THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

1888—Sixty-Fifth Anniversary Year—1953

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 1953

THE END OF A DREAM FOR N. C. CITIES

WHEN the national Congress, in 1949, established slum clearance by urban redevelopment as a part of the National Housing Act, city officials all across the nation began dreaming of the day when the pockmarks of blight upon their faces would be removed by surgery, and replaced by new growth.

As other state legislatures adopted strong, forceful urban redevelopment enabling acts, the 1951 North Carolina General Assembly argued back and forth about the question, finally passed an act that left the redevelopment program hardly more than a shell. The key gimmick: a clause limiting the power of eminent domain to those tracts that clearly fit the definition of blight. That meant that any standard structure or vacant lot within a blighted area must be excluded, since the trick phraseology of the proviso also prevented the purchase by negotiation of such tracts.

An effort was made in the 1953 General Assembly to amend the law to permit North Carolina cities the same freedom in eradicating slums that cities in some 35 other states had. But for several reasons, including the outspoken opposition of Mecklenburg Rep. Arthur Goodman, who denounced the program as "socialistic" and the coolness of Sen. Fred H. McIntyre, the amendments failed of passage.

This week the attorneys of the Federal Housing & Home Finance Agency reluctantly came to the conclusion that the North Carolina act was so badly drawn and so unworkable that there was not even any point in testing its constitutionality. And the Charlotte Commission, like the boards in Winston-Salem, Greensboro and Fayetteville, decided to toss in the towel.

A great opportunity has been lost to North Carolina, an opportunity for its crowded cities to rid themselves forever of the dark and musty slums which breed vice and disease and which drain off a disproportionate share of tax dollars by their insatiable demand for health, police, fire and other public services.

It is the end of a dream for a state that, progressive in so many matters, by this action has safeguarded the right of property owners to collect their slum rents from the poor at the expense of humanity and society.

POLICE STUDY MAY BE OF GREAT BENEFIT

UNDER the terms of the resolution as finally introduced by Councilman James Smith, the coming study of the City Police Department cannot possibly do any harm, and may do a great amount of good.

Mr. Smith recommended the appointment of a three-man committee composed of Dr. R. S. Snyder, minister, Lambert Schwartz, business man, and Dan Marley, druggist. They will work "in full and complete cooperation" with City Manager Henry Yancey and Police Chief Frank Littlejohn, and they will file their own report, just as Mr. Yancey and Chief Littlejohn will do.

The resolution appears to cover the ground. The study will seek broadly to improve the "securing and maintaining of proper personnel", and it will encompass departmental promotions, salary ranges, retirement provisions, training programs "and any other specific recommendations as may appear necessary and desirable."

On reading the resolution, and noting that it got the vote of every Councilman save Basil M. Boyd, one wonders why there was so much hullabaloo about the idea some weeks ago when it was first advanced.

Something is wrong with the Charlotte Police Department. It may be that it is simply a matter of low starting salaries, inadequate adjustments according to service, and unrealistically small pension payments. It may be that the trouble lies deeper, and that personalities and the philosophy of law enforcement existing in the department are causing some of the dissatisfaction and unhappiness.

In any event, no one within the department or without need fear an honest and objective appraisal, undertaken with friendly and constructive motives. The best city in the state ought to have the best police department, and this study may well prepare the way to that objective.

GAINS SCORED IN HIGHWAY SAFETY FIGHT

NEXT January the several changes in auto insurance law legislated by the last General Assembly go into effect. It remains to be seen how effective they will be in mitigating the physical and financial distress caused by reckless and financially irresponsible drivers. Meanwhile, worth pondering are recent action by other states which seem more exercised about highway safety than North Carolina is.

Down in South Carolina, six months' operation of the new safety responsibility law has revealed compelling evidence that the reckless driver is usually the financially irresponsible driver. Financial responsibility was proved by only 6.2 per cent of the vehicles on which registration was suspended, after owners were convicted of reckless and drunken driving and similar charges.

What happens to the Sandlappers who don't comply with the security provisions of the new law? Their cars are taken off the road, pronto. Through June 30 of this year, almost 5,000 vehicles were taken off the road, with license plates jerked and owners' registration cards surrendered to the Highway Department.

And Massachusetts, which established compulsory auto liability insurance long ago, has now pioneered in another field that promises reduced insurance rates to the safe driver. The Bay State Legislature established a "demerit" system which will require higher premiums from drivers who are convicted of any traffic violations except parking. This assessment against the careless driver should halt further insurance rate advances for careful drivers.

