We may concede that General Eisenhower would have made a winning candidate and a forceful President but it is even clearer that he would not have been able to compose the differences that are racking the Democratic Party. Franklin D. Roosevelt managed that feat for a while but the conflict between the Democratic left and right grew progressively worse during his Administrations and at the last it had produced a condition close to stalemate in his own Congress.

Truman inherited that divided house and devoted the better part of three years to trying to please everybody, with the results that now are so painfully evident. A more adroit man could have maintained a better balance between Henry Wallace and Jimmy Byrnes, between Phil Murray of the CIO and Ed Pauley, between New Dealers and Southern conservatives, but not for long.

The party could not forever put off the day when it must develop from a coalition of divergent regional, class, race and economic interests into a truly national party or fall apart. It could not always have a glamorous personality standing by to carry the quarreling Democrats to victory. There was bound to come a time when the party organization itself, rather than the candidate, would have to carry the main burden in the campaign.

Harry S. Truman is so unpopular with the incompatible Democratic elements because he mirrors in his person, his thinking and his record the whole conflict within the party. Many leaders have tried to ignore the party's own riven character by seeking to disown the President, but the party now has been forced to acknowledge its responsibility. It has looked over the field and found no other Democrat who would be more acceptable or more representative of the party. It has endeavored to put on a new campaign cloak by drafting a war hero and failed in that.

This is the height or depth of the party crisis, from which will come either a new conception of national party responsibility —and a greater Democratic Party—or a long eclipse.

In his keynote speech in Philadelphia last night, Senator Barkley lifted the convention from its depression for a couple of hours with his statement of the common ground on which Democrats once had united and on which they might stand together again. Whether the demonstration for this good warrior under the banners of Wilson, Roosevelt and Truman was a final flash of the old party spirit or the beginning of a revival will be determined by events in the days immediately ahead.

'Shout Freedom' Earns Encore

A MEMBER of THE NEWS staff attended three performances of "Shout Freedom!" when that historical drama of Mecklenburg was presented in May and June. His interest grew with each showing and he observed a remarkable improvement in the production each time. When the last chorus of "Shout Freedom!" was sung, he expressed the wish to see the spectacle repeated in 1949 and predicted that the drama would be at least twice as effective if it were revived.

We cite this not exceptional impression of our patriotic pageant at a time when the question of a return engagement for "Shout Freedom!" is before the trustees of the Mecklenburg Historical Society. A decision one way or the other must be made soon. Our experience this year with "Shout Freedom!" was a good lesson in the value of early planning and preparation, or rather a pointed demonstration of the added costs, hazards and difficulties that result from a belated start.

Whether the program next year is to be "Shout Freedom!" or something else, the trustees will want to make their determination soon in order to give themselves and the community the advantage of all the time that can be mustered for the necessary arrangements.

In this discussion, we find there is a long list of reasons for favoring a revival of "Shout Freedom!" but we believe that the case is made conclusive by these two points:

1. "Shout Freedom!" is the most impressive Mecklenburg Independence anniversary program we have ever had, both as an entertainment and a stimulus to interest and pride in our historical traditions.

2. The Mecklenburg heritage and Charlotte's development demand increasing observance of the anniversary of May 20, 1775, the date when the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence was adopted. "Shout Freedom!" has set a high mark from which there should be no retreat.

Many American communities — some of them smaller than Charlotte—have established annual festivals, pageants, spectacles or celebrations which have contributed greatly to the business, cultural, recreational and patriotic life of their people and brought them wide fame. None has greater occasion to celebrate a famous day in the year, and none has finer material to work with than Charlotte.

On the basis of the showing made by "Shout Freedom!" this year under severe handicaps of weather and limited time, we would say that Mecklenburg unquestionably has the native talent and the spirit to make "Shout Freedom!" one of the notable annual spectacles of America— a new and better "Shout Freedom!" each year.

