THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1949

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

—St. Luke 2:1-14

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

ONCE EACH YEAR, on the eve of Christmas Day, the publisher of *The Charlotte News* is permitted to lay aside his usual duties, enter the inner sanctum of the Ivory Tower, and compose a message of his own choosing to many thousands of friends—some of them close by, some of them many miles away.

It is a message which virtually composes itself, springing as it does from a full awareness and deep appreciation of the important part that each of these friends has in the continued growth and expanding service of this newspaper. The only difficulty is holding it to reasonable lengths.

And so, on this joyous Christmas Eve, I think warmly and affectionately of:

Our *News* readers, to whom the major portion of our thought and energy is directed; for whom we strive constantly to produce an ever better newspaper which will fulfill, as best we are able to make it fulfill, the great obligations of a free press; upon whom we depend for advice and counsel and loyal interest and support. It is deeply gratifying that the number of *News* readers has again increased substantially during the past year. May they continue to make known to us their pleasure or displeasure with the product which arrives at their door, over which they exercise a greater measure of proprietorship than many of them realize.

Our *News* advertisers, whose friendship and good will make it possible for the newspaper to put out a better and better paper and so gain more readers. The relationship of a newspaper and its advertisers is basically a co-operative business enterprise, beneficial and profitable to both. But it builds strong personal ties and it further benefits the community and the larger region about it by fusing good merchandising with effective advertising to enrich commerce and increase the prosperity of all the people. We esteem very highly the cordial association of the past, and we anticipate the same pleasant relationships in the year which lies ahead.

Our *News* employees, whose ingenuity, loyalty and plain hard work are, in the final analysis, responsible for whatever measure of success *The Charlotte News* has achieved. They are people of diversified talents and skills who daily combine their ability in matchless coordination to surmount the unique problems of producing this ever-changing product. There are, in their numbers, young people who are just beginning their business careers; there are others who have given their entire adult lives to *The News*. Without exception, they continue to display a brand of fidelity and a degree of diligence which inspires great admiration and pride.

And so to all three—readers, advertisers, employees—and on behalf of *The Charlotte News*, it is a real pleasure to say: A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

Thomas L. Robinson
Publisher

CHRISTMAS

THE week has been dull and ordinary, save for a low-lying fog and occasional visits from a minute, warm rain. It has been neither uncommonly hot or uncommonly cold.

If it had not been for the endless flow of shoppers through the stores, it has had not been for decorations of holly here and there, if it had not been for the deserted schoolrooms and the occasional sound of carols—you might not have known it was Christmas week.

Many persons at midweek felt like remarking: "I just don't feel Christmas in my bones."

Others, decorating trees early, wondered why they felt a little ridiculous stringing colored light bulbs and flinging shiny tinsel. The usual round of Christmas parties were notable for their lack of concern with things yule. Children tried to generate Christmas jollity in their parents, but the change wasn't noticeable.

Not until this morning did the spirit of Christmas arrive in Charlotte, a strangely eager and joyous sort of spirit. Perhaps it was the fact that many of the city's laborers had only half-a-day's work ahead of them—or none at all. Perhaps the fever-pitch excitement of the youngsters had finally communicated itself to their elders. Perhaps it was the sight of candy-striped boxes piled high under the tree or the rows of green and red Christmas cards standing on the mantel-piece.

Whatever it was, Christmastime was upon us. There was no doubting that tomorrow was the day. It was a good feeling—warm, friendly, tinged a bit with expectation. It felt like a hangover from childhood.

The man who kept his eyes open today would be rewarded. All-year faces would disappear and be replaced by almost unrecognizable Christmas faces—bright faces with eyes unintentionally wide, lips unwittingly smiling, with an animation seldom found outside childhood.

And few sharp words. Even among the last-minute shoppers, elbowing their way through department stores; even among the harried clerks, on edge from weeks of extra work, voices would be pleasant, considerate. There would be little anger, little exasperation; it would be a sort of brotherhood, giving off a glow peculiar to a few days in December.

It would seem, somehow, as if a benign sort of innocence had settled over us all; it would seem that everyone was young.

It is no accident that Christmas creates this semblance of youth, for the distinguishing characteristic of youth is innocence and goodness. The Person whose birth is celebrated tomorrow was similarly characterized by goodness and innocence. It is malice and evil that ages us—and in Christ these things were missing. On the anniversary of His birth we partake of His goodness and become young again.

Thus Christmas makes children of us all.

