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FIRST THINGS FIRST

MOST of the proponents of a super welfare state have a stock answer to critics who object that the nation simply can not afford to take on any additional grandiose projects.

"We can't afford *not* to do it," they reply, and then proceed to conjure away the spectre of increasing Federal deficits by explaining that the domestic functions of government really take a very small cut out of the national budget, and that most of the expenditures are going to pay for the past wars and to prepare for future ones.

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THERE is just enough truth in that assertion to make it dangerous. A breakdown of the present fiscal year's budget shows that the $43.5 billion in expenditures can be divided roughly as follows: about $11.8 billion for domestic use (running the government, housing, farm subsidies, education, etc.) and that $31.7 billion goes for purposes connected with war.

This latter figure may be divided like this:

$19 billion for the armed forces.
$8.1 billion for foreign economic and military aid.
$6.9 billion for veterans of World War II and previous wars.
$5.7 billion interest on the national debt, most of which is a result of the recent war.

It is financially impossible to reduce the bill for interest on the national debt.

It is politically impossible to reduce the program for veterans.

That leaves $19.1 billion for the defense program and the equally important foreign economic and military aid projects. They can be reduced, of course, but at the immeasurable danger of losing our growing advantage in the critical war against Communism.

Let us assume, then, that the $31.7 billion can not be cut down significantly. That leaves only the $11.8 billion in domestic expenditures. Substantial economies can be made if the recommendations of the Hoover Commission are carried out, but at best we can hardly expect a balanced budget under the present revenue system.

President Truman has recommended in the past, and may do so again, that the Congress levy additional taxes on the people to bring the budget into balance and pay for some of his new projects. Even if new taxes were politically feasible—and they are not in an election year—they would be economically disastrous for individuals and corporations alike.

So it appears that the nation, fighting for its very life against the threat of a hostile ideology and burdened with the tremendous liabilities its new world role has brought it, will be unable to make ends meet for the next four years, even though all practicable economies are made.

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DOES it make sense, then, to throw the budget even further out of balance and pile up vast new obligations in order to put into effect immediately wonderful new social schemes?

We submit that it does not, and that the people who say blithely that "We cannot afford *not* to do it" are simply ignoring the realities of the situation. And we hope that more Americans will soon realize that the most important assignment in the foreseeable future is to guarantee that men everywhere are free to develop their own talents in an atmosphere of personal liberty. When that is done, we will have ample time and funds to build our own welfare state.

THERE IS YET TIME

IT HAS BEEN reassuring this year to read the daily list of contributors to the Empty Stocking Fund and to note again the universal appeal of this share-your-joy program.

Small gifts, middle-sized gifts, large gifts—they have come in all denominations from children, from parents, from business concerns, from civic and civic clubs and other organizations. And they add up to an impressive demonstration of this community's warm feeling for the less fortunate.

The other day we ran across in the office files a letter which the late W. Carey Dowd Jr., originator and guiding spirit for many years of the Empty Stocking Fund, sent to a few of his personal friends several years ago. It expressed so well the philosophy of the Fund that we would like to quote these two paragraphs:

"You may have your own idea of the most pathetic scene in the world, but ours is of a child, a believing child, excited by all he hears of Christmas, waking to disappointment and disillusionment on Christmas morn. And after the child comes, in the order of pathos, the parents who see in the child's lowered face the unconscious judgment upon their own failure.

"So that no one — no child and no family in this community — may doubt the miracle of Christmas, The Charlotte News once again hangs up its Empty Stocking. We know that once more this episode in the indispensable cause will head many a Christmas gift list as a sort of prerequisite to one's own appreciation of the holiday occasion. In that spirit, I solicit your gift."

The scope of the community-wide Christmas charity program has grown, and some of its procedures have been changed under the capable direction of the Charlotte Christmas Bureau. But the basic purpose remains the same—that no child and no family in this community may doubt the miracle of Christmas.

There is yet time if you wish to share your good fortune with others who are less fortunate.