Man Is Not So Dumb, Just Lazy

THE EDITOR of *The Monroe Journal*, Mr. R. F. Beasley, takes his pipe in mouth and writes a most fetching piece. His essay, which is reprinted in adjoining columns, was inspired or provoked by a recent discussion on this page of the so-called cold war and related matters.

Mr. Beasley's critical eye focuses on THE NEWS' editorial, captioned "Why We're Dumb In Politics". The Monroe editor immediately rises to the defense of mankind for he seems to feel that we are belittling the human animal when we unfavorably compare man's achievements in the scientific realm to his accomplishments in the vast area of human relations, or more particularly, politics.

We accept Editor Beasley's reproof that such a comparison is neither fair nor scientific. We left ourselves open to correction by not making it clear that we recognize the distinction between the material sciences and politics which our Monroe neighbor states so precisely.

However, at the conclusion of Editor Beasley's thoughtful and delightful article, we find that we are in no fundamental disagreement. He concedes that men will make more and faster progress in the art of government if more people devote more time to the study of politics and to active participation in governmental affairs, which is the point we were trying to make. We applied the word "dumb" to man only in a relative sense in this connection, in order to emphasize the obvious fact that we are foolishly neglecting many of the faculties and facilities that are available to us.

It appears that Editor Beasley does not follow us all the way in the assumption, or the hope, that man eventually will solve all of his political problems if he diligently cultivates the scientific or critical attitude in this business. Our philosophical Monroe friend takes the view that there will always be a crisis of some kind in the City Hall or other departments of government so long as people are people.

We agree that an element as volatile and unpredictable as man will never fail to create problems for society, but we hold that the species which possesses the intelligence to discover Christianity and democracy is capable of solving all the political problems which now are giving us such a headache.

From The Raleigh News & Observer

Double Or Nothing

A LAUDABLE interest is shown by the Junior Chamber of Commerce of High Point in its efforts at juvenile rehabilitation by putting up the money to send two young juvenile delinquents to a boarding school. Under the plan, the two boys would be relieved of their reform school sentences for stealing pistols from officers and would be given a new chance and a good education.

The plan has merit but it is also a plan based upon the lottery techniques of our times. These boys are to get an education because their crimes won them public attention. The plan assumes that the State reform school to which the boys were sentenced does not provide such an education as might help rehabilitate them. It should serve to point out also the fact that beyond State reform schools there are boys in the State prison system which does not today provide any formal education even in reading and writing for the juveniles in its charge.

The two High Point kids have hit the jackpot. The High Point Junior Chamber of Commerce deserves praise for a dramatic good deed. But somebody ought to provide a booby prize also for the State of North Carolina which not only has no schools in its prison but whose reform schools are regarded as places from which the Jaycees deserve credit for rescuing delinquents

'Very Inefficient'

Edison's Light, Marx's Confusion

Politics Isn't A Science

By R. F. BEASLEY
Editor of The Monroe Journal

ON JULY 6th, which was the day after the 5th, which was the day after July the 4th, The Charlotte News ran a "dog ear" on the first page saying: "It's showdown time for America. Turn to the editorial page for timely discussion of this challenge, in an article by Sumner Welles and two News editorials." That shocked us right after a quiet July 4th and we hastened to consult the editorial page and see why the bottom was about to drop out again.

The bottom drops out so often that I am not usually alarmed. You can get used to anything, you know. When I was a boy one of the favorite expressions of people when they felt like agonizing some was the warning to look out for the "crash of worlds and the wreck of matter." Everybody felt sure that it was coming some time, something like Judgment Day; but nobody considered it in the certainties that might concern us some time, like death and taxes. We rather liked the sound of the crash of worlds and the wreck of matter, because it concerned us so little, like, for instance, the death of Julius Caesar. But now its different. We may all happen before breakfast. So I thought I would read up on THE NEWS' pieces and see if there was any chance of getting in out of the rain.