From The Duke Chronicle

ONCE A YEAR

ON DEC. 25 of each year, malice takes a holiday, and the spirit of brotherhood and good will moves in for a one-day stand. The spirit of Christmas permeates every nook and cranny the world around, and there is a general atmosphere of joviality expressed in every tongue.

Christmas Day is to us a symbol of hope; not because of the idealistic phrases about peace on earth, but because we are convinced that if all people in the world can foster the spirit of good will for one day out of the year, there may be hope for the other 364. Unfortunately, however, up to this time Dec. 26 has been a day of despair.

Christmas, 1917, is a good example of what the Yule can accomplish. It was on this historic day that the conflicting forces of a sick world took time out to celebrate the great December holiday. For one day, World War I was at a standstill. That the Christmas spirit exhausted itself on Dec. 26 is witnessed by the fact that we celebrate Nov. 11 as the day that brought a *permanent* end to hostilities.

In the true Broadway tradition, a show which is overwhelmingly popular with the public is held over for weeks and in some cases years. The rave notices which Christmas has gotten through the years certainly ought to make it worth a longer run than the one day which it now enjoys. It would be pleasant to write on next Christmas that the Yuletide spirit has just completed a successful 365 day stand.

Now that women control 75 per cent of the wealth and 51 per cent of the vote, is it too soon to start a movement in behalf of men's rights?—*Sherman (Tex.) Democrat.*

Definition of a small town: A place where the boys move the checker board near the stove when the weather gets cold.—*Rocky Mount (N. C.) Telegram.*

News From The Capital

Paul Green Drama Taking Shape

By TOM SCHLESINGER
Charlotte News Special Writer

WASHINGTON

PAUL GREEN is receiving more publicity in the local press than any non-political figure from North Carolina in recent years.

This college professor, author, playwright and music-composer has been rather subtly wrapped up in one of the feature pieces of the Capital's Sesquicentennial Exposition, scheduled to open July 4, and run two Summers.

The Pulitzer-prize-winning dramatist is writing a symphonic drama on General George Washington which will be one of the more ballyhooed aspects of the fair. He is also making sure that he will have a theater in which it will be produced.

For the past couple of months, Green has been running back and forth from Chapel Hill, granting interviews to the press, appearing on radio and television and dropping hints about the play-to-be. On the side, he helped round up a group of experts to build a 4,000-seat $350,000 amphitheater for his production.

This week, he saw things begin to take shape. Interior Secretary Oscar Chapman turned the first spade of dirt, dedicating the new theater to "the principle that only free men can achieve the full flowering of the human spirit." Afterward Green told the press that Washington would soon have "one of the most beautiful and modern outdoor theaters in the world."

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ACADEMIC-MINDED Green compared his writing efforts to those of a football player. "I take the ball—an idea—and want to go over the line. How can I do it? Through tackle? Around end? Where will I stiff-arm, where will I pass, where will I dodge?"

"That's all there is to a play anyway—fellow wants something—how does he get it?"

However, he did get a bit more specific. The play will probably show five days of George Washington's life—"at the most robust period of his career, yet in the great crisis of his life," Green said.

He hopes the play will become an annual production here, such as his "The Common Glory" at Williamsburg, Va., and "The Lost Colony", at Roanoke Island.

Through flashbacks the drama will take Washington back to his early days. But mostly it will be a forward-looking exposition, with Washington, Alexander Hamilton and other Revolutionary figures peering into the future of America.

"I am trying to take five days of Washington's life to give the full story of his significance," Green said. "It is a play about Washington and his part in the creation of the democratic nation and the philosophy of self-government."

Green has read everything available about his subject and the Capital, and has visited such historic spots as Valley Forge and Morristown. He hopes to uncover some of Washington's early life in Ohio, "where he banged some people" and to depict Benedict Arnold in his true likeness. The title is uncertain, but it will probably be something like "Merciless Days" or "Days Without Mercy."

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RADIO experts in Washington said this week that they feared a full-scale United States-Cuban ether war which may make casualties of many listeners in the southeastern states. WBT in Charlotte stands to be one of the stations that could have its clear-channel broken down.

The trouble began last Spring when the broadcasting authorities between the U. S. and Cuba expired, and Cuba demanded some of the U. S. frequencies. Cuba has already licensed some of its stations on these frequencies. As it stands now, the U. S. has refused to yield to Cuba's demands for eleven new radio channels.

