THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 1949

HAND OF FRIENDSHIP

THE President's speech before the American Legion convention in Philadelphia will dispell much of the pessimism which was building up in advance of the dollar crisis talks beginning in Washington next Wednesday.

For some weeks now Administration opponents in Congress and such conservative newspapers on this side of the Atlantic as the *Wall Street Journal* have been waging a vigorous campaign against further aid to Britain, charging that the British dabbling in Socialism was responsible for her financial plight and demanding that the price of American aid be an abandoning of Socialism.

This tendency to sit in judgment on a form of government the British people have chosen by democratic processes was sharply criticized in England by Tories and Laborites alike, both of whom know that Britain's difficulties date back at least 20 years and that Socialism has not been the vogue long enough to make any appreciable difference.

Recriminations from Britain brought further attacks from this side, and it began to appear that the bond of friendship between the big Atlantic nations, strengthened during the war and all-important in any world defense scheme, was being jeopardized.

Then the President stepped in.

THERE are two main reasons why world recovery is not yet assured, he said:

1. The economic life of the world was shattered more completely by the war than anyone realized;

2. Soviet Russia's resistance to world recovery has delayed economic progress in Europe, and her threats of aggression have created alarms and fears and hampered recovery.

Then he set forth what must be the cardinal policy of our Government in dealing with all nations wherein the democratic processes still prevail:

"We recognize that each nation has its own political problems and that it uses different political labels and different slogans from those we use at home. In the same way, nations have different business practices and different governmental devices for achieving the same economic ends."

Stating in one simple sentence a very profound truth — "World prosperity is necessary to our own prosperity in the United States" — President Truman held out the hand of friendship to Britain, and extended an offer of "mutual concession and co-operation" to the British officials coming here next week.

"We look upon these talks as discussions among friends about problems which affect all of us, and in the solution of which we all have common interest," the President said.

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THE problem of world trade is almost frightening in its complexity. Elsewhere on this page are excerpts from an interview with Britain's famed editor, Geoffrey Crowther, which indicate just how complicated that one nation's affairs are. Multiplied by all the factors of trade balances, customs regulations, tariffs and duties, different currencies and the like, a workable formula for world trade which would mean prosperity and security for all would appear to be beyond the mental abilities of ordinary men.

But the sheer difficulty of the problem should not dismay us, but rather spur us on to greater efforts. Somehow a way will be worked out which will permit the peoples of the world to resume trading with each other as they have done in centuries past and in such a manner as to steadily increase production and augment the living standards of all.

While it may be true that there is a limit to the number of dollars the United States can pour into world recovery, there is no limit to the time and thought and cooperation we can spend.

If we expend it in an atmosphere of friendliness and kindness, rather than suspicion and hostility, our chances of success will be immeasurably better.

LATVIANS FIND A HOME

THERE are between 30 and 40 Latvians in Mecklenburg County. They were brought here by the Baptist World Alliance.

Some of them work on farms. One of them works in an ice cream plant. All of them are starting new lives and they are working hard.

Charlotte will be better for their presence.

The work of the Baptist World Alliance in bringing these displaced persons to the United States is commendable. Here, in Charlotte, the work of Dr. Claude U. Broach, pastor of the St. Johns Baptist Church, also deserves praise, for he is the clearing house for Mecklenburgers who want to employ displaced persons and the Alliance which arranges to bring them here.

Dr. Broach said this week that people in this area are beginning to increase their requests for the Latvians. He has now, he said, 23 requests from prospective employers.

"They are beginning to learn," he said, "that the Latvians are not alone in benefiting from the arrangement. They are beginning to learn that they, too, will gain in the transaction."

Would-be employers, he said, are responsible for transportation for the displaced persons from their point of entry, New York, to their destination. The Government, he said, pays transportation from the DP camps to the United States. If, when the worker arrives on the job, his employer finds him unsatisfactory, the worker may be discharged and the employer is no longer responsible. The worker has the same right; he may quit if he does not like his position.

It is true that in this rehabilitation program it is necessary to consider such practicalities. But there is much more to it than the matter-of-fact arrangement between employer and employed.

Pastor Robert Elksnis, a Latvian who left his church in a Baltic village and came to Charlotte, put the appreciation and the appreciation of the Latvian group here in these words this week:

"Thank God for such people. They did not care who we were or where we came from. They were kind to us."

We can think of no finer tribute to the Baptist World Alliance, its representatives here, and those who have volunteered to employ the displaced persons.