COAL DISPUTE LINGERS ON

WHEN the president of the Southern Coal Producers Association, Joseph Moody, asked Mr. Truman once again to invoke the national emergency provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act and force a resumption of a five-day work week, he knew full well that the request would be turned down.

Mr. Truman is not going to use the weapon he has so often criticized unless the country is indeed in desperate straits. And Mr. Lewis' three-day week, plus an obvious slowdown in the mines, has kept just enough coal trickling from the mines to keep anyone from freezing.

The other part of Mr. Moody's request —that the President ask the Congress to revise the trust and monopoly laws to encompass organized labor—will probably be turned down, as well. The President would be reluctant to stir up, in a Congressional election year, the hue and cry which would certainly greet such a move.

There remains the hope that the Congress itself will adopt such legislation. In Monroe this week, Senator Frank Graham outlined his program "for American leadership in a time critical for freedom and peace in the world." One of his main points was this:

"The elimination of monopoly power of any individual or group over the basic resources, the production or market of the nation in order to make free and open a resurgence of productive enterprise for the prosperity and well-being of the people."

Senator Graham didn't mention Mr. Lewis specifically, but the broad statement certainly covers the mine boss. When a man of such consistent pro-labor sentiments as Dr. Graham urges the end of monopoly over basic resources, we can be reasonably sure of a favorable Congressional atmosphere.

There have been reports the past few days that a full-scale coal strike will be ordered after the Christmas season. If that happens it may very well furnish the needed impetus for Congressional action.

From The Winston-Salem Journal

WHAT IS WRONG WITH IT

WE'VE wondered for a long, long time why the Democrats down here would find anything wrong with a coalition," says Chairman Sim DeLapp of the North Carolina Republican Executive Committee. The coalition he is talking about is the one proposed by Senator Bricker of Ohio, by which Northern Republicans and Southern Democrats would unite in opposition to the Democratic Party.

The North Carolina Republican Chairman says Southern Democrats should unite with the Republicans because they are against waste. Most all Southerners, it is true, are opposed to needless or socially unnecessary public spending. And they can be counted on to work within their own party to prevent waste in Government expenditures.

But there are other important issues besides public spending. For decades the Republican Party has been established as the conservative party in this country, the Democratic Party as the liberal political party. Vast numbers of people in the South belong to the Democratic Party today, not because of the War Between the States and Reconstruction, but because they are liberals in mind and heart.

These Democrats will not enter any coalition with the Republican Party for the reason that they feel, despite the "me too" platforms of the desperate GOP during the last three Presidential election campaigns, that the elephant is still the same old elephant—that the Republican Party at heart is reactionary and not a little isolationist.

The Democrats of the South have not forgotten what the Republican Party did to Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations under the leadership of Lodge and Harding. And they have not forgotten either what the Republican Party did to the economy of the South under Hoover.

The fact that a Southern Democrat opposes waste in Government expenditures is no reason why he should want to join Senator Bricker in taking the country back to Harding and "the Ohio gang."

Advice to Brides: Always eat breakfast with your husband, even if he prepares the breakfast.—*Starkville (Miss.) News.*

'Think We'll Have Rain, Brother?'

Premiere Tomorrow

New Christmas Cantata Is Born

By TOM SCHLESINGER
Charlotte News Special Writer

WASHINGTON

MUSIC critics around Washington will decide tomorrow how close the Lamar Stringfield-Marian Sims Christmas cantata comes to replacing such time-tested Noel favorites as "The Messiah."

The combined choirs of historic New York Avenue Presbyterian Church (150 voices, accompanied by orchestra and organ) will present Sunday night the world premiere of "Peace, A Christmas Symbol," written by the two Charlottean.

Charles Boaz Beaschler, the noted director of music of the church, was the guiding spirit behind the piece. He was asked by a local music critic in 1947 whether there was any great contemporary work suitable for Christmas. If not, why not? And is there any great oratorio on this theme since Bach's "Christmas Oratorio" and Handel's "Messiah"?

The question, of course, had occurred to many musical directors at different times, and always with the all-too-obvious reply.

