



THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1958

Government With A T-Model Chassis

ALTHOUGH North Carolina's constitutional commission is not expected to report until late fall, guardians of the status quo are already erecting their barricades against change.

Maj. Gen. Capus Wayne, who fought the good fight for a brand new document in 1933, told a newspaper gathering in Chapel Hill four days ago: "I really cannot say that the state urgently needs a new constitution."

The Greensboro Daily News, one of North Carolina's most influential newspapers and a chronic complainer about constitutional deficiencies, promptly began to warm up some second thoughts of its own. Said the GDN this week: "Unless an extremely good case can be made for the proposition that North Carolina needs a completely new constitutional document, the Daily News is inclined to agree with Gen. Wayne that change merely to improve the language and eliminate clutter is not desirable."

BOTH Gen. Wayne and our Greensboro contemporaries have their reasons for their latter-day doubts. Many of the reforms proposed in 1933 have found their way into the old document in the form of amendments of one sort or another. More tinkering is anticipated to add the Bell Court Study Committee's proposals to the document. There is deep concern, too, about the very nature of change and its consequences. Says Gen. Wayne: "The trouble with the business is that when you change a constitution you discard a great mass of clearly defined law and you impair volumes of interpretation that have accumulated through years and years of the experience of the people."

But surely it is not being seriously suggested that imperfection be perpetuated because perfection is such a bother.

Both Gen. Wayne and the GDN concede that the state's present 1868 constitution is a defective instrument of government. Gen. Wayne, for instance, sees "great need" for changes to relieve the General Assembly of responsibility for passing on the details of local government. The GDN feels that there may be several areas where improvements are "either desirable or imperative."

Actually, it is hardly an exaggeration

to say that the state's 1868 constitution is a bundle of inadequacies. It contains so much legislative ad hocism and political fiddling that it is hardly worthy of the term "constitution." It has been amended more than 60 times — furnishing it with enough baffling and schizoid divergences of purpose to qualify it as a Rubik's cube cartoon.

JUDGE JOHN J. PARKER once wrote: "The purpose of a state constitution is two-fold: (1) to protect the rights of the individual from encroachment by the state and (2) to promote a framework of government for the state and its subdivisions. It is not the function of a constitution to deal with temporary conditions, but to lay down general principles of government which must be observed amid changing conditions."

The 1868 constitution hardly passes these fundamental tests with flying colors.

It is not only far from unnecessary defects and its lean on principles. It is weak and inconsistent in its approach to the general executive authority of the state. North Carolina is the only state in the union which has neglected to give its governor veto power over legislation enacted by the General Assembly. North Carolina's governor cannot even succeed himself in office under normal circumstances. Furthermore, the governor has limited appointment power, no direct power of supervision and little removal power.

THESE and other deficiencies have been discussed in Tar Heel newspapers, by legislators and political scientists for years. Periodic patchwork has been a statement of a crisis of mis-matched design and self-defeating weakness. Additional patchwork cannot remedy defects in design which are basic. The time is clearly ripe for a new constitution giving North Carolina's citizens a statement of governing principles which will draw proper lines of authority, responsibility and accountability. The commission ought not to be hampered by the guardians of the status quo. It has a duty to Tar Heels of today and tomorrow to perform. Let's get on with the job.

The Wage Bills Never Become Law

MUTUAL backslapping provided most of the noise at the state Democratic convention in Raleigh last week but in the background, party listeners could hear portions of the party platform collapsing.

We refer particularly to the plank in which the Democrats, avowing traditional friendship to labor, "pledge our continued support to a program of humane labor laws, safe and healthful working conditions, and fair compensation for the industrial workers."

This friendship has failed noticeably to bear any fruit for some 90,000 Tar Heel workers unprotected by any sort of minimum wage legislation. It cannot be said the Democrats are unaware of the problem. After considering bills to establish 55-cent minimums for these workers in 1953 and 1955, Democratic legislators last year discussed a 75-cent

floor. Keeping right in step with the cost of living, they were. But doing something about the problem has been entirely another matter. All this consideration, even when accompanied by admission that the paltriness of some wages is a shame, has been entirely without result. Consideration has never ended in approval by the Democratic-controlled legislature.

On this matter, the Senate tradition is to whittle minimum wage legislation until it covers roughly one half of the unemployed workers. The House tradition is to reject what is left of the legislation.

All of which goes to prove the political platforms offer risky footing and should be taken no more seriously by the public than by the politicians — which often is about as serious as a giggle.

Pass The Humane Slaughter Measure

DEMANDS for humane slaughter legislation dump more letters into congressional mailbags these days than any other political issue.

