The Charlotte News

And Evening Chronicle

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 14, 1938

More Silly Season

At Rice, in Southern California, the thermometer stood at 120. In Charlotte, N. C., it stood at something like that.

In cantankerous Yorkshire, England, it snowed, and the children snowballed in the streets of the towns.

In Smithfield, Pa., a seven-year-old boy got paid $6.54 as a ditch-digger for WPA.

In Trenton, N. J., John W. Mannefield Jr., who paints white lines on roads to warn motorists to keep to the right got fined for driving on the wrong side of the road.

In San Francisco, a line of lovelies in bathing suits picketed the Golden Gate International Exposition on the ground that its publicity wasn't fair to legs.

In Durham, N. C., a defeated candidate reported for campaign expenses "75 cents for gum drops."

In Baltimore the watchful cops caught a slot machine redhanded and arrested its owner.

And somewhere in the heavens Sirius, the dog star, beamed on his way, doomed to wait eight years or so before he found out about it all.

Boy, bring up our eight-motored, 700-miles-an-hour, solid platinum fuselage plane. We crave cantankerous Yorkshire, even with the pudding.

In the Powder Keg

What seems to be shaping up in Europe is a showdown on Czechoslovakia. And at the end of the road lies a very great possibility of war. That Hitler's mobilization is a routine maneuver is nonsense, as Mr. Chamberlain in London undoubtedly knows. Questionless, it is a move designed to intimidate Czechoslovakia and France. And if Mr. Chamberlain goes on alleging that he believes that it is a routine maneuver, then it may well be because Mr. Chamberlain is hand in glove with Hitler on the whole business. Reports have had it for the last two weeks that Adolf has promised to give up his demand that England return the old German colonies if he (Chamberlain) will acquiesce in the rape of Czechoslovakia, and Lord Runciman is pretty plainly engaged right now in attempting to coerce the little country into yielding without a fight.

But that the regime of Dr. Benes has any notion of doing that is far from certain. The apologists for Chamberlain's policy claim that all Hitler wants after all is simply the economic hegemony of Central Europe and that if he gets it he'll be content without political hegemony. That's what was said about Austria once, too, but it didn't work out so. And the very nature of the demands of the Sudetens indicate that it is not really true in the case of Czechoslovakia either. "What the little country is really being asked to do is to surrender its sovereignty immediately, with every prospect that it will cease utterly to exist, as Austria has ceased to exist, within a very short period.

And if it shows the proud, stiff courage which is the inheritance of its people, defies Mr. Chamberlain and Hitler's show of overwhelming force, can Adolf back down even if he wants to? It is more than improbable that he'll want to, for the man is a psychopath who believes frantically that destiny rides invincibly with his arms. But even if he did, can he afford as a dictator to see his mobilization scorned? And if he strikes, will France break her word to come to the aid of Czechoslovakia? Benito Mussolini, at least, obviously doesn't think so, as witness his sudden decision to issue no more passports for Italians to travel into French territory.

Point of Departure

The National Emergency Council's report to the President on the South Friday contains nothing which is startlingly new. That we are poor; that we have a third of the nation's population but only 16% of its total productive equipment, 13% of its total income; that our wages average a third lower than the national average; that our average income is only about half that of the average of the nation; that the assessed value of taxable property per person among us is only one-third that of the rest of the country; that farm unemployment has been increasing by leaps and bounds as the foreign cotton market dwindles; that our housing is bad; that we have a monopoly on pellagra, and that, though Dr. Isaac Goldberger proved it a vitamin deficiency disease so long ago as 1916, it has shown little decrease since; that our system of finance imposes an intolerable burden on agriculture; and that all this, and more, is true in face of the fact that we have a country which is one of the richest in natural resources to be found on the earth — all this has been pointed out often in recent years, and may be found set forth methodically and in great detail in Dr. Howard Odum's "Southern Regions."

But if the report has the effect of directing popular attention to these facts, it will be immensely useful. One of the great burdens which the South has labored under has been its refusal to admit that anything was wrong — its tendency to take a dispassionate statement of facts concerning its economic and social condition as criticism inspired by the same carping and hated spirit which characterized the Yankee journalists who have roamed the land from the Civil War right on down to Mr. Walter Davenport and The Philadelphia Record, and to insist that, in fact, the South needed nothing but to be let alone and to go comfortably and complacently on in its ancient way.