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UNLIKE other musical directors, Beaschler decided to do something about it. He approached several outstanding composers, among them Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, Harry Wilson and Geoffrey O'Hara, none of whom could suggest just the right man for the job.

Finally, however, he put the question to the ubiquitous former Pulitzer prize - winning composer Stringfield. At first he, too, joined the search for a possible composer. But, in the end, he accepted a commission to write the work himself. In turn, he secured the aid of Marian Sims, author of short stories and novels, to provide the textual setting.

BOTH Beaschler and Stringfield agreed from the outset on two characteristics of the piece:

(1) The text should be suitable to Christmas, but not just another story of the events surrounding the Nativity.

(2) It should be scored for chorus, orchestra and organ without vocal solo parts.

Both being rather unusual points, the reasoning behind them may be of interest. First, there are numerous cahtatas, oratorios and anthems about the Birth of Christ, the Holy Family, the Babe of Bethlehem and the Shepherds, Beaschler pointed out. "It seemed to us that an addition to the Christmas musical literature should proclaim a central message of the Master. The theme of peace and brotherhood of all mankind was selected as a noble subject appropriate to the exalted life of Christ.

"Second, while cantatas are usually scored for solo voices in addition to the chorus, we felt there should be a major part for the entirety for chorus. Audiences vary in their ability to enjoy and appreciate lengthy solo parts in the form of recitatives and arias, but they are always moved by a well-trained group of singers."

The vocal parts are melodic, supported by colorful and dynamic instrumentation. Indeed, Beaschler said, it could be stylized as appealing and glorified folk music, the idiom for which Stringfield is famous.

The text begins with Marian Sims' "Peace I Leave with you; My peace I give unto you," followed by a prayer "that we may walk at last in the paths of peace." Some of the factors that have turned the world away from the paths of peace, and our inconsistencies of word and deed, are dramatized.

The conclusion is a challenge to "breathe life into the noble words—peace and brotherhood." The text is not only directed at the international and domestic conflicts, but also to the individual's responsibility for applying Christ's social gospel in his own relationships.

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ON THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT this week, you just weren't considered anyone if you didn't receive a Christmas post card from a person stamping himself "Robt. R. (Bob) Reynold" with a mimeographed greeting. "The, Gate Is Wide Open, The Latch String Always Hangs On The Outside." Pictured on the card was his Carolina home not an office on Capitol Hill . . . Dick Queen, one of Senator Graham's secretaries, is back in Washington after an extended North Carolina vacation, with word that "Dunstead will definitely run."

However, smart money, while admitting that Dunstead appears to be making a run for some office, says it might not be for Graham's seat. Some say that he may be seeking a deal whereby he will be set up for the governorship.

Other so-called sages scoffed at Ralph Gibson's report in The News that Basil Whitener will leave his court post and run for Congress from the 11th Congressional district. Even with Solicitor C. O. Ridings dropping out of the race, the insiders say that the winner is bound to be from Rutherford, and Whitener won't leave his sure $7,500 job for a slim chance at the $15,000 Congressional touch.

Some of the political plums for Rep Ham Jones this coming election year include the appointment of postmasters at Morganton (where Dulwinkle-appointed Ben Kibler is retiring after 15 years) and Banner Elk (where Frank H. Stinson, another Bulwinkle man is stepping down after 15 or so years). He also has other openings for carriers in Hickory and Connelly Springs.

Some Congressional offices are wary about sending out Christmas cards. They feel that those who didn't receive them will probably resent the fact more than those who do get them are made happy . . . Looks as if Ham Jones won't go to the Rice-Carolina game, but is making sure of attending the opening of Congress on January 3 instead . . . The North Carolina Society's Mistletoe Mingle Christmas dance will be held tonight at the Shoreham Hotel . . .

Quote, Unquote

A women's writer says "too many club meetings stifle the growth of a rich personality." And she might have added that too many can play hob with a home, too. —Greenville (S. C.) Piedmont.

