THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Is America Waiting For A Trumpet?

"One feels that increasing numbers (of Americans) are waiting for a trumpet to sound."

The words are those of Arthur Schlesinger Jr., historian, pamphleteer, guardian of the Democratic conscience. The source is an absorbing pamphlet, "The Shape Of National Politics to Come." The subject — a prediction about America's politics just-round-the-corner.

At the moment, Mr. Schlesinger detects "spiritual unemployment" in America; and he revives a theory developed in 1939 that American politics passes through cycles every 15 or 16 years, its mood alternating between action and passiveness. Thus, the Harding-through-Hoover era was passive, with the Hoover era, like today's under Eisenhower, reflecting a vague dissidence. The "active" cycle bloomed with FDR in 1932 and ran its course through the late Forties, when a period of retrenchment and quietude set in. The mood, he thinks, is about to be overthrown and replaced by an era of great action and development. All it needs is a figure who would arise, like Teddy Roosevelt, Wilson, or FDR, to give it form.

His conservative enemies, particularly in the Republican Party, will be tempted to dismiss Schlesinger's prophecy as a mere psychological fillip aimed to pick up waning Democratic spirits. Some Democrats may hastily think the same. Partisan conclusions would be rash. Not only does he have a good word for certain Republicans (notably Nelson Rockefeller) but Mr. Schlesinger has brought forward sound empirical arguments for his notion that we border now on the upturn of the political cycle. Certainly, this memorandum is more than airy theorizing.

For him, such current phenomena as the rise of the Beat Generation and "sick" humor, the religious boom ("suggests the widespread yearning for spiritual purpose of some sort in life") big sales of Boris Pasternak's "Dr. Zhivago" or Galbraith's "Affluent Society" indicate the "spiritual unemployment" in America. One does not need to be terribly sensitive to feel a certain malaise, it is true. Certainly, as he claims, one major source is "our greatest present anomaly" — the unevenness of public and private bounty. "The United States, the richest country in the history of the world, cannot build an educational system worthy of its children, cannot build as many ICBMs as the less affluent Soviet Union, cannot maintain its roads and parks and forests, cannot have a proper resources policy, etc., indeed, cannot even run a decent postal system."

It is admittedly easier to share Mr. Schlesinger's conclusions about the national mood than to agree that the horn will be blown by anyone on the immediate horizon. Not everyone will share his mystic view of Big Government as the savior of the national conscience, even while admitting its necessity as a mediator against private predators run wild. This Gulliver will not move effectively, or with any moral direction, until the tiny mortals unstring him by their own initiative. At the moment, the mortals — especially those who will offer their services for the White House in 1960 — seem to be sitting tight and mending political fences. No one summons America to the sawdust aisles. The big issue at the moment is "spending"—a political toy which means virtually nothing in and of itself. In other words, Mr. Schlesinger, we are still waiting for the trumpet to sound. It will be interesting to see what happens if it does.

Jim Tatum: Incorrigible Individuality

America has sports scholars, Dwight MacDonald has written, who chronicle the world of athletics as scrupulously, with as much sense of history, as a good historian would chronicle Napoleon or Alexander the Great. To those keepers of the record we leave the assessing of Jim Tatum's role as a football player and coach. His career undoubtedly was one of massive importance, fitting into the tradition of Knute Rockne and the other historic builders of football power.

As laymen in these matters, who did not belong to his great world, we can only assess Jim Tatum as his life and work impinged on the life and work of the fans who sat in the stands on Saturday afternoon, watching the man in the Texas-style hat move autocratically up and down the sidelines.

Jim Tatum believed, he said, in winning. "Winning is everything," he said once. We couldn't have disagreed more about the purpose of college football had he suggested it should unseat Latin or history or mathematics in the University he served. There seemed to us just as much chance for strength and character, if not for elation, in a hard afternoon lost as in an easy afternoon when your score column is heavy and the opponent's is empty. We still believe it.