The report discreetly made no recommendations as to what ought to be done, contenting itself with the observation that the solution of the problem is "not beyond the power of men." It is a faith we all must share — or resign ourselves to disaster. But it may as well be conceded at once that solution is not going to be easy. What is primarily involved is the shift from a traditional economy which has always made us poor by binding us to European standards of living, and an economy which we must willy-nilly get away from because it is now shrivelling at the root, to a new one of which the shape is yet far from apparent — and that in no very long period. And men have not ordinarily been able to make such a change in orderly fashion — for the reason, precisely, that they have refused to face the facts and begin making their plans before necessity had them in such close quarters that it was no longer possible to plan.

And if Friday's report can have the effect of drawing the attention of the South at large to the facts and bringing about agreement that these facts do exist and must be met, it will, as we say, have done us an immensely useful service. For it is to that point that we must go before we can even begin to look for a solution.

In the Right Direction

And discussion of Friday's report and the Southern problem reminds us that the Agricultural Committee of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, headed by Ralph Robinson and Harvey Morris, seems to be going the right way with its program for a farm congress here next Saturday, to the end of letting the farmers hear speakers who understand the facts in the case, and the promoting of a packing, poultry, and milk products plant in Charlotte.

Charlotte boasts itself the center of one of the largest and most populous trading territories in the South. But it is clear now that mere population isn't going to make the city prosperous and great. What is required is buying power on the part of the population. And so far as the rural population goes, the buying power of this territory is appallingly low. Farm lands in the area run to only four and a half acres per person engaged in agriculture. And the growing of cotton on those four and a half acres accounts for almost all the income such a person has. Over in South Carolina, for instance, 40% of all farm families have no cow, and 21% haven't a chicken.

But obviously the production of beef, poultry, dairy products, etc., offer an excellent chance for increasing the incomes of these farmers, and their buying power. For the South every year spends $7,500,000 in freight bills alone for the importing of food products, among which these of beef, poultry, and dairy products are important items. What is needed is three things: (1) to get the farmers supplied with good breeding stock, which will pay a profit, (2) to acquaint them with the best methods of raising their animals for the market, and (3) the provision of a regularly organized market where they can bring their animals and produce, get them properly graded, and sell them at the market prices current in the nation instead of for whatever they can get.

The Chamber's plan looks toward the second and third objectives, and if these can be reached, a way can probably be found to take care of the first.

THE BULL PROSPECT

By Hugh S. Johnson

BETHANY BEACH, Del.—The Consumers' Goods Industries Committee has just reported that business is getting better fast with a fine Fall prospect.

I got a big kick out of this for these four reasons: First, these first-stringers cover a wide field and know what they are talking about, so this is a dependable forecast of a real advance. Second, that NRA committee survived the death of the Blue Eagle, and, under the skillful leadership of Mr. George Sloane, has done much to prevent departures from high code standards. Third, it is precisely what this column began saying three months ago—"I told you so." Fourth, this business enthusiasm comes in an election year, largely from anti-Third New Dealers, and refutes the insinuation that business is hanging back on the traces of recovery to embarrass the administration.

The report covers a wide range of business—practically all except the capital goods industries. It tells a consistent story throughout—stocks low, demand and activity increasing. There isn't really a sour note in it.

EVEN CAPITAL GOODS BEGIN TO MOVE A LITTLE

It is true that there can be no real recovery without the capital or heavy goods industries and these cannot stage a comeback without a restoration of the flow of new private money into the investment market. It is not so hard to pump-prime a consumers' goods boom. That was even done by Mr. Hoover in the Fall of 1932, and by the New Deal in 1933 and 1937 but, because these spurts did not extend to the new investment and heavy-goods group, it flew on one wing and fell. There is nothing you could call a starting boom in these fields as yet, but there is a faint stirring in both and if this kind of rise in confidence can be kept alive and growing, we might see the beginning of real recovery this Fall.