This concern for the manner in which food animals are slaughtered may seem incongruous when the Congress is busy with matters affecting the lives and fortunes of human beings. But it only seems incongruous. No civilized people can engage in needless cruelty. Nor can they rightly sanction it when it is carried on unseen.

No one opposes humane slaughter, of course. Not even those meat packers who practice the opposite — and not all of them do. But there has been sufficient opposition to weaken proposed legislation to the point that humane slaughter would be required only of those packers who sell meat to the federal government.

From The Goldsboro News-Argus

MISSILES AND BASEBALL

THE development of the missile as the great force in the nation's weapons system is one of the major news stories of our time. Editors have groped hesitatingly in efforts to interpret this story to their readers. One of the major addresses at the recent meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington was that of Dr. John P. Hagen, director of the Navy's successful Vanguard project. He speaks with top authority as a scientist on missiles.

Came the hour of the Hagen talk. And what happened? The date and hour coincided head-on with the big league game between the Washington Senators and the Boston Red Sox. Baseball won over missiles. At our table at the luncheon where Dr. Hagen was speaking, nine people were seated. Four of them ex-

changed themselves and rushed off to the game even before the scientist was presented.

We offer no criticism, however. Indeed when the mind of man is so intent upon relaxation and enjoyment, conditions are pretty safe for the country. Sputniks and satellites must not too long get top billing in our minds. If they did, it would be just too bad.

P. S. What happened at our table happened to a more or less degree at the other tables where 500 had sat down to dine.

"If you were in love your husband," the insurance salesman asked the young housewife, "what would you get?" She thought for a moment, then: "A parachute." — CARLSBAD CURRENT-ARGUS.

'Don't Fret, Chile! Pappy Won't Let 'Em Take Y'Alive'

Paris Conceals Her Fears

With Rich & Elegant Looks

By MARQUIS CHILDS



Rules Of War Must Change

By MURRAY SNYDER
Assistant Secretary Of Defense For Public Affairs

Most of our fighting forces are today assigned to such commands on a geographical or functional basis, but the President's legislation would make explicit the authority of the secretary of defense to establish additional unified commands. Moreover, the bill would remove uncertainties concerning the authority of unified commanders to exercise direct control over military forces assigned to them.

NO PULL-OUTS
The bill would remove any possibility that Army, Navy or Air Force units might be pulled out of a unified command without concurrence of the secretary of defense.

The President's plan provides for giving the Joint Chiefs an ex-

plained, and apparently unexplained, killing of the young girl called for the maximum punishment provided by law. The republishing has been persistently and repeatedly informed that this young man had been standing student—not so testified by his teacher; that he has been a star athlete, which, if true, should have increased his status and the highest respect for young womanhood and womankind as well as that he is the son of a highway patrolman, which is not only wholly irrelevant, but none of these achievements afford any defense whatever to the enormous crime under the law. Neither can they possibly afford any semblance of excuse to the same mind.

Let me comment on the bugaboo you hear raised that the necessary job of clarifying the authority of the Secretary of Defense might somehow turn this great nation of ours into a military state—that we may wake up some bright morning to find ourselves a "man on horse back." This is part and parcel of the equally specious charge that we are on the road to establishing here a "German General Staff System."

As Admiral Arthur W. Radford, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said a few days ago, the people who sound these dire warnings ignore our basic pattern of civilian control.

During the war the French worshiped De Gaulle. He had become a symbol of freedom. To many he was a great hero. Edén recognized this fact in the summer of 1943 when Churchill wanted to fire on De Gaulle. Edén argued that he had become such a symbol that the British could not tear down the men they had built up.

Churchill called a press conference in which he blasted De Gaulle as a latent Fascist, accused him of stirring up the French and Arabs in Syria against the British, and claimed De Gaulle leaned toward French-Russian control of Europe. Actually De Gaulle has proved himself strongly anti-Russian and anti-Communist.

FDR & De Gaulle
It was FDR, however, who ridiculed De Gaulle perhaps more than Churchill. He delighted in telling the story of how he and Churchill tried to get De Gaulle and Girard, the Vichy commander in Casablanca, together. The incident is important, first, because it showed De Gaulle's unwillingness to compromise with Vichy. Second, because it showed France down the river, second, because it was the beginning of American coolness toward De Gaulle.

Here is the incident as FDR used to tell it:

"One man is beating the drum," he wrote. "But a host of beetles are bouncing up and down on it and they think they are beating it."

A lot of people at the time thought he was right.

Even during the war De Gaulle had ideas about autonomy for the Near East and North Africa, as had a stored session with Churchill over Egypt and Syria. Critical of British military leadership, De Gaulle offered to take over the entire allied command in North Africa.