But if, in the abstract, one disagreed with Jim Tatum that "winning is everything," one grew to suspect that with his sense of humor and his incorrigible individuality Coach Tatum didn't really believe it himself, altogether. He returned in 1956 to Chapel Hill, a place he adored as much as anyone else, like "Br'er Rabbit coming back to the briar patch." It was plain that he loved Chapel Hill and the University, in the last resort, more than he loved winning football games. He sensed the tradition of Archibald Henderson as well as he did that of Charlie Justice, in the end, and he respected both. He also understood the tradition of freedom that prevails there. When some of his more excited partisans wanted to cast out the adversaries of his coming on the student newspaper, he called them to order with the affirmation: "I believe in freedom of speech as much as anyone. I practice it every day."

Jim Tatum believed in his principle of victory strongly, only stopping at the point where the principle might have done violence to other traditions that grew from interests and assumptions different from his. That is, after all, the acid test of football coaches, no less than of scholars, statesmen, and kings. In anybody's history, he passed it worthily and with dignity.

Hot Words Clear The Air In Moscow

Vice President Nixon's "toe-to-toe" swap of words with Nikita Khrushchev at the Trade Fair in Moscow made up in air-cleaning frankness what it lacked in courtesy. The scene was badly chosen. The words, however, needed saying. There is reason now to think that sharp exchanges occasionally are better for peaceful relations than a continual swap of double-meaning, innuendo and platitude.

The Soviet Premier should understand, as Mr. Nixon tried to say, that the Western allies regard their position in West Berlin — pending a reasonable agreement for the future — as a position of honor. We cannot be shoved out by ultimatum.

From The Greensboro Daily News

AL CAPP–AT HOME ABROAD

Al Capp, who satirizes U. S. social customs while amusing us with his Dogpatch characters, has recently drawn a bead on two typical but contrasting American attitudes toward people of other countries.

Significantly he has been using Italy as a background for his Lil Abner comic strip to make his points. From decade to decade Americans choose favorites. Between the two world wars France was the mecca of the "lost generation". In postwar Europe Italy has drawn Americans like flies to honey.

Some weeks ago Al Capp set his protagonist, Lil Abner, in Italy to characterize the "ugly American" who no matter where his travels take him really "never leaves home."

This three-panel strip opened with a Roman cafe owner complaining to a spaghetti-ensnared Yokum, "My—er—'insurance' business was fine until those foreigners came from America."

Lil Abner immediately set the Italian straight: "Yo' got it wrong, suh!! Americans is Americans WHAREver they is!! It's YO' critters who is furriners!!"

The elder Yokum son, Al Capp implies, is the American who cannot understand why everybody in the world is not like—Americans. Such citizens come back shocked and chagrined to find so many "foreigners" aboard. Or as one elderly lady complained about a shop she entered on her European tour, "Not a soul spoke English."

Just recently Al Capp poked fun at the other extreme: The xenophile American who thinks that anything—and everything—foreign is naturally better.

Lil Abner's younger brother, 15½-year-old Tiny, one day announced to his parents that he was leaving home. It was time, he said, he settled down and "got married up" with the young woman in the photograph he held lovingly.

"Moonbeam McSwine?" asked Mammy Yokum, looking at the picture. She was referring to a Dogpatch "critter" who consorts with pigs and has aversions to bathing but who, unbeknownst to Tiny, has by strange circumstances become an Italian movie star and the idol of the newest U.S. "beat" group, the Slobniks.

"How many times Ah gotta tell yo'?" answered Tiny. "This HAIN'T Moonbeam!! THIS is a glammy-russ star — namely th' — (quiver!!) Pig-Gal."

Ever realistic, Mammy observed that "she don't seem to be no diff'runt than Moonbeam! Jest as sloppy!!" If that is the way his taste runs, why doesn't Tiny stay home "and — ush — marry Moonbeam."

Speaking for all who see glamour in the distant, Tiny explained: "Ah hates an' despises thet dirty Moonbeam — but Ah loves an' pines fo' this earthy furrin critter!!"

So Moonbeam McSwine, at home, is dirty, sloppy and unwashed. But abroad she is desirable, her "earthiness" an attractive quality.