Four states—Massachusetts, Connecticut, Nebraska and New Jersey—already have "point" systems under which drivers found guilty of many serious violations can have their license suspended and revoked.

State after state is finding that rather harsh laws are essential if the unfit and irresponsible drivers are to be kept off the highways. North Carolina is hardly in the forefront of this movement. And it won't be until its citizens elect legislators who are willing to pass laws that crack down on those drivers who are turning North Carolina's highways into grisly gantlets of death.

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME

THE attitude of a town toward its baseball club is a strange and unfathomable thing. It may swing from insane enthusiasm, like Milwaukee shows for its cherished Braves, to the dull apathy with which Charlotte has greeted its Hornets. And the fellow who tries to put his finger on the reasons for either is hard put to do so.

Winning games doesn't seem to do it. In 1950, Charlotte had a lousy club. In 1951, it had the winningest team in years. Yet in '51, the team drew only 112,000 paying customers—only 8,000 more than the previous year.

This year attendance threatens to drop to an all-time low. It is currently running at about 82,000—some 8,000 less than at Rock Hill, with less than one-fifth of Charlotte's population. In fact, the Charlotte attendance is the smallest in the six-team league.

This is not a thing for which you blame somebody. People either like baseball, or they don't like it, and they go to games or they don't go, depending on a lot of factors.

Nonetheless, good promotion always helps, and that's why we're pleased that the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, working through its new recreation committee, has thrown its support behind the Hornets. On next Wednesday night, the whole C of C membership will turn out, complete with families, and a lot of new potential customers will be introduced to Mr. Phil Howser's lads.

We take it that they'll have a good time, and we suggest to other Charlotteans that there's no pleasanter a way to spend a warm Summer evening than watching the Hornets in action. Try it and see.

From The Milwaukee Journal

THOSE 'MILLION DOLLAR' RAINS

ONCE AGAIN the phrase "a million dollar rain" has been going the rounds, following the recent soakers which brought relief to some farming areas in the state. It has a nice nostalgic ring—a million dollar rain—but it's darned inaccurate.

The phrase has clung on since times when a million dollars was a dazzling figure of wealth, a sort of financial horizon beyond which few men dared to peer. Webster's Unabridged, by the way, still lists a definition of "million" as "a very great number; an indefinitely large number."

But what's a million dollar rain nowadays? Literally a drop in the bucket. Inflation, which has made the yiez for a good five-cent cigar ludicrous, ought to operate in reverse here.

Using the old cost of living index, in other words, a million dollar rain in the 1935-'39 base period becomes a $1,910,000 rain in 1952. A downpour of the same real value in 1947-'49, under the new COL index, should save $1,140,000 in crops this year.

But why bother with awkward figures? Call it a billion dollar rain—maybe inflation will catch up.

The only practical test for Photon has been experimental publishing of a Rinehardt & Co. book, *The Wonderful World of Insects*. It appeared a couple of months ago after 10 1-2 months in production. A spokesman at Rinehart commented that several bugs had been encountered during the long production period.—Printers' Ink.

'Fine! Fine! Maybe You'll Do Better Next Time'

People's Platform

Letters should be brief. The writer's name and address must be given, but may be withheld from publication in the discretion of the Editors. The News reserves the right to condense.

In Defense Of Liberty

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

IT seems to me that there has been very little public attention directed to a matter now widely developing in this country, which constitutes a serious threat to the liberties of American citizens.

I refer to the rapid spread of various arrangements for compulsory unionism, by which hundreds of thousands of people are being forced to join labor unions and pay dues and fees to them or else give up their jobs. So completely wrong does this seem to me, and such an alarming trend for the future of all of us, that I have decided to do what I can to help make the general public aware of it.

As this is being written, approximately 200,000 employees of the railroads of this country, who have not been members of the railroad unions are being required to join and pay dues to these unions under penalty of being fired from their jobs if they fail to do so. Many thousands of people in various other industries who have performed the duties of their employment competently and for long periods of years, but who are opposed to joining Unions, are now being placed under similar compulsion.

I think the general public believes in the right of the working man to join a labor union. But I think the general public, if ever presented with the issue, will just as truly denounce and condemn those who force him to join against his will. There must be freedom to join labor unions in this land and likewise freedom not to join! In such matter, liberty means—if it means anything—individual freedom of choice.

