

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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THURSDAY, JULY 21, 1949

SCOTT AND THE UTILITIES

UTILITIES newspaper does not share Governor Scott's anger at the utility companies operating in the rural areas. It would like to go far to advocate public ownership and operation of all public utilities. Nevertheless, we find ourselves in general agreement with the Governor in his latest Forward Campaign.

In a radio broadcast Tuesday night, the Governor set forth vividly the need for greater expansion of electricity and telephone services into the rural areas. He said there are 298,000 families in the state who do not have electricity but can't get it, and 100,000 families are waiting for telephone service.

If these figures are accurate—and they have not yet been challenged—there is certainly a great and pressing need for action at the State level to improve the situation. We are living in a modern age, and it is inconceivable that so many of our people are still without the facilities which were once considered conveniences but now are necessities.

If the private companies won't supply them, the government will have to. The Governor snapped, and then added:

"The utility companies have long tried to impede progress. I definitely feel that the people in the utility field had too long negative opinion. Instead of fighting everything they tried to do, a positive approach and do something about fixing these needs."

Here the Governor was shouting from the hip. It simply does not make sense for a utility company to "impede progress." If the Governor means they have been fighting public power, perhaps he has been "impeding progress." But if he means that they are refraining from expanding merely to prevent progress, he is mistaken. We have never known a utility company to turn down the opportunity to make an extra dollar. And if they haven't stretched their lines out into the rural areas, it is because prevailing rates haven't permitted them to do so and still make a profit.

The Governor appears to have offered a way around this impasse. Rural users do not have to pay higher rates to get utilities, he said. He said that the rate system should be borne by the whole system—a proposition that we are also in agreement with, even if it means some increases in industrial and residential power rates in more thickly populated areas to subsidize some of the rural lines.

But The News parts company with Governor Scott when he threatens to put the Government into the utility business. Not only does The News oppose the theory of government operation of private enterprises; we do not think it necessary and proper to the rural problem and for other utility questions such as the Duke Power Co. request for higher bus fares in N. C. cities; lies in a stronger and more dynamic State Utilities Commission; one which would prosecute service as well as approve or reject rate change requests.

North Carolina is not alone in suffering from a weak and ineffectual Utilities Commission. In altogether too many states, commissions have been the legal authority under the technical manpower to keep utility operations under close scrutiny and to require them to furnish the public with the service. It is the result of this weakness at the State level that we have seen the trend toward Federal intervention in the past two decades.

As we have said before, the N. C. Utilities Commission has been a militant defender of the people's rights, not merely a passive guardian. Anytime it grants a monopoly in the utility field, it must (1) require adequate service to the public as well as (2) permit a reasonable return on the utility investment. Stated briefly, what we need in North Carolina is not more public regulation of utilities, but public ownership. It is the Governor Scott applies pressure in that direction, he will have the support of all the people, not merely those who stand immediately to gain.

HAMSTRINGING THE MARSHALL PLAN

ECA Administrator Paul Hoffman is completely justified in objecting strenuously to the latest Communist attempt to use the Marshall Plan as a prop for our own sagging economy instead of the European recovery program.

Mr. Hoffman's objections are based on three amendments to the ECA fund bill by the Senate Appropriations Committee:

1. The earmarking of a billion and a half dollars for the purchase of surplus agricultural products in this nation;
2. The inclusion of \$50 million in loans to Spain;

3. The cancelling of \$74 million in funds previously appropriated for the last quarter of 1949.

If European nations are reluctant to bank too heavily on a steady, consistent U. S. policy in its world aid program, they have every right to be. The latest example of abrupt change is typical of many such incidents.

Apparently Administrator Hoffman was so sure of his time ago to make big estimates of the amount of money to be spent for U. S. agricultural products. He did so, little dreaming that the Appropriations Committee was going to curtail his estimates and secretly write into the law a provision that the money be spent accordingly.

No matter the condition of our surplus crops, no matter the type of assistance program Europe receives.

THE 'INFLUENCE' RACKET

NO one is surprised to learn that a couple of high-ranking Army officers are suspected of taking advantage of a favorable business position to make things easier for themselves. It is disheartening and troubling and destructive of faith in "our national defenders"—but it is not surprising. It is not surprising in Washington, the cloak-and-daggerland of big business where a huge contract lurks just beyond the next agency.

It happened during the war, and since that a number of Army officers and other influential citizens could do themselves good by dropping a few figures into the waiting ear of a businessman. A little suggestion to a contract representative. And it happened, doubtless, that more than a few of these "influence brokers" cleaned up on the business.