THE RIOT AT PEEKSKILL

PENDING the outcome of an official investigation ordered by Governor Dewey, it is impossible to place the blame for the riot at Peekskill, N. Y. between parading war veterans and members of an audience gathered to hear Singer Paul Robeson.

Each side blames the other, and it is not at all certain that the authorities will be able to fix responsibility.

But it is reasonably clear that the parading veterans did not think that Robeson should be permitted to sing because (1) he is an avowed spokesman for Communism, and (2) the concert was sponsored by the Civil Rights Congress, an outfit that former Attorney-General Clark dubbed "subversive".

And it is apparent that the people who gathered near Peekskill went to hear Robeson, not to engage in a riot.

The veterans had a right to parade back and forth in the fashion of pickets, toting signs and banners and otherwise displaying their disapproval of Robeson. (No one, incidentally, is more adept at this technique than the Commies themselves.)

But whether it was advisable for them to do so is another question. As long as the audience was a peaceable assembly, and as long as Robeson was to sing rather than espouse Communism, there was no call for a picket line. Such tactics can only:

1. Make a martyr out of an artist whose warped political thinking has already brought his great career to near tragedy;

2. Afford Pravda an opportunity to rush this headline into print: "Outrage of American Fascists; Attempt to Lynch Paul Robeson";

3. Flatter the Commies by aping their techniques; and

4. Endanger the fundamental right of peaceable assembly.

SUCKER BAIT

ONE of the better stories of the year, which comes to us from a California newspaper via *The Greensboro Daily News*, tells of a concern in Alameda, California, which has been bottling sea water for years and selling it at $10 a gallon under the trade-name of "Cal-O-Dine".

There is no deception. The label says the stuff is sea water and gives its formula.

Furthermore, after instructing adults to "take Cal-O-Dine in a glass of warm water before meals and at bedtime," the label also states that "this article will serve no useful purpose as a nutritional adjuvant or as a drug when consumed in accordance with the directions on the label."

In spite of such frankness, the promoters sold enough to pay $30,000 in income taxes the last year their books were checked.

We've known for a long time that there are plenty of suckers in the world, but didn't dream that the pickings are still that good.

Hmmm. Wonder if there are any bottling plant sites available somewhere south of the Buster Boyd Bridge?

When one tries to sell something he doesn't need anymore he usually has a tough time getting anything for it and is convinced that prices are on the down hill grade and he usually stays convinced until he starts to buy something at which time he discovers that he was all wrong in the first place. — *Omega (Ga.) News.*

Joseph And Stewart Alsop

Out Of The Past

WASHINGTON

THE climax of the five-percenter investigation raises a simple question. How has the Truman Administration got into this mess? The answer appears to be that the Missouri part of President Harry S. Truman is reaching out to give his Administration its odor of courthouse politics and creeping mediocrity.

The way his past affects Truman's present is suggested by the fact that, in the thirties, the three Missouri Artillery Reserve regiments were commanded, respectively, by Col. Harry Vaughan, Col. John Snyder, and Col. Harry Truman. The roles now being played in the Administration by Colonel Vaughan and Snyder suggest the extent to which Truman holds to his rule that any man who has been politically loyal and a personal friend is capable of holding any post in the Government.

KNEW HIM WHEN

This rule led to two public setbacks when Truman tried unsuccessfully to appoint his old crony Mon C. Wallgren and his political angel Edwin Pauley to important posts. But it is not generally realized the extent to which the Administration has been affected by those men, together with the Missourians, who "knew Harry when." For the process of government by crony does not stop with the appointment of any particular crony. One old Truman friend, for example, is former Postmaster General Robert Hannegan, the Missouri politician who made Truman's nomination for the Vice-Presidency possible in 1944. Hannegan has been gone since left the Government, but his influence lives after him in the recent appointment to the Federal Bench of former Attorney General Tom Clark. Clark was a lobbyist in the Texas legislature for a number of big oil companies before he became a Hannegan protege. His sponsorship by Hannegan, and the fact that the President likes him, are his only visible qualifications for the Supreme Court bench.

Another crony from Truman's days of political apprenticeship is William Boyle, the new chairman of the Democratic Party who has known Truman since boyhood, and who was a lieutenant in the Missouri Artillery Reserve when Vaughan, Snyder and Truman were colonels. Like Hannegan and Truman himself, Boyle was schooled in Missouri's rough-and-ready politics.