Out of the mouths of comic-strip hillbillies Al Capp lets fly penetrating comments on our foibles and pretenses.

Will Fidel Castro's Cuba Become A Soviet Satellite?

By WALTER LIPPMANN

WASHINGTON

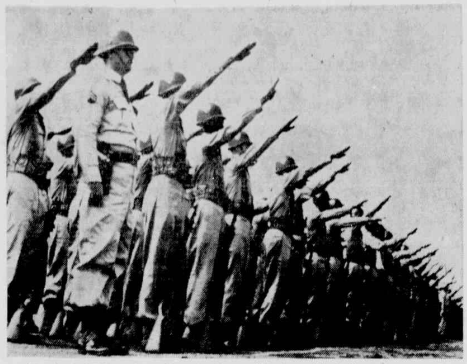
Shortly after Dr. Castro brought his revolution to power in Cuba, the governor of Puerto Rico, Mr. Munoz-Marin, came up to Washington. He came to give us advice which he was pre-eminently qualified to do. For he had been carrying through successfully a peaceable revolution in his own country, he had the personal confidence of the Cuban revolutionists, and he was and is our very great friend.

Even then, at the beginning, he foresaw the troubles in Cuba, the stubborn difficulties against which the revolution was waged and which it then inherited, the inexperience and the emotional instability of its fighting leaders.

THE REAL THING

Whatever you do, he said in effect, do not let yourselves become enemies of this revolution. For this revolution is the real thing. It is not a mere change of the guard at the top as is so common in Latin America. This is a popular revolution of the sort which, more than 30 years ago, Mexico went through, and after years of blood and tears brought to a happy ending.

It requires great skill to manage our relations with a revolution of this character in a country which is such a very near neighbor. We have to find ways of reconciling our political and economic interests with a revolution which cannot be stabilized until the chief grievances which produced the revolution have been redressed. This can be managed only if the American ambassador in Havana can work out a relationship with the revolutionary leaders in which they will listen to him, and even seek his advice and his help.



Hundreds Of New Army Recruits Swear Allegiance To Cuban Government

There is good reason to say that we have such an ambassador in Havana, one who is capable of carrying out such a delicate mission, who has, one might say, "good hands" when he rides. But, of course, he has no chance whatever of succeeding if Congress is going to roughhouse our relations with Cuba, as did the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Senate just the other day. This was when it provided a platform and loudspeakers for a disaffected Cuban adventurer to denounce the Cuban revolutionists as Communists. This country, as the President was quick to point out, "has made no such charges." But the damage done by the subcommittee's irresponsible meddling may not be repaired easily or quickly.

SELF-DETERMINATION

The policy which we are following in Cuba is to avoid a break with Dr. Castro and to seek more contact with him. This policy is the product of years of experience in our relations with the other American states. There is no alternative to it, given the fact that we have most solemnly renounced the right of intervention to suppress a revolution. In this century, we have committed ourselves repeatedly and wholly to the principle that each country in this hemisphere has the right of self-determination. This carries with it inseparably the right of revolution, and imposes upon us the obligation to live with the revolutions, when they occur, as best we can.

Beneath these large generalizations and abstractions, there is the substantial fact that in this century, which is seeing the awakening of the submerged masses of mankind, the old style of imperialism and overlordship is not only morally unacceptable but is practically impossible. To put it specifically and bluntly, the United States could not install a puppet to govern Cuba in place of Dr. Castro and his revolutionists. The United States must, therefore, do what it can to keep on good terms with Dr. Castro and his successors.

There are those who think differently. They see Dr. Castro going far to the left in the company of a number of fellow-travelers of the Communists. They think the way to deal with what they see is to denounce the fellow-travelers as Communists, even as Soviet agents, and to denounce Dr. Castro who tolerates and associates with fellow-travelers as himself a fellow-traveler and virtually a Communist. What good will it do, I would like to know? The result of such tactics will not be to cause Dr. Castro and the fellow - travelers to abandon their revolutionary program. It will be to cause them to regard us as their enemy, and to become as thoroughly anti-American as they dare to be.

