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THE GREAT DEBATE DRONES ON

The weight of American public opinion appears to be swinging slowly behind the Administration's foreign policy once again, after flying off in all directions during the panic of November and December.

There are many reasons for this trend, and the lead of the Administration's foreign policy critics to agree on a specific alternative.

First there was ex-Ambassador Joseph Kennedy, who stirred the old isolationists to life with a demand for a complete abandonment of the rest of the world and a withdrawal to our shores.

Next there was ex-President Herbert Hoover. He did not go quite so far as Mr. Kennedy, holding that Britain and Japan should be the outposts of our defense.

Then there came Senator Taft, who stretched the frontiers still farther, and recognized our sacred responsibility to Atlantic Pact members (though he still doesn't like the Pact).

Up popped Harold Stassen, just back from a trip around the world, to say that Messrs. Hoover and Taft don't speak for the Republican Party. And then Mr. Stassen outlined his own long-range program for a world center revolution against Communism.

Many others have tossed in their own suggestions: Senator Knowland of California, who agrees that Western Europe must be defended but who also wants to see Chiang Kai-shek in a war against the Chinese; Communists; Senator Paul

Douglas of Illinois, who was fairly vague on the specific application of his ideas; Senator Lodge of Massachusetts, who conceded the President has the power to send American troops where he pleases; And finally, there was the new Governor of North Carolina.

A new factor has entered the national debate in the person of General Dwight Eisenhower. Now on a swing of Western European countries, the General Eisenhower is trying to find out which measure of self-help can be expected in Europe, and reportedly he is encouraged by what he has learned. If he decides that Europe can be defended, his opinion will have great weight with the Congress and with the nation.

In all the hubbub, the Administration's policy stands firm. It is to build up the defenses of Western Europe with the greatest possible speed and with the greatest possible degree of European participation. It is to hold firm against major concessions to Communist China, while avoiding a land war in the Far East. It is to hurry along our own preparedness program. It is to seek, within the United Nations, and conform to that body's considered opinion. It is, in brief, to exercise the world leadership that this nation has inherited in two great world wars.

Slowly the debate is being resolved, and it is a measure of the inherent strength of our American democracy that it is being resolved in the right way.

A PIONEER RETIRES

A MAN who has brought honor to his name and contributed mightily to the welfare of his native land has decided to call it a day. Hugh B. Bennett, retired who, as a boy, watched the Pea Dee carry off tons of topsoil from his father's Anson County farm and who, as a man, did more than any other else in the century to save the soil from the sea.

Dr. Bennett, chief of the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, will retire from that post April 15. It is Dr. Bennett's credit that he can retire now with confidence that there are others who will carry on his work.

Like any man who's good at what he does, Dr. Bennett has an almost fanatical devotion to his idea. That idea, simply stated, is this:

The soil will not endure forever; it is not indestructible; it can be "used up"; it can be saved; the people who till it are taught proper conservation methods.

That seems an obvious idea today, of course we know about erosion; of course we realize the necessity for contour plowing and other conservation methods. But when Hugh Bennett—fresh from UNC and new to the Bureau of Soils of the U. S.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

THE State Board of Elections stated in the case well when it asked the Legislature to abolish absentee ballots in general elections.

The absentee ballot "still remains the cause of most of our election troubles in a general election," said the Board, and it added, "We believe that if willing to abandon voting by ballot for the primary, it is bad for general elections, and should be abolished in both."

There is little this News can add to that. Historically, absentee ballots have been used to dishonest and unscrupulous persons to commit fraud in elections. It is true that they preserve the voting rights

Agriculture Department—tried to sell conversion, they are ignored.

In 1909 his boss made a speech pointing out that the soil is indestructible, that soil is one resource that cannot be exhausted, that soil cannot be used up. And that idea prevailed until 1933 when Dr. Bennett came to head the Soil Erosion Service of the Department of the Interior.

The work of Dr. Bennett has done in the practical aspects of soil conservation has been great, but even greater has been the change his work wrought in the public mind. Once the big planters laughed at conservation talk, now the poorest tenant farmer knows its importance.

There are a few men of whom North Carolina can be extremely proud. Most of them have been duly honored in their time and their names have become well known.

But Dr. Bennett has been a dedicated servant of his nation, a man who has become a legend among the men in his field but whose name sometimes seems to mean little even to the people of his native state.

Now, at 70, Dr. Hugh Bennett is to retire after a lifetime of devotion to his idea. No Tar Heel has better deserved the salute.