He therefore believes in a tough, partisan approach, and his influence at the White House has resulted in a growing partisanship in appointments, like that of Navy Secretary Francis Matthews. Matthews is no doubt able enough. But his only stated qualifications for the crucial defense job have been the fact that he is a good Democrat and the further fact that he is a good Irish Catholic. More serious than this sort of thing is that partisanship in appointments has tended to break down the bipartisan approach to foreign policy and national security.

PARADOX

The egregious Vaughan himself has been loudly interested in appointments. He is known to believe that he has a great deal to do with the selection of Louis Johnson to succeed James Forrestal as Defense Secretary. It is true that Vaughan was Forrestal's loudest White House enemy, and Johnson's chief White House booster, but in fact he probably had far less influence than he imagined.

On the other hand, Vaughan's fellow-ex-colonel, John Snyder, has certainly had a great deal to do with building a strong conservative and obstructionist axis at the heart of a supposedly progressive administration. Snyder was responsible for the appointment of Commerce Secretary Charles Sawyer, who is if anything rather more cautiously conservative than Snyder himself, and Snyder and Sawyer have joined hands with Truman's aide and old friend John Steelman to make up a powerful internal conservative bloc.

This suggests one of the most curious aspects of this whole Administration. There is no doubt at all that Truman sincerely detests the kind of shady financial dealings which has emerged from the five percenter investigation. A long time ago he issued strong orders forbidding John Maragon from ever again darkening the White House doors. Yet he knew that his old crony Vaughan was also Maragon's crony, and he kept Vaughan in the White House.

This Administration has some major accomplishments to its credit, and it has some very able men, including Missourians, working for it. But it is now in clear danger of getting stalled at dead center, and this danger arises in large part from the President's evident conviction that anyone he knew in the old days, especially in Missouri, is capable of running the American Government.

Marquis Childs

Objective The Same

WASHINGTON

SO many words already have been spilled in argument over the arms aid program and so many more will flow in the course of the Senate debate that the major objective is likely to be lost sight of. It is the familiar business of the forest and the trees.

This is an effort to put the program in the perspective of those who have drafted it and worked for its acceptance. It is based on talks with both civilian and military men responsible for inception of arms aid for Europe and for carrying out the program now that it is finally approved by Congress.

The primary goal insofar as the Atlantic pact nations are concerned is to re-arm the nine divisions that France has in being. Most of the $1,160,000,000 of the Atlantic nations would go for that purpose.

Those divisions are today inadequately armed with obsolete weapons. They are being trained under new and rigorous methods that represent a departure from the French military tradition. Foreign military observers have been impressed with this training.

But no matter how thorough the training, these troops could not fight in a modern war without modern weapons. This is considered basic since the French divisions would be the core of the initial holding operation should the Russians decide on war. As military men point out, there is little reason to train their will to fight as long as they do not have the equipment to fight with.

To strengthen the French divisions would greatly increase the confidence of the British. Fearing another Dunkirk, Britain has been reluctant to make a commitment to send any substantial forces to the Continent. The British commitment is at present a token one.

What few seem to realize, judging from many of the statements that are made, is the continuing fantastic unbalance between the military strength of Eastern Europe and Western Europe. The Soviet Union today has an estimated 170 divisions under arms. While they are not all at full strength, this is approximately 4,000,000 men.

This huge force with its modern armament is distributed around the perimeter of Russia with by far the greatest concentration in the West. Russia's satellites have an estimated 60 divisions. These vary greatly in their potentiality ranging down to the untrustworthy and the worthless.

But it doesn't take a military genius to see the use to which these divisions could be put in connection with Russia's effort to overthrow the Tito regime in Yugoslavia. If Russia became involved with the West, or feared imminent involvement, the satellite divisions could at least be employed to contain Tito's military forces. Such a plan for containment is believed to have been the subject of the well-advertised meeting of Cominform political and military bosses in Bulgaria last week.

In addition to arms aid spent to equip the French divisions, a smaller amount would go to start French armament production. The idea is to enable France to manufacture ammunition and spare parts for equipment furnished from the United States. Eventually, the French would be self-sufficient.

A small part of the fund would go for warning equipment in Northern Europe and for other more or less token beginnings of defensive armaments. But the creation of a bulwark in Western Europe is the essential target. Firmly and resolutely, Gen. Omar N. Bradley, the newly-named chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has tried to keep this goal in view.

There were those in high position doubtful of the wisdom of attempting the arming of Europe so soon after the Atlantic Pact. The fear was that this might lead the Russians to conclude that they had no choice except immediate war if they were to prevent the use of American resources in filling the defense void in the West.