* * *

NOW The Charlotte News is a good newspaper and not particularly an alarmist. But like the rest of us it has to keep the news pot boiling and steaming, always with the threat of the lid blowing off. Otherwise there would be no news. Senator Sorghum said the other day that there was no telling how much trouble this inflation business is going to cause. Already, he said, you have to promise people three times as much as before in order to get them to listen. It is the same way with the news. Dr. Poteat said that when a man opened his newspaper and saw nothing that made him exclaim, "Gee-whiz, looks here," it was no news at all. So we, newspapers, have got to keep them saying "Geewhiz." Therefore, while I did not exactly hold my breath when turning over to the editorial page, I was in a kind of suspense to find out what was slipping up on us now.

The blow was not as hard as I had expected. I had already found out that nothing in our diplomacy had seemed right to Mr. Sumner Welles since he himself quit running it. Cordell Hull, under whom Mr. Welles worked in the State Department, intimated in his memoirs that Mr. Welles had acted as if he were not Undersecretary of State, but over-secretary, the whole team, and the dog under the wagon.

* * *

NOT HAVING been too much alarmed by what Mr. Welles said about our position in Europe, I tried the editorials, entitled, "What's Ahead in the Cold War" and "Why We Are Dumb In Politics." "What's Ahead of Us in the Cold War," gave me no shivers. This was about the rupture between Tito and Stalin. As I had already settled that matter in an editorial of my own, I labeled it "unimportant," and filed it in the archives of gravity. But I was interested in "Why We Are Dumb In Politics." Who's dumb in politics? I'd like to know. If there is one subject that everybody knows everything about it's politics. Why, don't the interviewers and poll takers go out and ask the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker and all the wise men in the barber shops what they think on the profound question of the day, if any? What's the use to ask them if they don't know? THE NEWS' own favorite correspondent, Mr. Burkhalter, or Mr. Burkholder, constantly keeps me enlightened on all the wisdom of the ages from Adam to Hoover, and since then in his estimation there has been none. The Roosevelt regime blotted it all out and the world has since been in darkness. "Why We Are Dumb in Politics" interested me not because I admit the impeachment, but because it was an interpretation of what Lilienthal, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, told a bunch of school kids recently in a commencement address, and because THE NEWS fell into the same pit with Mr. Lilienthal's argument.

Summing up Mr. Lilienthal's question and its answer, THE NEWS says: "Why has man developed or exhibited so little political intelligence while demonstrating massive brainpower in the fields of invention, science, and industrial development? Why is it that the same species that harnessed the atom can't operate a city hall without a crisis? . . . The answer is simply that man has made an unholy mess of his political and social affairs because he has not applied his mind to the problem of government in anything except the most limited sense."

In all of this we dispute the premises, the argument, and the conclusion. The assumption that the approach to the exact sciences is the same as that to the social and political life is wholly erroneous, and from that incorrect premise Mr. Lilienthal falls into error in his whole argument and conclusion. The physical sciences deal only with matter, where facts can be ascertained, proven, and put beyond dispute. Government deals with all the complexities of life that beset the individual, the locality, the state, the nation and the world. It is the sum of human life in action. We dare say that in this respect as much progress has been made during the historical period as has been made in the scientific field.

To say that the human mind has not been applied to government except in a casual way is equally erroneous. That idea narrows government down to the mechanism of the city council or the legislative halls. Government can never be an exact science because it is nothing more than the common denominator of human hopes and disappointments, of success and failure, of desire and passion, selfishness and philanthropy, of wisdom and ignorance, of all human emotions. When you make government anything else but all this, you have abolished the whole purpose of government and created a perfect scientific machine like the Politburo. But you have abolished liberty and thereby abolished the very thing upon which science depends for its progress.