It is also true that part of this activity is due to the prospect of a new colossal government spending spree and that we are getting toward the end of our rope on that. There won't always be something to use for money. But that is the precise reason why, regardless of political or economic prejudice in an election year, business leaders generally are pushing the idea that all should get on the crank of this engine with a mighty yo-heave-ho and try to get hitting on all cylinders even if this is an artificial starter.

IT'S MIGHTY LUCKY FOR THE NEW DEALERS

That is far from being an impossibility. The mere rise in the stock market, based upon the prospect that business is going to be good, has created billions of dollars of potential investment and buying power—many times more than all the Federal spending. This may be called "paper" wealth and mere "book-keeping entries"—but so is a government bond. The stock market rise increases by billions the borrowing power of millions of people. It does more than that. It releases their confidence and courage to spend or invest other money.

There is nothing so conducive to rising business and if that tide of confidence should ever go to the height of releasing for investment the stupendous hoards of frightened, hiding, idle private money thus far scared into a thousand holes by political fears, we could have full recovery with a dangerous rush.

This flood might install the Third New Deal in perpetuity notwithstanding that many of its own policies have prevented it thus far. But nothing—not even that would justify anything but the utmost encouragement of the present trend.

This depression has gone on too long—far beyond the danger point. This may be a way out.

Old Words For New

(Charleston News & Courier)

Suancy, suant, and suantly are returning to good use in England. These words are likely to lose their label of "dialect" or "provincial." In the years of Queen Elizabeth the adjective suant was known commonly. A statute in her reign decreed that "eche sort of said Kerseys, or Dozens shall be sewantly woven throughout." Here is a reminder also that a dozen was the name of a cloth.

The dictionary says that suant means even, smooth, regular, so that a dozen suantly woven is dozen smoothly woven. A suantly run machine is a smoothly running machine. The English have readopted suant, suantly and suancy and it is likely that these words will be working their way into the English language in this Union.

Compromise

(Chicago Tribune)

A Chicagoan who owns a yacht he keeps in Long Island Sound was deciding on a name for it. He wrote to each of his old girls in turn, and asked permission to name the boat for her. Each answered giving permission, flattered by the suggestion. So he named the yacht "The Old Maid."

Letters To The Editor:

Small House Program Is City's Need

Vacant Realty In City Ought To Be Taken Over And Used To Build Low Rent Dwellings, He Maintains

Dear Sir:

Will you please publish the attached open letter to Mayor Douglas and the City Council?

CHARLES N. HARGETT.

Charlotte.

The Honorable Mayor Ben E. Douglas and Charlotte City Councilmen:

With regard to the Federal Housing and Works Progress Programs, I, as a citizen of Charlotte for more than thirty years, wish to make the following recommendation.

We people of this section of the South are not so greatly interested in the large unit tenement house system as we would be in an individual private home building program on an economical finance plan that would meet the income of the average working man. I believe that the last census showed that the average income of the Charlotte working man ranged around twelve dollars a week. And certainly, if that should be the average, then we should have a home building program to meet that income. Which is to say the average working man can only pay for rent or installments around ten to twenty dollars a month.

It seems to me that there is plenty of vacant land which has been lying idle within the city limits of Charlotte for thirty odd years that is practically of no benefit to God or suffering humanity and should be utilized for this great cause. And if the present owners and land dealers would not turn it over to society at a reasonable price, I think our state and national constitutions ought to provide a remedy for that.

Let us not overlook the great deserts of vacant land lying idle north of the Seaboard Railroad within the Charlotte city limits. Just let society imagine how many thousands of from four to seven room low-cost homes could be built in that vacant territory and how many hundreds of men for whom it would provide work for an indefinite time to come.

And just one of many other noble features that could be brought out in a program of this kind would be the opening of many streets and one in particular probably would be Twenty-Fourth or Twenty-Fifth Street, opened from the northeast to the northwest section, or perhaps from the old Lawyer's Road east to the Statesville Road northwest. That of course would mean a number of underpasses and probably one long subway under the north railroad yards. This of course, would mean many millions of dollars but why should we worry, it would put hundreds of men to work and would benefit society for all ages to come? There is not a safe railroad crossing for the public between East Trade Street underpass and the overhead bridge in the town of Concord anyhow.