But once the decision had been taken and announced, then the doubters put aside any lingering uncertainty. They believe that the United States must now go through with the program that has been proclaimed. To do less than that would, it is felt, provide another unhappy example of the kind of too little and too late vacillation that preceded the war, which began just ten years ago. To both East and West it would be a proclamation of indecision.

An Economist's Analysis

What Britain Must Do

(Note: The following excerpts from an interview with Geoffrey Crowther, editor, The Economist of London, are reprinted with special permission of the U. S. News & World Report. Mr. Crowther has been a close observer of his country's economic woes since World War II.—Editors, The News.)

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Q. What, in a nutshell, seems to be wrong with Britain just now, Mr. Crowther?

A. Well, in a nutshell, with all the oversimplification that involves, the problem facing this country is that of bringing its balance of payments into equilibrium; that is to say, of spending as much as it spends in relation with other countries.

Q. The question often is asked in the United States: Is British industry, at its best, able to make its way?

A. The only brief answer to that is: At its best, yes. We have some industries in this country that are the world's finest. For example, we build the best ships in this country and I think the cheapest, too—certainly the cheapest of all the big shipbuilders. Some of our other industries are still without competitors in the world. I think you could instance the linen industry of Northern Ireland and some of the very finest forms, of engineering. I believe it is true that in jet engines this country still has a big lead. Bicycles, to take a homelier instance—oh, certainly at its best, British industry can hold its own with anybody in the world.

Q. Does it seem that living standards in Britain will have to come down for a time at least, and could those standards of living be cut without serious political trouble?

A. I don't think that you can say flat-footedly that living standards must come down in this country. What does matter is the ratio between the effort that people put out in this country and the real remuneration that they require for it. Or to put it in rather more concrete terms—the British people have either got to give more for the standard of living that they already enjoy or, if they can't or won't give more, well, then they will have to suffer a reduction in their standard of life. For myself, I think the solution is to be found not in lowering the standard of living, but in raising the standard of output.

Effect Of Socialism

Q. Is Socialism helping in the present situation?

A. To answer that you will first have to define exactly what you mean by Socialism. But if you mean the transfer of industries to public ownership, I question, however, whether it is doing any real damage.

Q. Since only coal, electric power, gas and railroads, among basic industries, are socialized, can it be said, then, that Socialism is having much effect?

A. No. I don't think it is having much effect yet. My own view is that it will have a greater and very little importance who owns an industry—the important thing is, how is it run? And although the industries you mention have been moved into public ownership they are still being run by very much the same people and in very much the same way that they were before. The results, whatever they are, have not yet had time to emerge.

Q. Is the threat of socialization causing businessmen to hold back with new investments?

A. Well, that's often said, and it would be difficult to be absolutely sure of one's answer. But I think my answer would be: No, not to any very large extent. There was a report in the newspapers just a day or two ago of an enormous new development scheme that is being proceeded with by Dorman, Long & Co., Ltd., one of the biggest steel firms in the country.

I think the reason is that in most of these firms the management has long ago become divorced from the ownership, and the managers know that they, most of them, will continue in any new regime, and therefore they do not feel the same sense of impending doom as the owners of industry feel. That is another illustration of the fact that far too much importance is attached in current political controversy to this fact, of ownership; management is much more important.

Q. Does there seem to be any limit to the demand the public will make for social services?

A. Oh, the limit is when they realize that they've got to pay for it. The reaction began to set in down on the country with Sir Stafford Cripps' last budget. And I think events will drive that lesson home quickly.

Then you will have a most interesting and difficult problem in which the citizen as taxpayer will be demanding cuts in expenditures, while the citizen as beneficiary of social services is demanding that there shall be no cuts. And it will be difficult for him to make up his mind which of his two incompatible demands is the one that he really insists upon.

Britain Can Come Back

Q. Is it likely that Britain can again earn her way in the world?

A. Oh, I think so. I am not a pessimist about that. I noticed a piece in a recent copy of U. S. News & World Report—I'm not sure if I can find it immediately, but I believe I can—where a sentence that caught my eye said: "British troubles, as far as anybody can see, are temporary."

Well, I just don't agree. I think that we have a difficult problem on our hands now, that somehow or other we have got to reduce the cost of production of our industries. But, once we've done that, I believe our basic position in the world is very sound.

If you want a simple analogy, I would say Britain is like a man whose brain and constitution are still perfectly sound and efficient, but who has got into a very bad habit, shall we say, of drinking or taking drugs, or something of that sort, and he is going to find it a pretty difficult job to break himself of that habit. But once he has broken himself of that single bad habit, then I believe he will be fully able to earn his living in the world as before.

