THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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TAKE THE STENCH OUT OF SUGAW CREEK

SUGAW Creek, if it is not indelicate to say so, is a problem which anyone with a nose can recognize.

Sometimes, in Charlotte, the City Council comes up against an abstract situation which some consider a problem and others consider not a problem. Sugaw Creek and the stench which lays thick as a London fog about it is anything but abstract. On a Summer evening, nearby residents will tell you, it is one of the most concrete things they have ever had occasion to encounter.

There is, however, some question in the minds of a few officials of some industries about the *seriousness* of the problem, for it is the waste from their plants, apparently, which is causing the odor; and so far as preliminary investigation has gone, it has been considered their duty to correct it.

The City Council is not, at this time, calling on the industrialists to take steps to process the waste from their plants; but it is calling in a Chicago firm—Alvord, Burdick & Howson, specialists in stream pollution problems and experts in industrial waste processing — to determine what should be done about Sugaw Creek.

The service of the firm will cost the city $5,000 and some Council members wondered if the city did not already have engineers qualified to make the survey. Use of local engineers, it was suggested, would be less costly. The dissenting members came around, however, when it was explained that some of the officials of industries using the creek as a disposal route felt that the city engineers might be biased in their decision.

The Council, it seems, took the wiser course of action in employing the Chicago firm. Its advice will be impartial.

If the firm finds industrial waste to be responsible and makes suggestions as to waste control measures, it is to be hoped that local industrialists will carry out the firm's advice in the spirit of community responsibility.

Within the next month or so, the immediate objection to the creek — the stench it raises — will be lessened somewhat. Cooler weather will hold down the odor. But there is always another Summer — and Summer, with Sugaw Creek in its present condition will still smell. We must not, in the more agreeable months of the Winter, forget Sugaw Creek. Now, while interest and odor are at their heights is the time for action.

The Council's current course, carried through, will prove — we are sure — one of the most popular of recent actions.

A COSTLY BATTLE

CARRYING on a world-wide fight for democracy has been a costly business for the United States. Overseas loans and gifts in the past ten years have cost almost as much as it takes to run the entire Federal Government for two years.

A summary by Congressional Quarterly shows that a total of almost $72,000,000,000 have been sent overseas by our Government since July 1, 1939. Only $9,000,000,000 less than the Federal budget for fiscal '49 and '50.

In comparison with the cost of World War II, overseas expenditures are not so startling. The armed services spent $265,000,000,000 in the war years, and advocates of past overseas spending argue that $72,000,000,000 were little enough if they helped avoid another multi-billion war.

A large share of the overseas spending was in carrying out the Lend-Lease program which we adopted primarily to save Britain from annihilation by Hitler's forces. Forty-nine billion dollars went into that program. The remainder of the $72,000,000,000 went for relief and rehabilitation of war-torn countries. Largest portions of the golden stream went to Great Britain, about $36,000,000,000; Russia, $11,000,000,000; France, $6,000,000,000; China $3,000,000,000.

Part of the total money was in the form of grants, or, for most practical purposes, a gift. Grants totaled over $60,000,000,000. The rest, $11,000,000,000, was in credits. Credits are roughly equivalent to loans. Uncle Sam expects repayment.

Some of the money, $7,000,000,000 has come back to us in repayments by the debtor nations and from the sale of goods and property overseas.

The program continues, although at a reduced pace, with almost $2,000,000,000 proposed for 1950. Of this total $1,450,000,000 would go for military aid to the Atlantic Pact countries; $100,000,000 for Point Four (President Truman's request that American technical and scientific knowhow be made available to the undeveloped areas of the world); $175,000,000 for China; $150,000,000 for Korea, and $50,000,000 for Spain.

However, it is unlikely that the full program will receive Congressional sanction. Congress does not appropriate money for grants and credits these days without stiff battles. The ECA allotment was whittled down and there is every indication that the other requests will face equally tough going.

The battle for democracy was worth winning at any cost. But we must not make the mistake of throwing money down rat holes.

From The Manteo Coastal Times

A WORTHY TASK FOR GOV. SCOTT

THE desperate need of the people of Hatteras Island for a road whereby they may get their fish to market, and get their supplies in; the plight of those people who have waited 25 years since the State began building roads; and the heavy penalty that has been exacted of them in gas taxes which yield them only a third of the mileage others enjoy on modern roads, now shape up into a definite challenge to all citizens of the State to take extreme measures to come to the relief of these 2,500 citizens of North Carolina who strive to be independent and progressive—to enable them to use their resources, and become a greater asset to the State.