PAT - ON - THE - BACK DEPT

WHEN the past few years, the Charlotte Chapter of the League of Women Voters has been a conspicuous instrument of public good in this community.

It has turned its attention to many deserving projects—public meetings to question candidates for public office; instant inquiries about the state of the City-County consolidation movement; supporting the Park Improvement Commission ballot issue; the circulating of voter and door-to-door canvassing to get citizens to register and to vote; endorsement and active support of urban redevelopment.

The News has intended for a long time to tell of the many interesting and important things that the League of Women Voters has done in the past year.

MONKEY WINS TUG OF WAR

AMERICA is a sea power, China a land power. A whale and an elephant contending can get in a fight but it is hard to see how either could profit from it.

The Hindus, however, have a story about a battle between a whale and an elephant which was profitable to a monkey.

The monkey went out on the sea coast and bet a whale he could outpull him in a tug of war. The whale took the bet, sure he could win it.

of those who, by necessity, are unable to appear at the polls in person, but this protection is far outweighed in public importance by the frequency of fraud and abuse.

The State abolished absentee ballots in primary elections several years ago. The precedent has been set, and it is a sound one.

The current Board of Elections recommends that the absentee ballot be retained only for servicemen and disabled war veterans and disabled veterans. With that stipulation, the General Assembly should enact the measure without further ado.

So we make our manners to the ladies of the League of Women Voters for their interest and enterprise. More power to them.

Price Controls Eruption Seems To Be Certain

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON
SOMETHING more than six months ago, dealing with the national economy and the budget have now come off the Government printing press. They are stuffed with figures on spending and loans that run to dizzying levels of zero.

But the plain fact is that those figures are not meaningful so long as the pressures for inflation are unrelenting. The households who see the price tags in the grocery store moved up from week to week know more about the facts of life than the theorist learnedly discussing how to stabilize prices.

Both the Government and the people have long been convinced that price controls are necessary to check spiraling prices. But how to apply such controls is something the Administration has not been able to agree on.

If you manage to keep from going bankrupt in spite of the inflation, then in the case of character, the fascination in the politics of the delay over price and wage controls is not clearly identifiable figures that no Hollywood casting director would touch.

There are three lines of general theory, and these are the HEAT IS ON.

First is the politician. This part is played by Michael Disalle, a former Mayor of Toledo, Ohio, with the title of Director of Price Stabilization. Dr. Disalle is a ruff-poxy figure with a shrewdness that is unlooked for in a politician.

Second is the economist. This is played by the college president, Alan Valentine, president of the University of Rochester until he came to Washington, is perfectly cast in this role. He has had a distinguished academic career and has been a hard worker in several large corporations.

Third is the industrialist. He is the hard-boiled industrialist. Here again you could not improve on Charles Wilson, who is now president of General Electric to become Director of Price Stabilization. Wilson has a massive frame and a voice that rolls through a conference room like a sledgehammer.

Then just about the time a public audience would follow Mr. Wilson was called in. He began to ask some embarrassing questions. How many exceptions would be claimed by individual business firms? Someone guessed that there would be 100,000. Wilson's answer was as high as 500,000. This would be 500,000 businesses. There are 300,000 business enterprises to be controlled.

It is true that if each exception filed was not passed upon individually by the Stabilization Agency, the individual firms filling the exception would not be bound by the law. This is a workable plan is still going on. It is, of course, bigger than any individual case, but it is the economic destiny of each one of us. It is a matter of life and death. The line of the controversy and debate on the issue is still 400 U. S. miles. There are many who would appear to be almost insurmountable obstacles in the way of realistic price control.

There was a time when the workable plan of building up a huge staff. The other is the agricultural industry. The farmer is not being paid a party price, and they are formidable. They are the farmers who are waiting for a volcano to erupt.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON.
IT has been the policy of the brass hats that military mistakes, no matter how glaring, are not to be rehearsed in the newspapers. There are exceptions in the Northern military blunders in the Civil War still are secret.

That is also why our intelligence error in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir was never mentioned in the press. That is why our intelligence error in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir was never mentioned in the press.

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Errors Of Command

THERE was a good reason why I used paraphrased official cables from MacArthur. If I had not, Senator McCarty would have been able to pick out the errors in the Chinese figures out of whole cloth.

Faced with the official text, he could not very well accuse me of lying. One of the purposes of the deciphering of coded messages. This the Secretary of the Army.