* * *

MR. LILIENTHAL'S own experience is a refutation of his argument. Science disclosed atomic energy. It is up to government to make use of it. Nobody can dispute the physical fact of atomic energy, but everybody can dispute concerning its control and use. We come to no agreement because all kinds of human emotions enter into its consideration. The scientists built the TVA dams, but because the question of their use entails so much human conflict of opinion and interest, Mr. Lilienthal was turned out of his administrative office. The same reason nearly kept him from being appointed head of the Atomic Commission and will eventually disrupt his administration. It is equally fallacious to suppose that if all voters and others who influence and make up government were scientists and applied their minds to government there would be any appreciable rise in government efficiency. The scientists would disagree and work at cross purposes about the same way that goes on now.

Scientists disagree on everything until an undisputed physical fact has been ascertained. Plenty of scientists told us that men could never fly. Government—that is, society—appropriates the discoveries of science and adapts them to human welfare. This practical use is as much an accomplishment of society as is the primary discovery, as is the accomplishment of the individual scientist. Of course, I am not disputing Mr. Lilienthal's belief that individuals should dedicate ourselves to public service and that the people in general should take the greatest interest possible in the organized agencies of government. Edison operated in the field of physical fact and blessed the world. Marx, a so-called political scientist, operated in the field of speculative government and gave us Lenin, Stalin and Tito. Marx was probably the hard-headed student in his field as Edison was in his. The fields were different.

Joseph And Stewart Alsop

Why Hate Truman?

PHILADELPHIA

THE PRESIDENT clutched at Justice William O. Douglas in the manner of a drowning man reaching for a straw in the whirling flood. On Saturday he telephoned Douglas, who is on vacation in his native Northwest, and offered him second place on the Democratic ticket.

Douglas asked for and was granted forty-eight hours to make up his mind. Monday, when his friend Leon Henderson, one of the leaders of Americans for Democratic Action, called him in Oregon, the two men agreed that A. D. A. ought not to place Douglas in competition with Truman. Henderson then asked Douglas whether he would accept the Vice-Presidential nomination. Douglas replied that he would not.

Meanwhile, there are several points of very great interest to note in connection with this sequence of events. In the first place, word of the President's choice had hardly reached the convention insiders before the impulse to rebel asserted itself. The Southern insurrectionist mustered to fight Douglas hard on the convention floor if necessary. Certain other state delegations prepared to join them. It began to look as though the President's selection might conceivably be ignored.

JUST MAD

The truth is that this sullen, depressing convention has only one conspicuous, uniting feeling — resentment against the President. The different factions—the Northern organizations, the liberal and labor groups and the Southern oligarchs— disagree on every other possible point, and would like to cut each others' throats. But the name of the unhappy Truman needs only to be mentioned to bring forth a loud, unanimous anthem of condemnation. And since the delegates have failed to vent their resentment upon the President personally, a good number of them would probably enjoy expressing their sentiments by throwing his Vice-Presidential candidate into the discard.

It is unfair to the President that this should be so. He has simply proved to be too small a man to hold together the discordant elements in the Democratic party. Being a small man, he has also given offense by isolating himself among his Secretary Snyders and Major General Vaughans, and refusing to consult the party chieftains. He has not been wicked; he has only been weak.

But this is a convention of postmasters and collectors of internal revenue and leaders of postmasters and collectors of internal revenue. After the sixteen fat years, they can smell the lean years ahead. They can almost hear the loud "sip" of the Republican ripper bills which will slice off the pay roll even those covered in civil service. Their livelihood depends upon the political success of their party. They blame Truman for its failure, and that is why they hate him.

NO QUITTER

A good many of the leaders even believe Truman will be somewise to come here to accept the nomination. They predict that he will be greeted with a positive tornado of enthusiasm. This notion, passing word has been passed to the White House. But the President has given his little bob of the head and forced smile of a boxer receiving a hard blow, and has answered that he is not a quitter, just as he answered party leader after party leader who warned him that he ought not to run.