A Negro when asked the secret of his power, said: "It's simple. I reads myself full. I thinks myself clear. I prays myself hot. And then I lets go." — Pittsburg (Tex.) Gazette.

One upon a time there was an opposition that wasn't bitter.—Greensboro (N.C.) Daily News.

Johnson Finds Economy Too Often Must Be Its Own Reward

by MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON

THE CITIZENS Committee for the Hoover report to reorganize government has given its first citation for economy to Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson. This honor will undoubtedly spur the Secretary to even greater zeal in his battle with the vast and sprawling department he is trying to bring under control.

According to latest count, 116,000 civilian employees have been discharged and the purge is still going on. Johnson has said that not merely a billion dollars but perhaps as much as two billions can be saved.

This is heroic stuff. And it is merely one phase of the struggle to shape the defenses of the United States to a manageable size; a balance that will give the country a modern defense at a cost within the scope of the American economy.

Both Johnson's friends and his enemies, and particularly the latter, who are numerous and articulate, suggest from time to time that in his conspicuous role he is readying himself for a campaign for the Presidency in 1952. There are even hints that he is following a calculated plan to build himself for the next and biggest leap of ambition.

But this implies that Johnson knows far less about politics than he obviously does. It would be hard to imagine an office less likely to advance an ambitious man on the Presidential path than that of Secretary of Defense in the present stage of unification or the lack of it.

ENEMIES IN DROVES

Seldom has anyone in public life alienated so many large and vociferous groups so quickly as has Johnson in less than a year in the Pentagon. Take the Navy and the Marine Corps alone. Here are great traditional and sentimental sources of grief and rage with millions of adherents above and beyond the men on active duty and their families.

Economy of itself is not popular. It is the kind of virtue that must be its own reward.

In his assault on waste and duplication Johnson has not always been the soul of tact. In fact, that is probably the understatement of the year.

He has aroused suspicion and opposition where none existed before. This is said to be true even at the white House where the cooling off has been noticeable and especially, according to those who should know, on the part of the President himself.

If Secretary Johnson did harbor any hope that his headline-making job would advance his ambition, he must now feel a certain sad disillusion. A biting skit in the recent Gridiron dinner depicted him as quite willing to be nominated "a wonderful guy" so long as everybody agreed with the great unifier.

Not long ago a number of high officials in Washington received telegrams from New York inviting them to sit at the head table at a "Gold Medal Award Dinner" to be tendered Johnson on Dec. 14 at the Waldorf-Astoria. The organization conferring the gold medal was Inter-Faith in Action.

The response was depressingly slight as official after official discovered urgent reasons why he could not leave Washington that evening. A little later the Gold Medal Award Dinner was indefinitely postponed.

In his own party Johnson has intense competition for '52 from potential candidates who do not by the onerous nature of their duties have to take such a public bruising. One evidence of the confidence of the Democrats is this yearly pushing up on candidates so early in the game. You can hardly turn over a rock in the political rock garden without uncovering at least one or more eager aspirant.

Johnson's approach has more nearly a Republican than a Democratic appeal. Economy and efficiency are words that evoke Herbert Hoover rather than Roosevelt or Truman. They have an odd sound in the party of Jefferson and Jackson.

Perhaps by the kind of skillful manipulation that politicians and their henchmen have employed in the past, Johnson might succeed in getting the Democratic nomination. But it is hard to visualize him as the popular leader of a party that must rely on mass support at the grass-roots level. You may deplore this as a sad manifestation of the waywardness of our political life. But there it is.

In Danger of Starving to Death, Senor Moring Turned to Acting

by ROBERT C. RUARK

LOS ANGELES

ALBERTO MORIN, formerly of Puerto Rico and now of the world, is momentarily at liberty from his specialty. Senor Morin's specialty is making people angry, via a type of joshing called the "rib." Senor Morin is scheduled for the present-day film capital because he represents a loss of individual sense of humor, fetched about by an anxiety neurosis.