CHARLES N. HARGETT.

Charlotte.

Objects To Episcopal Chapel At Hospital

Dear Sir:

Why will the proposed new Municipal Hospital, for the whole city and county, have an Episcopal Chapel? I understand the hospital is to be built as a non-denominational, purely municipal hospital, for all the people of every creed, Gentile, Jew, Catholic, and Protestant. Why allow one denomination to go in ahead of all other denominations and build a chapel of their religious persuasion?

It would be fine to have a chapel, but I do not think it should be sectarian and sponsored by only one denomination. With best wishes for a municipal chapel.

MRS. JAMES McILHENNEY.

Charlotte.

Visiting Around

How To Identify An Aristocratic Chawer

(B. F. Sink, Lexington Dispatch)

Charlie Leonard, the big chief down on the orphanage farm, is doing some excellent work there. He is different from Bill, in that he carries his tobacco in the upper left hand corner of his mouth in a sort of aristocratic Gov. Cameron Morrison style.

Ocean Side—Now That's What We Call Accurate Reporting

(Thomasville Item, Lexington Dispatch)

Dr. and Mrs. W. G. Smith and W. G. Jr. left Monday for the ocean side to spend sometime.

Just Dropped In to Say Howdy, We Take It

(Rural Item, Lexington Dispatch)

Miss Elsie Clodfelter was a visitor at the Continental beauty school of High Point Wednesday.

Of Course, In Skins—And Unpasteurized

(B. F. Sink, Lexington Dispatch)

Bill Grimes and Dayard Hoyle Sink: It's time to can grape juice. Here we go!

R. G. Shoaf: Don't can it all—there are other ways to save it.

THE SAILOR HOME FROM THE SEA AND THE HUNTER HOME FROM THE HILL

Puncturing A Legend

By HERBERT AGAR

WE seem to love to frighten ourselves with tales of how dreadful the next war will be. Even the cautious Walter Lippmann writes of "a war more devilishly destructive than any which mankind has yet had to endure."

The first World War, we are told, was the most destructive war in history. And the second World War will be worse. It seems to be part of our general belief in progress. Just as our ocean liners and our airplanes get bigger and faster, so our wars will surely get bigger and deadlier.

The people who weave these dreadful fantasies probably think they are carrying on an anti-war propaganda. I suspect that they are wrong. I suspect that the horrors which they picture have a fatal fascination for the immature mind. Perhaps a little debunking would be a useful form of anti-war propaganda.

Military experts from time to time have pointed out that there is no truth in the tales of new and deadly gas which can destroy whole cities. Yet the tales persist. People do not want evidence; they want horrors.

THERE NEVER WAS A LOST GENERATION IN FACT

In dealing with the future, the horror-mongers have a happy time. Nobody can prove absolutely that they are wrong; only time can do that. But in dealing with the last World War, the historian can supply certain facts. And those facts suggest that the war's destructiveness has been greatly exaggerated.

Not the war's harmfulness—not the legacy of hatreds and of insoluble dilemmas which it left behind it—but the war's actual destructiveness has been exaggerated. The whole story of a "lost generation" is a fairy-tale. That fairy-tale was exposed some years ago in England by Douglas Jerrold; it has recently been exposed in America by Fletcher Pratt.

Writing in the July number of The American Mercury, Mr. Pratt (author of an admirable history of our navy) points out that there was no statistical evidence for the theory that the war generation was seriously handicapped by its losses in the war.

Deems Taylor in a recent radio speech explaining the lack of first-class musicians in the modern world by saying that the musicians of today are "lying in Flanders or the Carpathians or along the Isonzo, killed by the war." And many others have advanced similar explanations—for the feebleness of British politics, for the feebleness of the French novel, etc., etc. Mr. Pratt makes short work of such explanations.

POST-WAR PERIODS HAVE OFTEN BEEN VERY FECUND

His figures speak for themselves; but they are too detailed to be repeated here. I shall quote a few sentences from his concluding section:

"The Persian invasion of Greece saw some extremely heavy fighting, which cost Athens 14% of her entire citizen body, a far higher proportionate loss than any nation suffered in the World War. The 'lost generation' which resulted—after precisely the same lag that separates our Lost Generation from the World War—was known as the Age of Pericles. . . . The Lost Generation of the wars of Louis XIV was the generation that produced Corneille, Racine, Molière and Boileau."