INFLATION OFFENSE FUNDS

COLLECTED BY BILL SHARPE
TURPENTINE DRIPPINGS

Animal Yarn (Estelle Loomis, Richmond County Journal)
Of course my old favorite is the one about the squirrel who was riding along the bridge walk with his little dog running alongside. All at once the horse turned his head around and said, "See here, I'm getting good and tired of trotting so fast. If you don't want to slow down you can just get off and walk."

Beauty Hints (Camden Chronicle)
There is no substitute for experience, says one. And we thought of that when we read where showgirl Mildred Lewis had said that "the best way to keep lipstick on is to eat lard cake."

Awful With It (Morgan Post)
Advertisers who would like to see their products advertised are fighting a losing battle. Mrs. Emily Post, according to the One Adman's Opinion column in Time, in a page ad for Congress Playing cards in Time.

Panacea (John Wesley Clay, Winston-Salem Journal)
Fred King keeps mumbling "Don't get your hands on the money." Money goes, he knows. Money goes, he knows. Money goes, he knows. Money goes, he knows.

The Acid Test (John Underag, The State)
Bragging the quality of deaks of my business friends, when I find many choice bits of philosophy

Democrats See Greatest Need Of Coalition

By THE ALSOPS

IN recent weeks, the leading Democrats in Congress have been quietly meeting to discuss a national coalition Government. Particularly in the Senate, powerful sentiment has developed among the Democratic leadership for the immediate admission of dissenting Republican cabinet members to the White House.

The movement, although unpublicized, has gained considerable headway that the Senatorial advocates of the coalition recently sent the White House a long letter to press their views upon the reluctant President.

If nothing else, these behind-the-scenes events are at least a measure of the seriousness of the political crisis now gripping the United States. The Democrats and especially members of Congress, really burn with desire to get into the White House and to stay there if they do so now, it is because they believe that the only way to attain national unity and because they are convinced that immediate re-election of the national unity is essential to national survival.

In many quarters in Washington, the majorities for the President Truman's personal circle and among Republicans close to Sen. Robert Taft — it is still customary to parrot the claim that a national coalition is impossible in the United States. This is a directly refuted by the record of the last twelve years.

By 1940, President Roosevelt saw the need for greater national unity as the leading Democratic Senator. But when the President was elected into his Cabinet, Henry L. Stimson and Frank Knox as Secretaries of War and Navy. He further caused almost the whole defense and war effort to be staffed, not by the New Dealers whom he had formerly relied on, but by such men as Robert A. Lovett, James Forrestal and Henry H. Howland. The result was an American version of a national coalition administration.

By this means alone, Roosevelt was able to carry through his defense measures in the period when Sen. Taft was proclaiming that it was ridiculous to worry about any Japanese attack on this country.

To be sure, the presence of Knox and Stimson, Forrestal and Lovett in the administration did not mean that the views of Sen. Taft were represented at the Roosevelt Cabinet. But it did mean that almost all moderate men, both in Congress and in the administration leadership, and this led to the formation of a coalition. The aim of the advocates of a new coalition is to gain the same result again.

At least one of the major obstacles to a new national coalition has now been completely removed. In the event of a coalition, the President has felt obligated to offer the Secretaryship to the Chief Justice Fred Vinson. Despite the Chief Justice's gross incompetence in the appointment as Secretary of State, his successor would not meet the conditions of the coalition. His successor would not meet the conditions of the coalition.

Thus there are no outstanding Presidential commitments to prevent the formation of a coalition. Administration, if Truman ever decides to do so. In these circumstances, the response of the leading Democratic Senators, and of such men as Stimson and Howland, on the Republican side, is at least heartening evidence that our political system is still capable of doing its job. It is almost true today to say that everyone can come to believe in a national coalition, and that it is a good thing.

Only A Captain (Jim Parker, Chatham News)
Someone sent this in to us on a postcard. Perhaps it applies to you, but it certainly has all the things of which I'm certain. I'm the captain of my fate, and the master of my destiny. And my wife is the laundress.

The Big Risk (Wake Island, Grand)
MacArthur proposed exactly what he later executed. He proposed a march on troops up to the Manchurian border, a pause on the border only long enough to symbolize victory, then a march home by Christmas.

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Military Reluctant To Talk Of Errors

By THE ALSOPS

question dealt with Chinese military strength and the Chinese obviously knew their own strength. Furthermore, the Chinese had no interest in the U. S. Army's tragic retreat, and facts published after battle don't give much help to the enemy.

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