It is said, however, that the majority controls. But when any majority is in power, the rights of the minority are not to be wholly disregarded. Is that not assured to us by our constitutional form of government? When one political party wins, the losers do not all have to join it—not yet, at least—in the United States of America. What sort of oppression would it be if everybody in town were required to join the same church—or the largest church—or any church, for that matter?

In this land there should be no compelled allegiance to any organization, except to government itself. So long as they are within the law, the rights of minorities, of dissenters, of nonconformists and non-joiners must be respected and their freedom of choice and decision maintained inviolate. Through the centuries there have been unnumbered thousands who have died that this shall be so!

This is no academic problem, nor far-fetched apprehension. It is real, tangible and immediate. Many thousands of working people the country over have signed petitions entreating their employers not to force them to join and pay dues to organizations in which they do not believe. To them the issue is one that stirs deep emotions. The British Stamp Tax of 1775 was indeed a lesser tribute and more justifiable in principle than this compulsion now being imposed "in the land of the free" on behalf of private and non-governmental labor organizations.

And where are the liberals of the country on this issue? Those who so quickly raise their voice in behalf of oppressed minorities everywhere, who ordinarily spring to the defense of civil liberties at the slightest provocation—how is it that they neither utter a word nor turn a finger on this matter? Here a minority is oppressed in plain view! Here civil liberties are ravished in the sight of all! Yet the "liberals," usually most sensitive to such, are entirely blind, deaf and dumb. Are they perhaps one-way liberals, that is to say, more hypocrite than liberal?

Most amazing of all is the fact that our government has itself promoted the idea of unionism by compulsion. During the past several years various executive boards and commissions, shameless travesties of governmental neutrality, have officially "recommended" that employees be required to join and pay dues to Unions in order to work.

In 1947, in the Taft-Hartley Act, Congress declared that no person could be required to belong to a union in order to get a job, but then ironically provided that he could be required to join within thirty days in order to hold the job. Legislation has been introduced at the present session of Congress to correct this, but Congressmen as well as the general public seem to be largely unaware of the vital and dramatic issue at stake.

And what shall be said of the employing companies all over the country which are agreeing to force their employees into labor unions or else discharge them? The least that can be said is that they are either shockingly indifferent to what is right or pathetically unable to stand up for what is right. And certainly in handing over to labor unions the complete power of monopoly over their labor force, they exhibit a pitiful lack of foresight for in the long run such monopoly will strangle them and the employees and the public.

All aspects of the matter are, however, of incidental significance to the single and basic principle stated above, that individual liberty in this land means freedom to join a lawful organization and likewise freedom not to join. It means the one as truly as it means the other.

It seems to me that the time has come for all who will to stand firm upon such fundamentals as this. As this nation fights for freedom in the far corners of the earth and seeks to promote the principles of liberty all over the world, shall we allow this freedom to die—shall we allow these very principles to become extinguished—here in our own land?

—E. S. DILLARD

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Russia Jolted By Dramatic Food Program

WASHINGTON

MUCH more than the American people realize, the prisoner world behind the Iron Curtain is watching the food riots in East Germany. Also, more than the American people realize, the Eisenhower Administration has been holding backstage debates regarding the next step to be taken in East Germany.

So far there's been no decision.

Two facts, however, are fairly clear:

No. 1—The East German food program, is only a drop in the bucket compared with what needs to be done in all the vast and restless area behind the Iron Curtain.

No. 2—The Eisenhower Administration was elected on a platform of stirring up revolt behind the Iron Curtain. So vigorously did Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles emphasize this during the political campaign that Adlai Stevenson publicly chided them.

Once in office, however, the Eisenhower Administration has been bothered by doubting Thomases, do-nothing advisers, has moved with exasperating caution.

First Food Proposal

THE present food program for East Germany was proposed by this writer to certain State Department officials on June 23, shortly after the Berlin riots started. Some officials were enthusiastic, some dubious.

"If the Russians won't let our surplus bread and butter enter East Germany," it was proposed in one column, "then the American radio station in Berlin, RIAS, can put them on the spot by blaring the fact behind the Iron Curtain.

"All we have to do is put the bread and butter down in West Berlin and let the East Germans come and get it. Several thousand cross back and forth every day. I have crossed back and forth dozens of times . . ."