Those who knew him in World War II found him to be temperamental, conceited, strong-willed, but frequently able to put his finger on what was wrong with Allied policy. In the summer of 1943 he wrote a letter to the British and American governments complaining Allied strategy to the beating of a drum.

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PARIS

ONLY A great novelist or a master historian at the height of his powers could do full justice to Paris at this moment when so much for the future of France and the West hangs in the balance.

The surface has the same rich, elegant look that may even be enhanced by the threat of disaster in the air. After a long, cold, wet delay, spring has at last come and everything in those sentimental songs about Paris in the springtime—if one looks only at the surface—seems to be true.

The broad sidewalks along the Avenue Champs Elysees that sweeps so magnificently up to the Arc de Triomphe are crowded with strollers who move leisurely in the sun. They accept as a kind of spectacle the security police and gendarmes who mass along the avenue and around the arc where the eternal flame to France's Unknown Soldier is burning at any intimation that a demonstration may be held. The sidewalk cafes are so crowded that it is difficult to find a table at noon or in the early evening.

DIAMONDS AND RUBIES

In the Place Vendôme, the jewelers' windows are full of diamond necklaces and bracelets glittering like icicles. Emeralds, rubies, star sapphires—everything is there for a price—and it is a very high price.

An American collector in Paris for the first time in many years visited the gallery of the dealer who handles Bracqué, one of the greatest of the post-impressionists who is still living but who is so ill that he no longer paints. The American saw just the picture he wanted. The price: \$85,000.

HOTELS FULL

The luxury hotels are filled to capacity, one reason being perhaps that high Paris prices, which in recent years have kept tourists away, are now matched almost everywhere else in Europe. As one hotel manager put it: "All I am praying for today is five cancellations. If I don't get them, I don't know what I'm going to do."

The sensational British press has an absurd story. The Daily Mirror, with its five million circulation, slashed across the front page, "Flight From Paris," and it was a mass exodus. It was, of course, that a pleasure-weekend weekenders jamming the highways out of Paris.

In all this there may be an edge of "after me the deluge." But it is not obvious in a scene of so abnormal a society, an extraordinary society, that is sitting for its portrait dressed to the nines and with a smile as natural as though it were

A smile that lies behind the pleasantness of this spring.

People's Platform

Propaganda Made Halo For Murderer

Today there are too many crimes committed against women, young and old, and the unexplained, and apparently unexplained, killing of the young girl called for the maximum punishment provided by law. The republishing has been persistently and repeatedly informed that this young man had been standing student—not so testified by his teacher; that he has been a star athlete, which, if true, should have increased his status and the highest respect for young womanhood and womankind as well as that he is the son of a highway patrolman, which is not only wholly irrelevant, but none of these achievements afford any defense whatever to the enormous crime under the law. Neither can they possibly afford any semblance of excuse to the same mind.

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PRIME MINISTER
The Price Will Go Up

certain there was nothing ahead but summer and a long holiday at the seaside.

Just below the surface the changes are beginning to occur, and even if France escapes disaster, they are bound to come later and faster. The tough new Minister of the Interior, Jules Moch, has clamped a number of restrictions under the emergency powers granted by Parliament.

POLICE PERMIT

No Frenchman can leave France without a special police permit. This is a little late, since Jacques Soustelle and other de Gaulle and violent anti-government men have already escaped to Algiers, where they have joined the secessionist newspapers are subject to censorship. Individuals may be arrested and held without trial, and a number of arrests have been made in Paris and elsewhere.

But these changes are as nothing compared to those which must come in the economic field if the government—as a government, whether headed by General Charles de Gaulle or the Cabinet combination under Premier Pierre Pflimlin—is to face up to the war against the Moslem rebels in Algeria and what this means to France's fiscal position.

Specifically, the Cabinet pledged an additional \$100 million for the military budget. This must mean higher taxes, and without stringent controls—perhaps, rationing—must mean higher prices.

Behind the brilliant facade a swift deterioration has set in. If a showdown with the military which could topple the Fourth Republic is averted, the Pflimlin government will face the necessity for measures to support it that a second testing time may come very quickly.

A smile that lies behind the pleasantness of this spring.

—WM. F. JONES

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

PLEASE allow me space in your most valuable paper to express my opinion of the three candidates for the State Senate, who have been chosen by the three and of their past records and I have come to the conclusion that J. Spencer Bell is better qualified to serve the voters of Mecklenburg than the other two.

His record in the Senate has proved that he is well qualified for the job. What we need in the Senate is a man with experience and ability. Bell is the man and should be sent back to the Senate.

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