If only the cheapest sort of black-top road such as many other sections of the State enjoy, it would bring tens of thousands of extra dollars a year in income to the fishermen, where 90 per cent of the people depend on the products of the sea, but must accept five cents a pound less for their fish because they reach the market in poor condition by reason of the long delay in transportation.

The great hardship involved in getting trucks across the long stretches of difficult sands has been galling through the years to these people, and at times the hardship, the expense and discouragement contribute to a spirit of despondency and defeat among them that is not wholesome for the State, and is a situation unworthy in a state of the magnitude of North Carolina.

This is the most unusual circumstance in the State, and the wonder is that the State hasn't corrected this situation long ago.

In any other part of the State, conditions far less critical would have been relieved long ago, for a special grant of money would have been made, and the matter soon over, and the people made happy.

In many instances vast sums have been spent to replace costly engineering blunders or to re-route or replace roads unnecessarily constructed through political manipulations.

It is difficult for many people at a far distance, to realize the full extent of the conditions that prevail on Hatteras Island, and the unfair treatment its people have received.

Now is a worthy task at hand for Governor Scott to correct a great injustice—not one of his making, but one that becomes his responsibility—because his administration is dedicated to fair-play. It is true he has promised no one a road, but he has promised improvements in roads, and here is the outstanding opportunity for the State to do a great and worthy deed quickly. It would be a shining star in his administration. Nowhere else in North Carolina is there so glaring an instance of this kind; and no one in North Carolina could honestly do otherwise than praise him for relieving this condition, once they were fully informed of the true situation.

Pome In Which a Solid Suggestion Is Made Concerning the Current Torrid Temperatures:

Make it a rule,
Always to keep cule.

— Atlanta (Ga.) Journal

Journalistic twist was seen in a front page story in the Ittawamba County *Times* of Fulton. Under a two column head "Sex and Free Love?" was a feature which exhorted the citizens of Fulton to attend church regularly. An editor's note at the end of the piece explained the inconsistency by stating that the message was considered a very important one, and they wanted to make sure that everyone read it. *—Eupora (Miss.) Webster Progress.*

A young couple asked the parson to marry them immediately following the Sunday morning services. When the time came the minister arose to say: "Will those who wished to be united in the holy bonds of matrimony please come forward?" There was a great stir as thirteen women and one man approached the altar. *— Neshoba (Miss.) Democrat.*

There is something sardonically grotesque in the theory everyone would be well off if the assets of a bankrupt world were divided equally among the people at large. *—Lamar (Mo.) Democrat.*

We've heard of a wife who used to threaten her husband with divorce action every time she got mad at him. Now that divorces are obtainable in South Carolina she's stopped talking like that. *— Greenville (S. C.) Piedmont.*

'Just Because We Stick A Knife In 'Em They Get Sore'

Marquis Childs

The Handout State

WASHINGTON

THE charitable view of General Harry Vaughan's associates that he is merely a good fellow anxious to do favors for his friends has been considerably dimmed by the testimony before the Senate investigating committee.

While the general may be able to refute the testimony presented in open session by witnesses under oath, the picture as it stands now is not a pretty one. The implications of the influence exercised from the White House in behalf of a fixer's client are bad enough. But there is another aspect of the Vaughan affair that is just as reprehensible.

That is the use of coercion and threat against a minor government officeholder who was reluctant to do a favor for a firm that had flagrantly violated the law. This is an example of the arrogance of power wielded by a party long in office.

General Vaughan has never been elected to anything. It is most unlikely that he ever could be elected to any office. Yet on the testimony of Henry C. Hathorn, a former officer of the Department of Agriculture, under oath, we see Vaughan arrogating unconscionable powers to himself.

This is a symptom of political unwisdom, yes, of political atrophy, that the Administration will ignore at its peril. The public may be cynical about the gift of deep freezers. But the American people are acutely sensitive to the intimation that the power of office is a permanent and God-given right.

CLARK CONFIRMATION

An example is the way in which the confirmation of Attorney General Tom Clark to be a Justice of the Supreme Court was put ahead of urgent legislation and of other nominations long sidetracked. This was done even though Clark cannot sit with his eight brethren on the supreme bench until October when the sessions of the court are resumed.

It was done in the face of rumors current on the floor of the Senate that the role of the Department of Justice in the five percenter investigation would eventually be developed. At the same time the Senate inquiry was postponed.

This may have been a most innocent arrangement. But timed as it appears to have been in relation to the Vaughan inquiry, there will be doubts. The action on Clark came above government departments and the European Co-operation Administration were desperately calling attention to some way to stay in business in the face of the Senate's failure to pass essential appropriation bills.