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CHAIRMAN Doughton of the House Ways & Means Committee backed up Truman's hopes on the subject when the Tar Heel Representative said this week that he is hopeful "some of the more burdensome excise taxes can be reduced at the next session of Congress." He listed excises on transportation and communications as the ones that should receive "marked first," for cuts, but said, "I would not stop there." . . . Mrs. O. Max Gardner, wife of the late former Governor of North Carolina, has been appointed chairman of the women's committee for the Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner here, Feb. 16. Serving under Mrs. Gardner will be Mrs. Spencer Love, whose husband is head of Burlington Mills. . . . General and Mrs. George C. Marshall have closed their Leesburg, Va. home, and have left to winter in Pinehurst. . . . Army Secretary Gordon Gray is still being mentioned as a "distinct possibility" as the new president of UNC. . . . Mrs. Kay Owsley Glass, formerly of Charlotte, who was recently named "queen" of the Young Democratic Clubs of America, works as public relations director for the Washington Community Chest. She was at one time an opera singer, and later a producer at WBT. . . . Over 1,300 persons attended the North Carolina Society's Mistletoe Mingle here last week.

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HERE'S the final guess for the year on the two Senatorial races: Bob Reynolds will run; Bill Umstead won't. Reynolds, like an old firehorse smelling smoke, wants to get back in the limelight. This is probably his last chance because of age, and because he's been out of the public eye for too long. He also has the financial resources.

Umstead won't pass up a sure thing like a shot at the governorship for something as elusive as Graham's Senatorial post. The same people who would fight him in a race against Graham would support him for governor. He knows, too, that if he runs, and is defeated, he will be washed up politically in the state. He realizes that in four years he might have a better chance when Graham comes up again at the end of the short-term.

The new ornamented plaster and stainless steel ceilings for both the Senate and House chambers are finished. The chambers now are completely air-conditioned, and a new acoustical material is installed on the upper walls. All lighting is indirect. Gone are the hideous steel beams which had kept both roofs from collapsing, archaic lighting, poor acoustics and stale air.

Mediocrity Growing As Top Men Leave Government Posts

By JOSEPH & STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON

THE TRUMAN Administration's tendency to lose its able men is rapidly becoming a pathological condition, like a hemorrhage. The Secretary of the National Security Council, Sidney Souers, has just announced his resignation. Paul Hoffman and most of the rest of the top ECA staff are likely to have vanished from Washington before Summer. Secretary of the Army Gordon Gray is only remaining in his post temporarily. The United States High Commissioner in Germany John J. McCloy may go back to the law next autumn.

The foregoing names must be added to the lengthening list of those who have gone already. Presidential counsel Clark Clifford; the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, David Lilienthal; State Dept. counsellor George Kennan; State Dept. Ambassador-at-Large Phillip Jessup; the Chairman of the Defense Establishment's Joint Research & Development Board, Dr. Karl Compton—all these have recently shaken the dust of office from their feet, or have publicly declared that they would do so shortly.

In these lists, moreover, there is a far-reaching significance that does not immediately appear on the surface. Even in the first Truman administration, extreme mediocrity, occasionally tempered by political reaction, reigned almost unchallenged on the domestic side of the Administration. The good men who served the Government in those days—and there were a great many of them—were heavily concentrated in the spheres of foreign and defense policy-making.

More lately, the domestic side of the Administration has been ornamented with a large number of convinced Fair Dealers, although the caliber of the personnel has not been greatly improved. But in the period since the 1948 election, mediocrity has crept over the whole sphere of foreign and defense policy-making like a nasty infection, with certain inflamed patches of downright incompetence and self-serving.

The names listed above, of those who have gone or are going, give a very sharp emphasis to this point. For the past two years, the two conspicuously able members of the President's personal staff have been Souers and Clifford. Now Souers has followed Clifford out of the government. It is almost impossible to calculate the consequences of the loss of Souers, who served as Truman's personal liaison man in the foreign and defense fields, where the President most needs help.

Informed observers have always expected the eventual retirement of Paul Hoffman (who may go even before the Spring if the ECA appropriation is sharply cut, either by the President or by Congress).

Hoffman can be, and most probably will be, replaced by W. Averell Harriman. Harriman's transfer here will leave a major post unfilled in Europe. Meanwhile, the simultaneous departure of most of the ECA's higher staff, which is also on the cards, will tend to cripple this whole vital agency in the final term of its operations.