This has now worked out exactly as predicted. Though it took three weeks of backstage debate, press and radio comment, this idea has now been compared with what needs to be done in all the vast and restless area behind the Iron Curtain.

Our Next Moves

DESPERATE, the Russians are now blocking food distribution. And the question is, what is our next move to be?

1. Drop food by balloon in the rest of East Germany. If Red tanks and troops continue to block the East Germans, give them a spectacular demonstration of Yankee ingenuity by dropping food parcels at their front door. The God-given winds of the upper altitudes which move from west to east are with us in regard to this—and this is something the Kremlin can't change. We should use them.

The Junior Chamber of Commerce executive committee, meeting last week at Tulsa, Okla., offered to take over this friendship balloon food lift if the State Department has no objections.

2. Repeat the food program in other areas behind the Iron Curtain. Vienna, like Berlin, is divided into sectors, so that people can cross over from one zone to another. A similar program in Vienna would have the same electrifying result in southern Europe that the Berlin program is having in northern Europe.

3. Send food by balloon to other Iron Curtain countries which are not near Berlin and Vienna. Such action is a little more expensive, but intensely dramatic—and drama is needed to win the cold war. Furthermore, Poland, Czechoslovakia and other satellite countries were invaded by Germany, don't particularly love the Germans, and don't like to see us favoring the German people. For us to concentrate on helping Germany alone would be a serious psychological error.

4. Demand that free elections be held in every Iron Curtain country. In a formal note to Moscow we should emphasize the fact that the Yalta Pact gives these nations the right of governments of their own choosing and we should demand that the United Nations supervise free elections. Yalta has been used against us in many respects. We should not be so slow about using it to our advantage.

This is one of our biggest aces-in-the-hole, and so far we have completely missed the boat.

5. Move for a United States of Europe. Most Europeans know they are doomed both economically and militarily if they remain small, divided, independent countries. The only way they can exist is to emulate our example and unite.

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This has now worked out exactly as predicted. Though it took three weeks of backstage debate, press and radio comment, this idea has now been compared with what needs to be done in all the vast and restless area behind the Iron Curtain. As stated in a column of June 30, "If our millions of tons of surplus food were used appropriately in Berlin, the effect on the Russians would be devastating . . . If the Russians refused they would be more on the spot than ever."

The Russians did refuse Eisenhower's offer of July 10 and they are now on the spot in a manner which has lost them more prestige than any other single move they have made.

Golden Opportunity

THE death of Stalin, the purge of Beria, the unrest behind the Iron Curtain constitute an opportunity which comes only once in a lifetime. We can't wait a year or a month or even a few weeks.

Speaking in Buffalo Aug. 27, just about a year ago, John Foster Dulles promised that Eisenhower, if elected, would encourage "quiet revolutions in Red-dominated countries through such methods as passive resistance, general strike and sabotage."

And Eisenhower himself, speaking in Denver, Aug. 13, said: "The United States must try to obtain by peaceful means the restoration to the captive nations of Europe the right freely and honestly to determine their own fate and their own form of government."

Again speaking before the American Legion Aug. 26, Ike said: "The American conscience can never know peace . . . until the countries captured by the Communists are restored again to being masters of their own fate."

These pledges will not wait. Not only in the affairs of men, but in the affairs of nations, opportunity strikes but once. If this opportunity is lost it may not strike again.

Loss Of Taft's Firm Hand Shown In Debt Limit Rebuff

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON

IF ANY demonstration was needed of the seriousness of the blow to the Administration and to the Republican Party in the illness and death of Sen. Robert A. Taft, it came in the closing days of the first session of this unhappy Congress. It is hard to believe that the fiasco of the attempt to raise the debt limit would have occurred if Taft had been in his place as Majority Leader of the Senate.

In all the discussion of his role as Mr. Republican in the Congress, one important phase of his capacity to lead in a Senate divided by a vote or two has been overlooked. Taft was as close to the Conservative Democrats as he was to the members of his own party.

For nearly 15 years he had been a member of the club, serving alongside such veteran Democrats as Senators George of Georgia, Byrd of Virginia, Hoey of North Carolina and Ed Johnson of Colorado. More often than not they voted together.

In the last two or three years of the Truman Administration a coalition of Taft Republicans and Conservative Democrats was decisive on most issues. When they split it was usually on foreign policy with most of the Southerners for most of the measures implementing President Truman's effort to contain and compress Communist expansion.