The symptoms of arrogance of a party in power since 1933 had something to do, in my opinion, with the defeat of the Democrats in the Congressional election of 1946. That ancient slogan of American politics, "Turn the rascals out," may sound a bit primitive. But it is still a going rule of politics.

FAR-REACHING EFFECT

Perhaps the most baleful effect of the five-percenter revelations is the example it sets in the nation. It will encourage the system of fix-and-favor, the graft and the criminal taint, not only in the President's level of local administration.

We hear a great deal of talk these days about the danger of a welfare state. Much of that talk seems to me beside the point. To run a welfare state you must have competence, responsibility and ordinary honesty at every level.

The greater danger, in my opinion, is that we shall get the handout state. Under the guise of social welfare the entrenched politician will pass out pensions and perquisites to the favored. And the handout state can be far more costly in every way than the welfare state.

Joseph And Stewart Alsop

Small-Time Nastiness

WASHINGTON

IN the atmosphere of Washington today, one almost regrets the passing of the days when Big Sam Ward, king of the railroad lobbyists, fed his bought Senators on heaver's cut stewed in champagne. For at least things were done in a big way then.

There is nothing big in what the five-percenter investigation has been unearthing. There is only a kind of small nastiness. There has been no evidence of personal corruption. The motivation of almost everything that has been done has apparently been not personal gain but mere petty vanity. And it has been on a niggling scale — the hole-in-corner wire-pulling, the commercialized "friendships," the little favors for little men.

Even where the evidence of real corruption exists, as in the General Accounting Offices investigation of war contract settlements, it has been on a scale so petty to make Sam Ward blush with shame. To read the actual cases of fraud, which Comptroller General Lindsay Warren's investigators have unearthed and sent to the Justice Department for action, is a depressing experience. It is depressing to find that the service officers and government officials who have sold themselves have been willing to sell themselves so cheap.

Since charges have not yet been brought, by the Justice Department, names cannot be named. But here is the sort of thing which, according to Warren and his staff, has been going on. Shortly after a certain firm's representatives met two government employees, it was awarded three handsome government contracts. At the same time, liabilities to these government officials were entered on the firm's books: a measly $2,029 and a measlier $1,175.

SELL OUT CHEAPLY

Another firm asked a government official to increase its contract price. The increase was granted. The firm paid the government official $500, a sum Sam Ward would not have stooped to offer a cloakroom attendant. Again, two army officers on active duty were paid for "part-time services" by a firm with which they were dealing. Soon after the payment, the firm got a lush government contract. The officers collected a mere $2,000 in stock values for betraying their commissions.

Such raw palm-greasing was exceptional. Warren's investigators found. They more frequently discovered a subtler form of recompense for services rendered. Repeatedly they found that officials or officers, who had been responsible during their government service for awarding profitable contracts or exceedingly generous settlements, were subsequently employed at handsome salaries by the firms which had been benefited. No doubt in many cases this was mere coincidence. But no doubt in many cases it was not.

Although almost all of the cases of fraud involving government officials or officers have been on a petty scale, the total sums involved are not petty. Warren has already announced that his investigators have discovered fraudulently the unhappy taxpayer more than six and a quarter million dollars. Moreover, Warren's experts are now combing a case which may involve a fraud charge of nearly twenty million dollars against a single company. And it is not generally realized that the General Accounting Office is only equipped to spot-check a small proportion of the total number of contracts and settlements involved. Thus it is likely that the sum lost to the taxpayer may run well into nine figures, no small sum even by today's standards.

PROVING THEIR POINT

It may be argued that the General Accounting Office has an axe to grind. On the theory that reconversion would never get under way if the usual ponderous G.A.O. accounting methods were used, Congress relieved the G.A.O. from direct supervision of settlements. Warren and his subordinates have bitterly resented this, charging that it was an open invitation to fraud and waste, and it is obviously in their interest to prove their point.

It may also be argued that in view of the millions of people and the billions of dollars involved, the government on the whole honestly run. Certainly there is noting to compare with the lush corruption of the days when every important financial interest had its private army of hospital lackeys in the government.

Yet there are increasingly visible symptoms of a highly unpleasant disease. Such symptoms as have been uncovered by the five-percenter inquiry, by Warren's investigation, and by other probings do not indicate that the disease is as yet deeply serious. The symptoms are like the itching and scratching of the skin people get when they do not wash enough. Yet, as the government and private business become constantly more involved in graft, the disease could easily go more than skin deep. It is this which justifies all the hullabaloo about what would certainly seem to Sam Ward a very niggling business.

People's Platform

That Exasperating Telephone Cord

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

THE Bell Telephone System, of which the Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Co. is a part, is a wonderful organization. A page advertisement in the Aug. 13, Saturday Evening Post, tells about the marvelous services available and "The Big Things To Come." As an American citizen, I am proud of this American institution.