Averell Harriman is also being mentioned as the replacement of David Lilienthal at the AEC as are Ambassador to London Lewis Douglas and chairman of the AEC's Military Liaison Committee Robert Lovett. Like Harriman, Lewis Douglas is almost irreplaceable. In short, the most promising suggested replacements for Lilienthal are men who already hold important posts, just as Paul Nitze, who is to succeed George Kennan at the head of the State Dept. planning staff, was also doing a big job before his recent elevation.

There are, of course, many different explanations for individual cases. Some public servants are driven into private life by the pressure of personal debts, like Clark Clifford or John J. McCloy when he left the defense establishment. Others, like Paul Hoffman, never intended to serve more than a limited time.

The overall truth is, however, that mediocrity begets mediocrity. The first raters are now leaving the upper levels of defense and foreign policy-making because this sphere once set apart, has lately been added to the empire of mediocrity. It is easy to understand why all these men go. What is not easy to understand, however, is how the Government of the United States is to be successfully carried on, when only the cronies and the second raters remain on the job.

Commentary On World State: AEC And The Drunken Sailor

By ROBERT C. RUARK

HONOLULU

THE BIG double-decker Boeing took off smooth and nice from the field at San Francisco, and the stewardess smiled, and the steward said come on down to the bar in a few minutes and he would throw a light libation at me, and my berth was made and ready whenever I wanted it.

The drunken sailor said he sure could use a slug of anything short of sheepdip because, man, he had the worst shakes he ever had in all his born days, and in his time he had acquired some pretty fine shakes.

The sailor was red-headed, and he was wearing a leather jacket and a pair of dungarees rolled halfway up his legs. I asked him where he was headed and he said Eniwetok in the Marshalls.

"I am a carpenter," he said. "Before I was a carpenter I was in the Merchant Marine. Now I am going to Eniwetok to work for the Atomic Energy Commission. How do you like that? I am a drunk deckhand and now I am a working with the atomic bomb."

I hit the sack pretty early and died for a few hours, but I woke up still thinking about the drunken sailor and the Atomic Energy Commission. If you are shopping around for a short commentary on the state of the world, I guess this is as good as any you'll find.

It is a long haul from Jack London. Here you have a young man with too much to drink aboard going forth into the adventurous South Pacific. He is not stowed away in a tea clipper, but is riding a Pan American Stratocruiser which has two decks in it and carries a cocktail lounge in its belly.

This young adventurer, smoothed down by a night's sleep in a berth bigger than a Pullman accomodation, will talk his hangover to a cocktail bar in Honolulu for further nourishment; will climb on another huge Boeing and will arrive at the mangy little atoll of Eniwetok scented and tied in the apron beads combing fashion. There, while the waves pound on the reefs and the gulls yelp in the dawn and the palms sway, he will contribute his carpenter's knack to a project which very well may decide whether humans are to continue to dwell on this globe.

Occasionally I come down with the heebie-jeebies, man, he has of the world, and its oversimplification as a result of the airplane, and if some part of me is curious that a man of limited education and small skill would be winging thousands of miles on deluxe transportation to work with a miraculous scientific project on a far Pacific island whose name was unknown to all but a few before the Jap's decided to knock Pearl Harbor loose from its insularity.

This feeling of numbness was not dispelled when the big plane swooped down on the airfield in Honolulu. I was expecting no welcoming committee but standing on the ship was a group composed of Don Beach-Comber, Eddie Reich and Mel Taff.

Beach-Comber is a former lieutenant colonel in the Air Force. He is a restaurant man who thinks that Louisiana came of Beaumont-Gant to Beach-Comber for professional purposes. I know him from Italy and Paris, and later from New York and Hollywood.

Eddie Reich is a former sports-writer and publicist I knew in Washington before the war. Mel Taff is one of my oldest buddies from the University of North Carolina, more years back than I care to recall. He is working for the public health service here.

Maybe I'm naive, but to me—a country kid from the South—it's pretty fabulous. What I mean, I do believe the airplane is here to stay.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

British Wanted To Hold A-Bomb Story

WASHINGTON

THE astounding news that Russia had the secret of the atom was announced so suddenly and with no advance build-ups, that, few people know of the strenuous backstage debate which took place as to whether the news should be released at all.

However, here is the inside story of what happened.

News that Russia had exploded the atom was first turned over to President Truman by Dr. Vannevar Bush, head of the National Research Council. Most exciting and disturbing to the scientists was the enormity of the Soviet blast. Seismographic readings were far greater than those from an ordinary atomic-bomb explosion. This startling fact has led some atomic experts to believe that Russia's entire stockpile of bombs might have blown up accidentally. If this isn't true, then Russia has a bomb much larger than that set off at Hiroshima.