Mr. Morin, a backslid emphasizer of other folks' foibles, finally came to the conclusion that there was neither time nor place for spoofing the town which has suddenly gone deathly serious. Alberto wishes to make his eating money as an actor, and he found that actors who tell dignitaries unpleasant truths in lieu of humor do not last.

The "rib" or "reeb" as Master Morin pronounces it, is a highly specialized form of wit. It calls for character analysis of the victim, and the fun quotient derives from a dead-pan assault on the weaknesses of the subject. It is the polished insult, based on intimate knowledge of the loopholes in the target's conscience.

Since every man owns a stable chink in his private estimate of himself, Mr. Morin has had little trouble in piercing the social armorplate of the people he was called upon to insult. A versatile linguist, he has small difficulty in posing as an imported expert in any field.

MUSIC EXPERT

As a French music expert, he once drove Nelson Eddy to enraged distraction when he attributed Eddy's wooden delivery to lack of knowledge of the "clicknab" school of vocalization. There is no such thing as a clicknab.

Affecting an exaggerated French accent, Mr. Morin murmured sardonically that Monsieur Eddy could ever hope to achieve Parisian delivery onteel he had mastered the cleeknabs, and Eddy, long sensitive about references to his cowish cadences, would go furious.

Mr. Morin scorns the spilled-soup school of humor, typified by the art of Vince Barnett, a lop-eared comedian turned ribber, and aims always at well concealed sensitivities. He turned a Los Angeles party for J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI chief, into a shambles one evening by mimicking as the chief of the French Surete, and criticizing FBI criminal-capture technique as branch from the old rubber-hose and torture school.

The local cops were ready to inflict violence upon the man by when he revealed himself as a fake Frenchman, and they never quite forgave him for treading on a policeman's guilt complex about extraction of confessions by painful process. His performance impinged sufficiently on Mr. Hoover to move Edgar to direct Mr. Morin's arrest on a phony traffic charge. The actor spent a couple of hours in the clink as penance for his levity—all, of course, in behalf of the subject.

Mr. Morin, posing as a celebrated photographer, spent hours taking pictures of a muscle-decorated equally celebrated legs on blank photo plates. His attitude is always lofty, always condescending, always enraging.

The kidder is a good actor, a world traveler, a much-decorated performer in the Office of Strategic Service during the war. He wears the Rosette of the French Legion D'Honneur for his work behind the German lines with the French underground, and has sundry other medals for valor.

"But all this is no good if you hit people where they live," says Mr. Morin. "I find, finally, that if I wish to be an actor I cannot be a kidder, because the people whom you kid never forgive you, since ribbing is at least 75 per cent emphasis on truth.

"I am no longer a ribber. I am an actor now. Actors eat. Ribbers starve."

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Byrnes Allows Truman Is No Caesar

WASHINGTON

ACCIDENTALLY this column has got mixed up in the row between President Truman and his old Secretary of State, Jimmie Byrnes.

Some time ago, Byrnes wrote this columnist a letter regarding the circumstances under which he resigned from the State Dept. It was this writer's belief that Byrnes, who had done a great job as Secretary of State, had been eased out because of friction and jealousy which even then was evident between the two men.

Jimmie Byrnes, however, contending that he resigned purely because of ill health, sent Truman a carbon copy of his letter to me. And Truman sent him in reply a significant letter which ignored the issue of why Byrnes resigned, and dwelt instead on Byrnes' conversion to Dixiecratism.

"I have read your Washington & Lee speech," Mr. Truman said, and then went on to comment on the manner in which Mr. Byrnes was deserting the political philosophy of Roosevelt and Truman. As an afterthought, the President wrote at the bottom of the letter the following postscript:

"I now know how Caesar felt," he said, referring to Brutus' famed stab in the back, "when he said 'Et tu, Brute?'"

When Mr. Byrnes replied to this letter, he addressed himself chiefly to Truman's postscript. He explained at some length that he did not consider himself a deserter from the Democratic Party, but remained a devoted supporter of its fundamental principles. Then Byrnes polished off his letter with this crack:

"I am not a Brutus, and neither do I consider you a Caesar."