After all the basic the historical advantages of Britain in the world still exist. We are still an island which can import its food and raw materials from the ends of the earth more cheaply than they can be shipped from one state of the United States to the other by rail. We still have a skilled and homogeneous population. We still have a body of capital equipment which, though inferior to the American, is superior to that of anybody else. We still have the commercial know-how. We still have a great deal of industrial skill.

Once we can cure ourselves of this bad habit of trying to sell our goods too expensively, you will find that the competitive position of Britain in the world can be just as strong in the future as it has been in the past.

Q. When, in your opinion, might help from the United States become unnecessary?

A. I don't think I'd like to predict that at all. If you want to be a cynic you could give the answer that American help will cease to be necessary on the day that it stops. There is always a tendency, so long as help is forthcoming, to talk about doing the things that it is necessary to do in the future, rather than doing them now.

Effect Of Devaluation

Q. Would a cut in the value of the pound solve, or tend to solve, Britain's problem?

A. I don't think you can use the word "solve." I think it might help a lot. It's difficult to be sure, but my personal view is that if done at the right moment it would help quite a bit. But it wouldn't be by any means a solution, because when one talks about a cut in the value of the pound one means a cut in terms of the dollar. There is no question, I think, of the pound falling in value relatively to the other currencies of the world, and so it is a cut in other currencies that we must do by far the greater part of our trade.

A cut in the value of the pound will make our goods cheaper in the United States, but won't make them cheaper in Germany, or in France, or in Africa, or in Asia, or in Australia, or in the other places, where in fact, we sell most of them. No, it's a help, but it does not really absolve us from the necessity of doing the basic thing, and that is, reducing our costs of production expressed in the pound sterling here at home.

Q. The United States might buy more abroad, but how can it be induced to do so when its industries can produce the same goods more cheaply at home?

A. I agree that it is a very difficult problem. And when I talk about the chronic problem of the surplus in the American balance of payments that is what I have in mind: the great difficulty of the rest of the world in selling enough to America. But I think it would be effrontery to say there was nothing that can be done about it.

To begin with, we in Europe continue to hope that you Americans will go on with the good work of the last fifteen years in reducing your tariff rates. The rates of protective tariff that you still charge on many British and European goods are very high.

In addition to the actual tariff duty, I don't know that Americans realize that the network of customs regulations, practices and procedures that have to be got through before you can actually bring goods into the United States is a far thicker maze than anything that exists in any other country.

But even when everything has been done that can be done about the American tariff and customs practices, the basic difficulty that you have mentioned will still remain: How can Americans be expected to buy foreign goods when they can produce the same goods cheaper themselves?

Cheaper Goods Needed

Well, of course, the answer to that is that the foreign goods must be made cheaper, if they are not cheap now. In the long run the value of the dollar relative to other currencies will have to rise. There is always some price at which goods can be sold, and for most goods I don't know that the process would have to go very far.

Q. In summing up, Mr. Crowther, have you in mind for Britain a plan of action, or would you suggest a few priorities in the order of their importance?

A. It seems to me that there is one thing that needs doing in this country that is so much more important than any other that it can be allowed to stand almost in the way of that is to reduce costs of production. Or, to put it in another way, to restore the British people's belief in giving value for money. Now it's easy to say that, but how can you do it? How can you restore a belief in giving value for money? You restore a belief in the value of money? We shall have to tackle it in a number of different ways.

For example, I think a lot of trouble in this country recently for saying that so long as we have such a total absence of unemployment as we have now, you can't expect people to work as well as they might do. I'm not advocating a recurrence of the mass unemployment that we had in the 1930s. But unless a man has a certain healthy apprehension of losing his job, how can you expect him to work as well as he might do. Well, that's one thing.

The second is to review the activities of the state. Taxation is so heavy now that there really is very little reward for anybody to work any harder. And I'm not only talking about the high-income executive, I'm talking about the ordinary workingman. It's known that, as soon as his earnings exceed about $30 a week for a single man (rather more for a family man), as much as 36 per cent is deducted in tax off any additional earnings he makes. Well, that is quite a considerable disincentive to work.

Next, the social service. Though I'm one of their most convinced advocates, I think they've been allowed to run riot in this country. It's been made a little too easy to lead a soft and easy life, and in various ways the state has encouraged that.