PATIENCE, PLEASE

The wiser course and the more practical one is to be patient and relaxed — to remember that Cuba is our near neighbor and is far beyond the reach of the Soviet Union. Remembering this, we can rely ultimately on the high improbability that Cuba will drift or be pushed and pulled into the Soviet orbit.

Just as it was a great mistake to treat Egypt under Col. Nasser as a Soviet satellite, so it would be an even greater mistake even to intimate that Castro's Cuba has any real prospect of becoming a Soviet satellite.

KEEP THE WAY OPEN

For the thing we should never do is dealing with the revolutionary countries in which the world abounds is to push them behind an iron curtain raised by ourselves. On the contrary, even when they have been seduced and subverted and are drawn across the line, the right thing to do is to keep the way open for their return.

'Well, Now To Find Some Facts'



People's Platform

Baby-Bussing Doesn't Pay Off

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

I see where Sen. Hubert Humphrey has already started campaigning for the presidency and here it is only July 1959 and the fellow hasn't even been nominated yet.

Humphrey might as well take it easy. Take Briscoe Holt's word for it. You don't have to wear yourself out shaking hands to get elected.

Briscoe, many of your readers may remember, was the fellow who kept a log of his activities while he was campaigning for election as sheriff over in Tennessee a few years ago. It shows that he worked himself half to death for nearly a year. He attended barbecues, sang in choirs, gave away calves, suspenders and baby rattles. He walked 6,481 miles, shook 9,847 hands and kissed 115 babies before the campaign was over.

But ol' Briscoe lost. His total was 43 votes. This averages out to be less than one-half vote for every baby bussed. Worse, it comes out to only one vote for every 229 hands shaken.

So, Hubert might as well go back to the Senate and set a spell. The nomination — and the election — will probably go to some fellow who hasn't even thought about bussing a baby yet.

—JAY KIRKPATRICK

A Literary Lament

Bums As Writers

By ROBERT C. RUARK

BARCELONA, Spain

I would like today to do a piece about writers, for I have read a whimpering homily to F. Scott Fitzgerald, and I weary of the legend. Since I was also able to weary of Eugene O'Neill and Thomas Wolfe, not to mention Boris Pasternak, you cannot accuse me of playing favorites.

There is something wrong with the writing trade if you got to die, generally drunk, dope-addicted or just plain nuts, to be a legend. It does not seem quite fair to such terribly well-adjusted people as John Steinbeck, for example, who can drink a good glass like the rest of us, but who continues to love Miss Elaine and to pay his bills while writing prose.

FIVE MILLION WORDS

Perhaps I am not worthy of carrying F. Scott Fitzgerald's bad checks, and I certainly will never make as much literary mileage out of my family as O'Neill or Wolfe, but I can tell you one thing. I just finished a book which involved four years of writing and which will be published on Oct. 26, and that book took a minimum of five million words out of my nervous system in order to get a clean 400,000, or about five long novels. Under one cover.

This does not preclude the columns which are necessary to my financial health, or the magazine pieces, or the correspondence, or the daily paper-reading, or trips to various foreign places such as Australia, London, and Upper Kaabong, in Uganda. This does not preclude the business of tax returns, long written communications with editors, fights with publishers, or getting loaded when the time seems likely.

WAS HE A BUM?

But my point is that my three dogs are in excellent health, my wife is not nuts, I do not hate my mother, my mother-in-law is one of my best friends. I am not addicted to dope, I do not accept the bounty of women, and I have seldom been known to get sick in public or go around identifying myself to strangers as a famous author, a charming little habit Mr. Fitzgerald developed—when he was not climbing up walls, or being force-fed, or practicing to be the subject for autobiographies by women who kept him in his failing years, which started pretty early for a grown man.

The good Lord knows writing is not easy, because it is the most lonesome job in the world, and does not considerably enhance a good disposition. Even the dogs know when the Boss is having deadline trouble or must perforce do a massive rewrite job, and they stay clear. This also applies to the poor lady who has lived in a welter of carbon paper and newspaper clippings with me for 21 years.