REJECTION CERTAIN

George was for nine years chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. Byrd has been on the committee for 20 years and his word on fiscal problems carries great weight in Congress and in the country. If they were certain to vote in committee against raising the debt ceiling, as Taft would quickly have learned, then it was futile to ask Congress for such action. Worse than futile, one must add, since the slap down is bound to damage the Administration.

Taft had doubts about the Administration's all-out stand to retain the excess profit tax. He felt, as he said in a background talk with this reporter shortly before his final illness, that it risked too much in terms of the working relation between Congress and the White House for a limited objective. But once the White House had taken the decision, Taft did his best to carry it out.

What he had not achieved in his three months as Majority Leader was an effective and smoothly working coalition between the Democrats, such as Byrd and George who have on the whole supported the Eisenhower Administration, and those Republicans who could normally be counted on for support. It is only through such a coalition that the Administration can hope when Congress returns in January to pass the measures sidetracked at this session. That will be the difficult task facing Taft's successor.

Sen. William Knowland of California has been elected as Majority Leader. At 45, Knowland has served eight years in the Senate. He is conscientious, tremendously hard-working, loyal to President Eisenhower. But he has a lot to learn about the functions of a Majority Leader.

Curbing the irresponsibles in his own party was beyond Taft as it will almost certainly be beyond any leader. Thus Senator George Malone of Nevada supplied the one Republican vote necessary in the Insular Affairs Committee to bottle up for the session the Hawaii statehood bill. The House, under the skilled and unflagging leadership of Speaker Joe Martin and Majority Leader Charles Halleck, had passed the measure. If the Senate had followed suit, one of the pledges made repeatedly by the Republican Party would have been validated.

INACTIVE SENATORS

Wherever the fault may lie, whether in the White House or in the Senate itself, one conspicuous lack in the session now ended was any coalescing of leadership among Republican Senators who had been for Eisenhower before the Chicago convention.

That may be the cue for leadership at the next session — to bring these men into the team play so that they are participants rather than skeptical critics on the side lines. This must happen if the Administration is to overcome the narrow division in the Congress and split within the Republican Party and show it can get a program adopted.

Answer To Four-Power Note Full Of Soviet Mumbo-Jumbo

By JAMES MARLOW

WASHINGTON

IF the state of men's minds could always be read from what they wrote, it might seem the Russians were unsure of themselves in their note that was to be the Big Four foreign ministers conference.

But, since they've made a practice of doubletalk, the note's purpose was probably to confuse, not enlighten. The State Department is trying now to decide what it means.

The Russians have controlled East Germany completely for the eight years since World War II. That would seem time enough to crush the East Germans' spirit and discipline them under communism if they could not be won over to it.

At the end of the eight years, the East Germans brought riots, defiance in accepting American food, and desertions from the police and Army—have demonstrated neither discipline nor love.

This would be enough to shake some of the Russians' confidence in themselves, particularly since they're trying to feel their way under a new regime at home.

The Russians have consistently brushed aside suggestions by this country and its big Western Allies that East and West Germany be allowed to hold free elections for a single German government.

With the hatred expressed by the East Germans in recent weeks, the Russians must feel even less inclination than ever to permit them to unite with the West Germans whose present government is pro-Western. It seems impossible that the Communists would consent to free German elections or unification in the foreseeable future.

The United States has repeatedly urged the Russians to agree on those two points until this Summer. The last time the State Department made the proposal was in September 1952. The Russians never answered.

But in July, Secretary of State Dulles met here with the foreign ministers of Britain and France. On July 15 they sent the Russians a note suggesting that they and the Russian foreign minister meet to consider German unification and free elections.

The Western Powers could hardly lose with such a note, even if the Russians didn't answer. The proposal at least might win support for Chancellor Konrad Adenauer in the West German elections of Sept. 6.

But the Russians thoroughly scrambled up the business by inserting insistence that the Communist Chinese must sit in on possible discussions about seating world tensions.

The only purpose of the Russian note, probably is to make them look good, at least not absolutely bad, in the eyes of the East Germans. The foreign ministers' conference, if and when it started, could be booby-trapped with so much mumbo-jumbo about China that it would have to break up in despair.

In their note, in an almost self-conscious and defensive way, the Russians warned the West not to get too hopeful that the Communists were losing their grip on East Germany just because there had been some trouble there.