A couple of names that come up in this connection are Maj. Gen. Alden H. Walt, chief of the Chemical Corps, and Maj. Gen. Herman Feldman, Quartermaster General. These men are not clerks or finkies; they are big shots; they are supposedly men of responsibility.

No one has proved yet that they have taken graft or even that they have been involved in "influence" deals. They may not be accused; they may be guilty and yet not be guilty. It is up to their successors—Senator Hoy's subcommittee on executive appointments—to prove them guilty or clear them.

The same thing applies to Maj. Gen. Harry Vaughan, of Mr. Truman's White House staff. There is this difference, however, that in the case of Maj. Gen. Vaughan something about the "influence brokers" by an individual—Republican Rep-

resentative from Michigan, Paul W. Shaffer. Mr. Shaffer is not working very hard to cover up the fact that he is using to make political capital of the current contracts available.

He quotes Vaughan as saying that he (Vaughan) knows "at least 300" of the influential "influencers" in the capital, but that he is not working with them. He does not say Vaughan himself has been using his influence unlawfully; only that Vaughan has admitted to know "at least 300" persons who do.

The case against Feldman and Walt consists of this:
- Feldman is accused of supplying program information to a contractor's representative under circumstances which appear irregular.
- Walt is accused of "improperly" furnishing personnel data to an unauthorized individual.

We cannot say, of course, what the Senate inquiry group may or may not find to be incriminating evidence. But even if Vaughan—and if Senator Hoy's eyes are open, he and his committee might find: That any businessman will become enamored in Washington's red-line and "go through channels" to get things done; you must "know someone" or "grease palms" to discover what contracts are available in time to offer bids; that a clearing-house, an information center, or a clearing agent, which any businessman inquiring about contracts could get a clean straightforward answer without indulging in extrajudicial and degrading influence buying.

That is the reason why Senator Hoy, but find the cause, too. And try to remove it.

'It Is A Far, Far Better Thing That I Do—'



Topics Of The Times

The Tribulations Of Obesity

(From The New York Times)
THERE are times in the life of almost every man when he suddenly realizes he is growing, as they say, a trifle plump. The work at hand is disregarded at whatever the cost to truth, honesty or appearance around the middle. The realization is not easy, and never is self-inspired. Like marriage, it always is the direct result of the meddling of women. A man looking into his shaving mirror sees below his face, and if something down around the middle seems to be pushing him farther and farther away from that mirror, he does not think about it.

But women! They inevitably come their way, when glancing around critically and with a chip on either shoulder, they make a dark speech about plumpness. They do more, they use the word. They do even more, they laugh with a sound hollow enough to set the backbone tingling.

BACON'S FAT FALSTAFF
The realization of plumpness is no laughing matter, even though vaudeville existed on it up until such time as vaudeville died. The current revival of vaudeville no doubt means that there will be all those jokes again, and also means that this is a sorry time to be plump. It is Bacon, writing under the name of Shakespeare, who made of plumpness a worthy and deplorable thing. It was Bacon who invented Falstaff, who is literature's best-known plump.

Let the thin scholars who go on believing there was a Shakespeare get into this, be it noted that Bacon all but signed his name to Falstaff. In the "King Henry IV" there is a note that "Falstaff was to descend and leave the lean earth as he walks along." Lords? Ladies? And then comes a connection with Bacon? But no matter. The setting is a secularly minded, scholastic dispute. Little consequence as opposed to the feelings of a man who has been told he is growing plump. Even fat.

A GOOD, MANY ADVANTAGES
Everyone loves a fat man, they say, but this amiable thought is qualified by the fact that always they laugh as they say it. In the opinion of that Bacon all but signed his name to Falstaff, there are many hidden neuroses, the plump man is thin wry and thin, but of course, before starting to reduce it is a good thing. Before starting to reduce it is a good thing. Before starting to reduce it is a good thing. Before starting to reduce it is a good thing. Before starting to reduce it is a good thing. Before starting to reduce it is a good thing.

FIRST DAYS ARE TRYING
However, it is necessary to have been fat for a long, long time before the advantages of plumpness are fully realized. Due to the general unfortunate

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

SOME people, including John L. Lewis, seem to have forgotten his all-too-familiar refrain: "No one can work."
Yet today, John L. and the miners are doing what they vowed could not be done in the past. They have no contract, yet they are working.
It is not so excellent a record for this.