When the news first reached Truman, he called in Secretary of Defense Johnson, Undersecretary Stephen Early, and Secretary of State Dean Acheson—separately. Acheson, who was tied up in New York with the United Nations, said he would have to check with the British and the Canadians before giving an opinion on releasing the news to the public.

Acheson Opposed

FOLLOWING such consultation Acheson said he was flatly opposed to an early press release. The British, he said, were worried over what the British people's reaction would be. They were already upset over the shock of developing the bound, and the Labor Government didn't want to punish them too much.

This set off a vigorous backstage debate, with the British Ambassador Sir Oliver Franks summoned to the White House. Reporting that he was speaking for both Prime Minister Attlee and Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin, he made an eloquent plea for delay, even suggested the possibility of leaking the story through James Reston of The New York Times, close friend of the British embassy. Truman, however, turned this down.

Meanwhile, a meeting was convened at the Pentagon Bldg. between the American joint chiefs of staff and representatives of the British joint chiefs. Both groups of military men went on record almost immediately as favoring prompt release of the information. They pointed out that theirs was the obligation to defend the Western world, in the event of a Russian blitz. They also stated that if the Russians opened a blitz by dropping the atomic bomb, the people of the West would lose faith in the ability of their Government to defend them. If no word of the Soviet bomb were released, the people would remain under a false impression of security.

Steve Early Wins

MOST decisive and eloquent pleader for immediate release of the information was Undersecretary of Defense Early, who, as FDR's press secretary for twelve and one-half years, knew full well you couldn't keep an important secret long. Early pointed out to Truman that the American people would never believe anything their Government told them if the Russians leaked the story of the bomb's explosion first.

Early also warned that the wily Russians, experts in propaganda, would probably break the story at the United Nations where Vishinsky was scheduled to speak. American morale might well be shattered, Early warned, if the Russians got the story out first.

This also clinched the decision. However, the President still had to clear with Prime Minister Attlee and convince Bevin, and a cable finally was sent to American Ambassador Lewis Douglas in London ordering him to appeal personally to Attlee in the strongest possible terms for simultaneous release of the story. Emissaries were also flown to New York in Army planes to argue with Acheson and Bevin.

Reluctantly the British gave their consent less than 24 hours before the White House unloosed the momentous statement in which the American people learned once again that in a democratic country the public has a right to know the facts and can take the bad news as well as the good.

Christmas Parcel Post

THE Post Office Dept. is handling the biggest Christmas mail load in history, including a 100 per cent increase in parcel post shipments.

However, Christmas mails brought no cheer to the Railway Express Co., which has boosted rates four times since 1945 and as a result lost an enormous amount of Yuletide business to parcel post.

Another reason for the loss of business is the fact that the major railroads, which control the express agency, can make more money on subsidized parcel post hauling than on unsubsidized express shipping.

As a result, Post Office insiders fear the Railway Express Co., which sprang from the famed Wells-Fargo of almost a hundred years ago, faces rough financial going in the future.

Capital News Capsules

AUTO SALES STIFFEN—Automobile manufacturers may have to absorb the new steel increase rather than boost auto prices. They don't want to know, but sales have already dropped under the present prices. Tuesday the Federal Reserve Board reports that the market is still ripe for new cars, nearly 350,000 new models have jammed up on dealers' lots this year. The smaller manufacturers may have to cut prices instead of increasing them—in order to sell new cars.

PORTUGUESE WON'T PROTEST—Portugal is the only government which rejected the State Dept.'s protest that all nations protest the arrest of American Consul Angus Ward in Mukden. Portugal has notified the American embassy it cannot protest because the Chinese Communists for fear the Communists would use this as an excuse to invade Portugal's wealthy island of Macao off the China coast—now receives a bonanza as a center for opium smuggling.

NEW GERMAN ARMY—Rumors are spreading behind the Iron Curtain report that hundreds of former German Army officers are leaving the American and British zones and crossing into Red Germany to join the here so-called German militia where the Russians will give them an opportunity to pursue the only profession they know—militarism.

GERMANY'S NEW HITLER—U. S. Ambassador Kirk in Moscow has word that the Russians are getting ready to release German General von Paulus from his prison camp and send him to East Germany to head up the pro-Russian German Army there. Von Paulus is reported to have become a rabid Communist during his lengthy stay in Russia and thinks that he is destined to be Germany's new leader—with Moscow's blessing, of course.