Big Gamblers Evade Taxes

IN the opinion of this columnist, tax fraud and tax evasion are now more prevalent than at any time in years. This means, of course, that those who do pay their taxes have to pay more to make up for those who don't.

There used to be one category of citizens against which the Treasury never pulled its punches—the underworld. It took an income tax case to send Gangster Al Capone to jail, while various underworld figures have been caught in the income-tax mesh after all other avenues failed. Today, however, even the underworld is safe from income-tax prosecution—provided they know the right people. Here is a case in point.

Most notorious gambling network in Southern California operates under the name of the Guarantee Finance Co. of Los Angeles, which serves not only as a respectable cover, but loans money to bookies and acts as a payoff center.

Recently Los Angeles County indicted twelve members of this cover operation.

Prior to this indictment, however, the Federal Government through conscientious internal revenue agents on the West Coast had caught four of the big-time gamblers on what appeared to be a clear case of tax fraud. Gov. Warren's forthright California Crime Commission was responsible for the original clue. The crime commission had seized some of the gamblers' books and turned them over to the T-men.

Before doing so, however, the California Crime Commission specifically asked the U. S. Treasury whether it would be willing to co-operate in cleaning up the California gambling racket, and got an affirmative answer.

Accordingly, T-men Dan E. Goodykoontz, internal revenue intelligence agent for San Francisco, Ralph Read, internal revenue intelligence agent, and Walter M. Campbell of the chief counsel's office in San Francisco, got busy. The evidence they assembled appeared conclusive.

Protection Money

IN 1948, the Guarantee Finance Company listed in its income tax returns $248,000 paid to "Lopez," and another $108,000 paid to "special." No further explanation of these huge expenditures was given, but it appeared from Treasury investigation that $108,000 was paid to runners, and that the $248,000 to "Lopez" was probably paid for police protection

The gambling company's 1947 income-tax return was somewhat similar, with $247,000 paid to "Lopez" and $109,000 paid to "special."

After preparing what they considered an airtight case, the West Coast T-men came to Washington where they recommended the prosecution of Marvin Kovey, Albert Kogus, Harry Rockwell and Phil Cobert, the chief partners of the Guarantee Finance Co.

In Washington, a Treasury conference took place between the three West Coast T-men, together with Charles Oliphant, general counsel of internal revenue; W. H. Woolf, head of the intelligence unit; and Riley Campbell, in charge of internal revenue's penal division. It seemed certain from this discussion that criminal prosecution of the above-named gamblers would be recommended to the Justice Dept.

One other official attending this conference was Assistant Commissioner of Internal Revenue Daniel A. Bolich, who has been seen in New York in the company of the famous gambling king, Frankie Costello.

Pulling The Right Wires

BUT simultaneous with the departure of the West Coast T-men for Washington, there also left Los Angeles for Washington one Harry Sackman, former public accountant, since then indicted by Los Angeles County. Sackman had been in charge of the gambling ring's books and had helped to organize the gambling bosses out of the soup. In Washington he contacted Hayes, former head of the international sweepstakes in Mexico City.

Significantly when the books of the Guarantee Finance Co. were seized in Los Angeles, papers were found linking the California gambling ring to Ted Hayes' old organization in Mexico City, including one telegram in which the Mexican sweepstakes asked for $7,000.

Hayes, no longer with the Mexican sweepstakes, was formerly associated with Ed Flynn, Democratic boss of the Bronx. He is now with the Federal Security Administration in Washington. When questioned about the Sackman visit, Hayes stated that Sackman had conferred with him about the tax case but that he had told Sackman he could be of no assistance.

Apparently Sackman found other wires to pull and pulled them successfully. For the supposedly airtight case against Kovey, Kogus, Rockwell, and Cobert was immediately dropped. The Treasury has done absolutely nothing since.

Only other development is that Los Angeles County has now indicted Kovey, Kogus, Rockwell and Cobert. As far as the U. S. Treasury is concerned, however, no effort has been made to proceed with criminal prosecution.