John L. is not making a deal with the mine owners, but rather is declaring that the coal industry needed a car. In fact, such a car has been agreed upon by Lewis and the Northern.

Wall Street's Boners
The J. P. Morgan firm which finances U. S. Steel, dictated every move from center, with E. J. Connelley, chairman of the finance committee, acting as chief dictator.

The J. P. Morgan boys even dictated the telegram which Ben Fairless sent to the White House. The wire was written in New York and phoned to Pittsburgh. All Fairless did was sign his name.

The Friction Grows

Marquis Childs

THE news photograph shows 14 marchers in England bearing aloft a sign which reads: "No Atomic Bombs for the Britons. No Barracks For Yanks." There are some very interesting questions about this demonstration. How would the Americans react to the pro-peace friendship between British and American demonstrators?

On both sides of the Atlantic are articulate individuals seeking to bridge the friction between the Communist strategy behind the strikes and the American cooperation is obvious.

The fact that the two countries have been allowed to cooperate to the extent that today U. S. bombers are based in England is a gift to the Soviet Union. So long as the protest against "Yankee imperialism" is confined to Britain, the Communist Party it is unimportant. As reflected in the left wing of the Labor Party it is a more serious phenomenon.

On the extreme right is another small minority with a resentment of America's economic power. It goes back to the school of empire self-sufficiency, which led to the time by Lord Beveridge, the publication of "The Day After Tomorrow" which was the start of the economic Co-operation Administration.

In this country the forces opposed to the working class are turning. The Communist is almost as easy to tag, as the British and the American are. The isolationists on the right talk in terms of the same language. They wish not to help our own people first. What have the British ever done for us?

Britain's program of socialization has furnished a breeding ground for right. It has been a convenient laboratory for the workers who have taken a pole at an old enemy and thereby also make a little political mud. Quite apart from the social rights, others have felt a genuine concern that socialization might lead to a form of monopoly, as when America was sending over large quantities of money to help production and recovery. American officials directly concerned believe that the Labor Party program has not hampered recovery. This is to suggest only a few

of the sources of friction that are creating a growing gap between the two nations. If this process is allowed to go on, the end result can be disastrous.

The really serious thing is that there has been too much talk of "friction against the background of a rapid rise in production and a corresponding rise in living standards. None of the pressure for relief thus far, outside the Communist strategy behind the strikes and the American cooperation is obvious.

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James Marlow
Never-Failing Spring

HERE are millions who know the status of Justice Frank Murphy. But why all this fuss? We wrote and he thought in terms of people. His opinions had life and feeling. Compared to the Supreme Court opinions that have been handed down, his were clear and easy to read.

It is easy for a man, elevated to the great eminence of the Supreme Court, to slip so far from people and think of abstract principles. Murphy kept his eye on human beings. He had great sympathy for the rights of the individual.

His profound sympathy for the individual, including those secured by the Fourteenth Amendment, being not alone to the members of those nations that subscribe to the democratic ideal.

Quote, Unquote
UNIQUE FISH STORY
In Italy a young man had to be operated on to remove a tumor from his chest. It is probably the first time in history that a fisherman's tongue failed to protect him in a critical moment.—NO Hysteria in Sticks

With all the talk about hysteria the plain people of the country are going about their business without a tremor. Two years ago it was planned and executed. The hysteria is concerned mainly about the slowdown of business on prices.—The News County News

N. C. Highway Toll
Killed July 18 through July 18... \$
Injured July 18 through July 18... \$
Killed to date in 1949... 36
Injured to date in 1949... 3,870

Capital News Capsules
ATLANTA—Aerosol Aviator—Dr. Karl Compton, chairman of the Research and Development Board, has a secret briefing to brass hats recently at which he reported the first nuclear reactor in the world, and the first atomic bomb, is completed in four or five years.

Compton warned that our worst bottleneck is a shortage of physicists. He said that we must train more physicists. He said that we must train more physicists. He said that we must train more physicists. He said that we must train more physicists. He said that we must train more physicists.

British Control Uranium
URANIUM is still one of the scarcest metals in the world. The Russians have been searching frantically for it, and the Germans have been searching frantically for it.

The British, meanwhile, are blessed with a virtual monopoly of uranium, first through Canada, second through

their financial and political hold over Belgium. The British claim they have made considerable progress in making the uranium they need. They claim they have made considerable progress in making the uranium they need. They claim they have made considerable progress in making the uranium they need.