He shows that the Lost Generation of the Napoleonic Wars was one of the most productive generations in modern European history. And he concludes that we must look elsewhere for the explanation of our modern failing off in creativity and self-trust.

"To ascribe (this loss) to the effect of the war is to commit as great an absurdity as Lord Kingsborough's when he declared the decline of Dutch painting due to an increased diet of fish."

Truth in Spain

(Manchester Guardian)

In most discussions on the Spanish war, whether public or private, there comes a point when the supporter of Franco, unable to deny the overwhelming superiority of foreign aid on the rebel side, unable to persuade his opponent that it was the Basques who burnt Guernica in a fit of temper, unable to explain why the Moors should be defending Christianity in Spain, exclaims with all the certainty of prejudice, "Well, at any rate, the Russians intervened first."

It is not, from any point of view, a good argument and it happens not to be true. There is no evidence to support it such as was supplied on the other side, for instance, by the official inquiry into the three Italian aeroplanes which crashed in French territory on July 17, 1936 (just two years ago yesterday) on their way to Spanish Morocco. Indeed, it is hardly an argument at all, but an article of faith, a dogma, which has been repeated so often that it is sometimes believed.

Out of darkness, however, came forth light, and out of Italy has now come refutation. In an article celebrating (the word is accurate) the second anniversary of the Spanish war the industrious Signor Gayda has boasted (again the word is accurate) that Italy, so far from intervening after and because of Russian aid to the Spanish Government, gave assistance to the rebels from the very beginning. Signor Gayda is said to be his master's voice, and Signor Mussolini, if any one, should know.

English supporters of Franco, thus unfairly deprived of their moral comforter, may, and no doubt will, fall back on the argument that if the Russians were not the first to intervene militarily, at least they were the first to intervene politically. That also is untrue and can be refuted without the aid of Signor Gayda.

A Last Year's Editorial

(From The News for Aug. 14, 1937)

ALIKE TO ALL MEN

The judiciary of North Carolina, it appears, is beginning to assume a gradually revised attitude towards intra-racial crimes in which members of the Negro race are involved. Witness the sentencing this week of Robert Lee McLean, 19-year-old mulatto, to a term of 30 years in State's Prison, following conviction of attempted criminal assault upon a 16-year-old girl and two other young women, all Negroes. That the court's verdict will not be regarded as excessively severe in the Laurel Hill community, where the crimes occurred, may be deduced from the fact that when the crime was committed Scotland County officers saved McLean from lynching at the hands of a colored mob, including many women armed with shotguns.

Time was when such a punishment for such a crime, involving Negroes, be it remembered, would have been meted out from no bench in this commonwealth. In our opinion it augurs well, not only for law enforcement in general, but for improved racial conditions in particular. Judicial recognition that wrongs suffered by one Negro at the hands of another are as hurtful as when assailant and victim are white is a decided step forward for both races and no more than equal justice, as promised by the law to all men.

We believe that the example made of Robert Lee McLean will not be lost on North Carolina's Negroes, either upon the great majority who appreciate an exact justice or the few who have come to count on the lenience of the law.

By This Sign—

(Billy Arthur, New Bern Tribune)

Several fellows sitting near the Negro stands in Greenville the other day were telling about a conversation between two occupants about Red Harper, the New Bern third baseman. One said Red couldn't hit, but was told just to wait. Shortly, the Red drove out a long hard single.

"See?" said the Negro. "I told you he could hit. He ain't ugly for nuthin."

Course Of Nature

(Atlanta Constitution)

After the new party is organized, with dynamic leaders and an ax to grind, comes the solemn ceremony of naming it non-partisan.

Peculiarities Of People

By F. Romer

OLIVER GOLDSMITH CAPABLE of sublime outbursts in marvelous writing, Goldsmith was incapable of living within his means, however great his income. His poetry is vital forever, yet he was considered in school "impenetrably stupid"—and so lazy vagabondage appealed to him more than respectability.