For a long time, I garnered what shekels I could with the idea of some day buying a share of stock in the SBT & T Co. I wanted to be included in a company headed by men so capable as those who have determined the policy and directed the affairs of the greatest communicating system in all the world.

I have changed my mind. I shall not buy that share of stock. I no longer have the desire to be associated with the telephone service geniuses. My patience has been exhausted. I have lost faith in these men. They are a hard and cruel lot. They are not concerned about my feelings. They make torture part of the price I must pay for talking over the telephone.

The tormenting device they have attached to my telephone is a rubber-surfaced cord, about one-eighth inch thick and four or five feet long. It is slick and black, and has one end fastened to the base of the telephone and the other end connected with the receiver. I don't know with what substance this harmless-looking cord has been impregnated that makes it so devilish, but I have never had to handle anything more exasperating. At rest the cord dangles down by the side of my desk and does not annoy except to get in the way when the desk is dusted, or, for a time, prevents the closing of a drawer.

However, these are minor perversities. It does not exhibit its full devilishness until the receiver is lifted. Then it goes into action, writhing and violently resisting every effort of mine to lean back in my chair and talk and listen comfortably. The recalcitrance increases with continuing use of the telephone. Every taking up of the receiver seems to cause another kink, and the tension tightens until extending the cord requires too much exertion. So I sit with my tummy pressed close to the desk and the receiver lifted only a few inches.

Someone told me that bright-red, plastic ribbon wrapped about the cord would serve the dual purpose of making the cord more visible and keep it from kinking. I tried it and found the statement only half-true. The cord is more conspicuous but it twines about itself more than ever. And now there is an added horror: every time the telephone is disturbed the cord, sliding and knocking against the desk, contorts and makes a noise like an excited rattlesnake.

In case anyone reading this thinks, "Why doesn't he take the telephone from the desk and place it somewhere else," I wish to say I tried this expedient. It did no good. After the convulsing cord had swiped me on the back of the neck and had knocked an ash tray from a table, I put the telephone back on my desk where the cord could do less damage.

Master-minds occupied with great inventions and developments such as direct dialing, traveling telephones, coaxial cables and electronic amplifiers, may not be expected to give attention to small things like in-the-way, twisting telephone receiver cords. Or, maybe, like the physician who can cure pneumonia but knows no remedy for the common cold, they have tried, without success, to make the cord non-kinking and tractile or retractile.

If this be true, I hope they keep on trying. I did so want to own a share of Southern Bell Telephone Co. stock, and to be partner in an enterprise that refuses to be defeated by any obstacle, big or little, affecting telephone service.

—LEWIS AYER SMITH.

Church And State

GASTONIA

Editors, THE NEWS:

I HAVE read with great amazement in the recent issues of your newspaper accounts of the issue of church vs. state. It seems rather odd that some individuals whose hands are soiled are making a fuss of another party whom they claim are the only individuals with soiled hands. So it brings the famous quotation: "If you live in a glass house don't throw rocks at your neighbor's glass house."

The point I am trying to stress is the attitude of certain ministers toward the Barden Bill in Congress. I don't blame a man for disagreeing with it but to have a person to disagree with you and raise a smell because you disagree with so and so is showing poor taste. In other words being made a saint and being a devil in disguise.

Being a Protestant I have looked for the Catholic union of church and state as has been told by some Protestants. I would like for them to show me if such an animal now exists.

The old saying, "practice what you preach", ought to be applied to the argument of church vs. state. Some individuals ought to think of the church and state when they try to govern men's habits. When a minister gets up and makes statements like the one I am going to quote, "I tell my congregation to vote my way or else they will leave my church," now is that freedom? That statement was made in Gastonia last August, and in my opinion that is a union of church and state. I thought we fought a war on a guy by the name of Hitler to get rid of such conditions. We ought to have done a little housecleaning while we were cleaning Hitler.

If we are to have the separation of church and state I think that if we make it clear to pastors of all denominations—that the pulpit is a sacred place, —if you are to use it—use it as it should be but not for political gains such as the alcoholic issue or any other issue. The church as I understand it was created by God not to be used as a political soap box but as a spiritual guide. If a minister wishes to use his pulpit as a political trading post he is defiling the house of God and is not classified as a minister but as a Judas. We have a great number of Judases in our time, who would swap the Bible for the dollar mark.

Let us clean our own muddy skirts before we talk about our neighbors' skirts.

—JAMES GEORGES.