While the immediate response to Truman's selection of Douglas tells much about the Democratic party, the selection itself tells a good deal about the state of affairs inside the White House. The struggle with Congress would have been terrible and bloody, but Truman would certainly not be where he is today, if he had played the role of a fighting New Deal leader in the Roosevelt tradition. At least, he would this have had some following somewhere. Instead, he employed the curious tactic of sending to Congress from time to time messages as long as telephone books, indorsing every one of Roosevelt's objectives, and then doing nothing much further.

The messages were commonly the result of the Northern Democratic leaders' combining with such personal advisers as Clark Clifford. The subsequent inaction resulted from the influence of the Snyders, Vaughans and John Steelmans. Truman is now utterly cut off from the Northern Democratic chieftains, not one of whom he has yet noticed during the convention. But Clifford is still very much at his elbow. Douglas is the most eminent and effective of the vanishing race of New Dealers. And the fact that Douglas has been the President's first choice for the Vice-Presidency implies that the Clifford viewpoint is predominating in the President's campaign strategy.

Sumner Welles

Soviets Checked?

THE political reverses which the Soviet government has suffered in Europe must have forced the Politburo to reappraise some of the assumptions on which its policy is based.

Recent developments in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Finland have provided an added incentive to resistance against the Communists throughout Europe. They have lessened materially the aura of Russia which has so often paralyzed the Western foreign offices. While they may tempt the Soviet government to greater recalcitrance in Berlin in the hope of regaining prestige, the Kremlin has undoubtedly suffered a material loss of power in its contest against the West.

The Soviet government has assumed that it could impose upon the peoples of the satellite states a discipline as rigid as that imposed upon the Russians themselves. The fallacy of this assumption has been dramatically shown up in Yugoslavia and in Finland. The Politburo has underestimated the power of nationalism in the countries it has thought to dominate. It has failed to recognize the strength of a patriotism that has been forged in the millennial struggles against alien oppression.

Tito is less Marxist than Stalin. But in his dual role as head of the Yugoslav Communist party and as Moscow's pro-consul, Tito found himself up against one of the toughest specimens of the human race—the Serb. To a Yugoslav peasant a communal system that would take from him the little farm on which his family has lived for uncounted generations is anathema. Had Tito persisted in carrying out Moscow's orders to force agricultural collectivism upon Yugoslavia he would now face a nation-wide revolt.

BIG SETBACK

The results of the elections in Finland were no surprise to those who had the opportunity of appreciating the measure of the devotion of the Finns to their country and to their liberties. Neither anti-Soviet fulminations as those heard last month, when the Finnish Parliament ousted Yrjo Leino, Communist Minister of the Interior, and thus prevented the Communists from rigging the elections, nor such Soviet blandishments as the remission of part of Finland's reparations just before the elections, had the slightest effect upon the voters. The Communist party of Finland travelers were routed. The Soviet assumption that the Finns can be molded in the Communist image has been upset.

Molotov and his majority in the Politburo have based all of their strategy on the assumption that before the end of 1948 the United States would be crippled by an economic collapse. They now see American production indexes at an all-time high and employment figures that are unprecedented. "Pravda", the Communist party organ, has already found it expedient to indicate the alibi the party spokesmen should present. Harry Pollitt, Secretary General of the British Communists, used it when he told Welsh miners the other day that the United States is still facing the "greatest depression ever known." But that Wall Street and the war-mongers have succeeded in delaying it until next year.

Yet some of us are deluding ourselves if we think that because many of its assumptions have been exploded the Politburo will now change its policy. The objectives will remain the same. It is the methods that may change.

LIMITATIONS

Tito's ability to resist is limited. Yugoslavia's economy, already chaotic, can quickly become if Moscow decrees the closure of her frontiers. If the Kremlin decides to use force, Soviet armies can readily move in from Romania.

Finland has been deprived of all means for armed resistance. But in her case Moscow may resort to the political tactics so successfully adopted in Czechoslovakia.