THAT AIN'T HARD

But a great many of the pros manage a fairly orderly life, even if it entails divorces, and the point is that they don't whimper enough about crazy wives and their own booziness or bad seed in their sons or domineering mothers to make themselves proper subjects for biography. I think that possibly Paul Gallico is the best all-around pro in all the writing fields I ever met, and Paul looks better at 63 than I do at 44. And before somebody hollers, "that ain't hard," I'll say it myself.

PENALTY FOR NEATNESS

Just because a guy writes or paints for a living gives him no license to be a bum, a drunk, a whiner, or a public charge. And I have always thought, frankly, that Mr. Fitzgerald was a much better actor than he ever was a writer, and that the lonely, boring posturing of Thomas Wolfe was just a collection of words. Neither Fitzgerald or Wolfe had any more plot sense than Mamselle, my stupid poodle, and you can just eat so much mood before you start to clamor for the meat. And the meat is plot and the construction of same.

What am I so mad about? I'll tell you. I just finished this massive volume, my bills are paid, I still got the same wife, and I shaved this morning. And nobody, ever, is going to find me so violently disgusting or outright odd that any obituary longer than a stick of type will be written. That is the penalty a writer pays for neatness, hard work, no libel suits, and hitting a deadline smack on the nose. Selah.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Nixon Plays A Long Shot In Russia

WASHINGTON

Political cross-currents can blow public figures into strange places. And the most ironic twist of fate today is to see Mr. Richard Nixon, who a few short years ago was handing out subpoenas to Communists to appear before his Un-American Activities Committee, now in Moscow trying to patch up a peace with the Communists.

However, the Kremlin moves in strange ways, and it might just happen that young Mr. Nixon could come home with accomplishment. Certainly he's not unaware of the stakes.

The Big Pay-Off

"If I can break the deadlock in Geneva," he confided to a friend just before he left, "nothing can stop me in 1960."

That was one reason he prepared so carefully for his mission to Moscow. He proposed to Secretary of State Herter that he take up with Khrushchev the whole question of the Berlin stalemate and try to break it. He took up with Eisenhower the idea of extending to Khrushchev an invitation to visit the United States.

Ike Said No

Eisenhower turned him down. He didn't like the idea of inviting the No. 1 man of the Kremlin to Washington at a time when his foreign minister was giving the West such a rough time at Geneva. Ike's negative attitude, leaking back to Moscow, may have been why Khrushchev remarked that he was puzzled about the aim of Nixon's visit.

Green Light Given

Herter, on the other hand gave Nixon the green light to do anything he could to change Khrushchev and get the Geneva talks off dead center. But just to make sure the eager-beaver vice president makes no mistakes, Herter sent a top Russian expert, Foy Kohler, along to guide him. Ironically, Kohler is the former head of the Voice of America, who came in for attack by Sen. Joe McCarthy at a time when Nixon was McCarthy's chief defender.

Backstage Moves

Nixon has made other backstage moves to make sure his trip is a public relations success. He pressured Deputy Premier Kozlov during their Capitol Hill meeting to lift all censorship on American newspapermen accompanying him. This has now been done. He also insisted that he visit some of the key cities of Siberia instead of the usual sightseeing cities of Tashkent and Kiev. This has been partially granted.

He also told the American Embassy he would do his usual hand-shaking stunt, which so flabbergasted the Japanese when he got out of his car and began shaking hands and bussing babies along his line of march. He is also taking along—at his special request—Ralph de Toledano of Newsweek, the writer who turned out the rave book on Nixon. Newsweek is represented by its diplomatic editor, Edward Weintal, and its publisher, Malcolm Muir, but added de Toledano when Nixon urged it.

Long Shot

This mission to Moscow is a long shot. But long shots and irony have paid off in the career of Richard M. Nixon and perhaps this one to the leaders of a government which he has so long battled against will pay off, too.