The People's Platform is available to any reader who cares to mount it. Communications should be less than 300 words, typewritten if possible, and on only one side of the paper. Libel and obscenity will be deleted—otherwise anything goes. Each letter must be signed. — Editors, THE NEWS.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

Senators Talk Court-Martial For Vaughan

(NOTE—While Drew Pearson is on vacation, the Washington Merry-Go-Round will be written by his old partner, Robert S. Allen.—Editors, The News.)

WASHINGTON

MEMBERS of the Senate "five per center" investigating group are considering demanding that Maj. Gen. Harry Vaughan be tried on military charges.

The Senators have discussed the matter with authorities on military law.

Basis for the proposed action are two factors:

(1) Vaughan is not a civilian employee of the White House. He is a reserve officer on active duty and draws pay (over $12,000) from Army funds. He is therefore subject to Army regulations and rules of conduct the same as any other active officer.

(2) By his own admission, Vaughan has accepted gratuities and gifts. This is in direct violation of a specific prohibitory Army regulation. In addition, other charges made before the Senate Committee lay him open to disciplinary action on the ground of "conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman."

What the Senate investigators have in mind is a formal demand that Vaughan be hailed before a court-martial.

Such a demand would put President Truman on the spot. It would be wholly up to him to decide whether Vaughan is "friend." The President has immediate jurisdiction over Vaughan, and no one in the Army would risk ordering him court-martialed without Presidential approval.

The Senators are fully aware of this. That's why their plan has such a strong appeal for them. Putting the President on the spot is one of the primary objectives.

However, other Republican Senators are less enthusiastic.

One proposed a modification. He suggested dropping the court-martial demand and substituting instead removal of Vaughan as co-ordinator of veterans' affairs. The Senator pointed out that the claim could be that Vaughan is "unfit" to handle veteran affairs and the President could be put directly on the spot with millions of ex-servicemen.

Another Republican Senator, a party leader, was opposed to the whole idea of taking any action against Vaughan, unless the Democrats took the initiative. His view was that it would be better GOP strategy for Vaughan to continue at a prominent member of the President's entourage. In that position, he would be a vulnerable target in next year's elections.

"We could plaster the country with billboards reading 'Have you got your freezer yet?'" the Republican leader pointed out. "If we give Truman the chance to get rid of Vaughan, he might take it up. I would if I were in his place. We don't want to outsmart ourselves in this matter."

NOTE—Sen. Margaret Chase Smith (R-Me), has sharply chided her investigating colleagues in closed-door sessions for talking out of turn. "If we are going to permit testimony to leak," she said, "we might as well save time by giving everything directly to the press. That is not my idea of a fair investigation."

So far, Mrs. Smith's admonitions have had no effect.

All Set

RHODE ISLAND Democratic chiefs have it all set on who will get what as a result of the elevation of Sen. Howard McGrath to attorney-general. This is the deal:

McGrath's seat will be filled with a temporary appointee, who will not run next year. He will merely keep the place warm for Gov. John Pastore, who will be a candidate next year for the remainder of McGrath's term which expires in 1952. As Pastore's successor in the governorship, the leaders have selected Rep. John E. Fogarty.

Both Pastore and Fogarty are New Deal Democrats. The reshuffling arrangement was chiefly in accordance with Pastore's views. He is the real Democratic boss of the state.

Uneasy

ECA authorities are uneasy about the situation in France. Currently, political and economic conditions are quiet there. Inflation has been stopped, and the de Gaullist and Communist flareats have subsided. Also, the Chamber of Deputies is in recess and a large portion of the population is enjoying the first quiet vacation period since the war. But behind this peaceful surface are a number of disquieting factors.

Chief of them is the wide disparity between prices and wages and the known preparations of major unions for a new round of pay demands. These are expected early in the Fall, with the Communist unions taking the lead.

Housing Ditty

A TAKE-OFF on the famed lyric of the late Gallagher and Shean featured the banquet the National Housing Conference gave Congressional supporters to celebrate the enactment of the President's housing program.

Charles Abrams, New York lawyer and author of the take-off, sang it as follows:

Oh, Mr. Bricker—Oh, Mr. Cain—
How can we kill off housing without pain?
With Sparkman, Douglas
Our slums may soon be bugless,
And liberals like Morse will never wane.
Oh, Mr. Bricker—Oh, Mr. Bricker—
Oh, Mr. Cain—Oh, Mr. Cain—

Sens. Bricker (R-Ohio), and Cain (R-Wash), were leading foes of the measure. Among those at the banquet who laughed heartily at the ditty were Sens. Robert Taft (R-Ohio), Wayne Morse (R-Ore), John Sparkman (D-Ala), and Rep. Helen Douglas (D-Calif).