One could go on making a number of suggestions of this general sort, but basically what is needed, I think, is that we should have a moral revolution. We have slipped in the last generation in England into believing that the world not merely owes us a living, but that the world will meet its obligations and provide us with a living.

And the old Victorian belief that a high standard of living comes from a high standard of production, or, to quote one of Sir Stafford's slogans, "He who does not work, neither shall he eat," has been allowed to slide too much into the background. And without going back fully on that, we have to lead a way to the old doctrine of hard work and self-help, we have got to make some moral return in this direction.

We have got to be willing to face the uncomfortable fact that the world values the services of the British people less highly than they value them themselves. There really is no escape from that. There is no appeal from the verdict of the world market place. Until we are prepared to make that moral adjustment, it's no good talking about economic remedies.

But, once that moral readjustment is made, then I think the economic policies will follow by themselves. Then they will be relatively easy and that they will not cause one-tenth part of the pain and grief that people expect.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

Iranians Putting On Backstage Squeeze

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

WASHINGTON

THE Iranian government is attempting a new backstage squeeze for a big U. S. handout.

It is a demand for a $250,000,000 World Bank loan.

The proposal was sprung by Abol Ebtehaj, head of the Iranian State Bank and a governor of the World Bank. He is due here next month for a meeting of bank governors.

Meanwhile, Ebtehaj is trying to put on the heat in Teheran. He has hinted that Iran is entitled to the same kind of monetary and military aid the U. S. is giving Turkey and Greece.

He conveyed this impression with the haughty observation that if such assistance is not forthcoming "The U. S. can go to hell."

Actually, a large flow of U. S. dollars is pouring into Iran. American oil interests are paying out millions monthly, and the U. S. Government is spending large sums. It has just completed a $500,000 engineering survey for Iran.

Strained Relations

BEHIND-THE-SCENES, diplomatic relations between the U. S. and Iran are at the lowest ebb since '20's, when the State Dept. deported a member of the Iranian legation for smuggling opium.

Curious aspect of the current strained relations is that Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlevi is making a state visit to Washington this Fall. His mother and several other members of his family already are in the U. S. Authorities are at loss as to the reason for Iranian gruffness.

Iran put on a huff last month at the turndown of an opium scheme.

Famine conditions exist in Azerbaijan, northwest Iranian province. Despite large oil royalties, Iran asked the U. S. for 200,000 tons of free grain. When that was refused, Iran proposed to swap opium for the wheat.

U. S. Narcotics Commissioner Harry Anslinger vehemently objected.

He cited the fact that Iran is the most flagrant exporter of illegal opium in the world, and has persistently defied international attempts to curb this vicious traffic. Also, that due to flagrant violations, the U. S. ceased buying medicinal opium from Iran. Anslinger's forthright protests blocked the swap scheme.

Pickets

REP. ARTHUR KLEIN (D-NY) telephoned the District of Columbia Corporation Counsel for information about local picketing laws.

"This is the first time in five years we have had a query about that," was the answer. "The last time a member of Congress called us on the subject it was the late Sen. Bilbo of Mississippi."

"What did he want to know?" asked Klein.

"He called early one morning and said, 'There's a bunch of pickets outside my apartment. Is it legal for me to shoot them?' We explained that in Washington pickets could not be molested as long as they kept moving and did not obstruct traffic. Bilbo replied, 'In that case, I guess I can't shoot them,' and hung up."

Public Housing Pal

DURING the hotter House battle over the President's low-cost public housing bill, one of the most acrid foes was Rep. Gene Cox (D-Ga). At one point, his trigger-temper flared to where he struck Rep. Adolph Sabath, aged dean of the chamber.

But Cox sang another tune the other day at the Public Housing Administration.

Officials of Albany, Ga., his home town, appeared at PHA to sign up for a housing project under the new act. Albany is the first small town to get such a development, and right in front to get his picture and name in the papers was Cox—who had voted against the legislation.

NOTE—Since the enactment of the measure, PHA has been flooded with applications for low-cost housing projects, many of them from small towns of Congressmen and Senators who tried to kill the bill.

'Five-Percenters'

COMMERCE Secretary Charles Sawyer's announcement that his field offices will provide businessmen with information on Government contracts free of charge is causing no concern to "five per centers." Reason is, the intricacies of Government procurement are so complex that only an insider can make any headway against them. All big corporations have their own business representatives in Washington and hundreds of other concerns employ part-time consultants. Most of them are legitimate contact men who know their way around and make no claims to inside influence.

All the publicity given "five per centers" has boomed their business greatly in recent weeks.