There is as yet no evidence that Moscow's recent setbacks will prevent the Kremlin from continuing with its plans for aggressive expansion. The contest between Soviet imperialism and Western democracy will not be decided in any near future. It will only be decided in our favor when Moscow becomes convinced that the American people are solidly behind a national policy of unflinching firmness backed by military and economic strength.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Second Chance Is Missed By Douglas

PHILADELPHIA

WHEN Justice William Orville Douglas eliminated himself from Democratic consideration as a Presidential or Vice-Presidential candidate, he passed up a chance to revive an old rivalry with Thomas E. Dewey.

For Dewey and Douglas were members of the same class at Columbia Law School. Douglas at the top of the class, Dewey not so near the top. With both rivals in law-school debates, FDR, who had to run against Dewey in 1944, always said that one reason he liked to have Bill Douglas around was because he knew how to get the best of Dewey.

If the Democratic lightning had hit Douglas at Philadelphia, it would have brought belated fulfillment of Roosevelt's original intention—fourteen years late. For at the 1944 convention which finally nominated Harry Truman as Vice-President, Douglas's name was mentioned first in the letter which FDR wrote Bob Hannegan expressing his choice of running mate.

But Hannegan, determined to put across his old Missouri friend, withheld publication of the letter until after the Truman bandwagon had gathered momentum.

Douglas' Handicap

JUSTICE DOUGLAS has suffered politically from one of Franklin Roosevelt's pet policies—his desire to keep the Supreme Court as a protective bulwark against reaction. Fearful that his social program would be hacked down by the judiciary—as it was by the Supreme Court prior to 1936—and worried lest reactionary successors sabotage the New Deal, FDR appointed some of his abler young executives to the bench. Douglas was one of them.

There his hands have been tied politically, and he has dropped partially out of sight.

When you first meet Douglas, he looks as innocuous as a male ribbon clerk and talks as pleasantly as Robert Taylor. But when the New York financial writers staged their annual dinner back in 1938, they handed the then chairman of the Securities & Exchange Commission—Mr. Douglas—a black-snake whip in token of what he had been doing to Wall Street.

Douglas came to Washington shortly after the financial debacle of 1932, joined the newly created Securities & Exchange Commission, and undertook the job of cleaning up a system of financial brigandry which had skimmed the savings from millions of investors.

Today the Street is an example of virtue compared with what it was then, and one reason was Douglas's whip-cracking. Before he finished he had sent Richard Whitney, one-time pillar of Wall Street respectability, to the penitentiary.

Up By The Bootstraps

JUSTICE DOUGLAS got his early training under the late Chief Harlan Stone when the latter was Dean of the Columbia Law School. Douglas, a raw-boned, gangling youngster from Yakima, Wash., had arrived in New York via the empty freight-car route with exactly 36 cents in his pocket, applied for a small loan from Columbia, and lived part-time on the streets of Manhattan to make the loan go further.

The youngest Justice of the Supreme Court looks Scotch and is Scottish. Perhaps it is this inheritance plus the fact that he raised himself by his own bootstraps, which has given Bill certain Calvin Coolidge characteristics. Even with the salary of a Justice of the Supreme Court, Bill used to walk from the District of Columbia home to a few blocks away in Maryland, in order to save 20 cents extra taxi fare. The border between the District and Maryland marks the taxi zone limit.

Wearing The Black Robe

ON THE Supreme Court Douglas has been a restless, prodigious worker. Leaving social engagements early, he goes home night to work on opinions. Along with Justice Hugo Black, he has usually led the Court in the number of decisions handed down.

Douglas was a close friend and intimate adviser of Roosevelt's to the very end. His work was not publicized because a Supreme Court Justice isn't supposed to get mixed up in the Administrative branch of the Government. But Douglas helped out on various national-defense matters, especially the development of adequate electric power. It was his quiet backstage work—on this, long before Pearl Harbor, that was responsible for the nation having enough power to take care of the tremendous war needs, including the manufacture of the atomic bomb.