

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Foxy Stuff

State Dept. "Agents" Were There for a Purpose

Let no one say again that the U. S. State Department doesn't know there's a "war on the young men" in the U. S. Huxley employ have not only been scooping their fellow countrymen by their apparent solicitude for Vichy-France, they have been pulling Pierre Laval's plentiful eyebrows down to his neck. Huxley, this once, gave way to dirty tactics.

A loud cry went up when the State Department announced that it had consented, at Vichy's supplication, to supply North Africa certain foodstuffs and other non-military goods. People said, "Why give the traitorous French masters supplies which they will surely forward to the Nazis? And when Weingand, who had been posed as an enigma in command of the uncertain quantity of French forces in Morocco, was kicked out, removing the last hopeful doubt, people cried that the State Department was obtuse. The State Department, like the Tar Baby, said not a word, but, like old Br'er Rabbit, knew what was about.

The arrangements for supplying North Africa made necessary there, in addition to regular consulates, the services of special American representatives. They have not been idle. According to a dispatch from Washington:

These men, all conversant with the French language and specially selected for their ability to gather and sift all manner of vital information, played a complicated role during the period of preparation for later military action.

They traveled to all parts of the French zone. They became thoroughly familiar with every road in the country. They obtained detailed information on the general and with Axis leanings of groups and individuals. The information collected by these men is now in the service of the AEP in North Africa.

Something went on here like the active young "tourists" who always preceded the Nazi military machine into foreign countries, and like the "business agents" Ribbentrop deployed where he found them most useful and dependable. Both, not only highly useful in time of war. And the U. S. State Department knew all along, it develops, that we were at war.

Two Strikes

Jurisdictional It Only Another Word for Petty in These Times

Once more making a mockery of the Union Labor pledge to devote itself to sacrifice and work for the war effort, irresponsible leadership has proved to be out of tune with the times in two recent strikes in the Mid-West. Both are jurisdictional, both are unproductive, both are of jurisdictional nature, both were called on the basis of inconsequential.

On a short rail line in Ohio, determined to keep the materials of war flowing between big plants, the Army has taken over. After the belligerent District, 50 of the Lewis family's United Mine Workers had struck the line and at least one war plant on its tracks, the Government could wait no longer.

The case boils down to a protest of railroad men over the alleged dismissal of an unspecified number of employees who have not reported for the road since Labor Day, 1935. The Lewis "over-all" section, the aim of which is to organize all fields of labor not controlled by UMW, gave a new bit of evidence of its stature in obstructing war production by digging up an obscure seven-year-old grievance.

In Detroit, a sympathy strike called by Matthew Smith of the newly-formed Mechanics Educational Society shut down fifteen tool and die plants employing 9,200 workers. Upon those plants, say the Army and Navy, a large part of the armament industry is dependent. The strike was called because four union members were ejected from a plant while taking part in a union squabble with CIO.

The plants were closed overnight, and the War Labor Board ordered a truce. As final settlement, however, is still pending. Will the time never come when the War Labor Board will practice what it preaches? Chairman William S. Davis said this week that the Board would be "pretty damn tough." That can't come too soon for the boys and girls who are out there waiting for the weapons of war.

Poll Cats

Election Irregularities Must Be Controlled, or All Will Be Lost

North Carolina's election laws, having been the subject of reform and still under the gaze of the state's attention, are no more perfect than any other group of man-made statutes. But the treatment they apparently received in the elections in Watauga and Ashe Counties last week makes them look like monuments to better government. From all indications, in the cases of missing ballots, new registrations and vanishing poll books, there has been fraud.

Today the State Board of Elections, an exceptionally able body with a penchant for thoroughness, is looking into the matter. It will delve into the mystery of Boone's 312 orphan ballots. There is every reason to believe that, fraud or unhappy chain of accidents, the question will be settled to the state's satisfaction. Under Chairman W. A. Lusk, the Board has acquired that kind of reputation.

These little irregularities in the laboring of Democracy are so isolated and obscure as to seem of the least importance in these times — even though several power offices depend by the consent of the governed, simply make a mockery of our efforts.

And if not rigidly controlled, the prime process of Democracy may deteriorate to such an extent that it might one day stand as every weak as much as the loss of a global war.

After Me

Slippery Admiral Darlan Now A Pawn For American Use

"On dit que Dieu est toujours pour les gros bataillons." Voltaire, who wrote those words in 1770, was assuring a friend, and later the world, that God is always on the side of the victor. The Axis, this week, is one of the great philosopher's countrymen, Admiral Jean Francois Darlan. An American captive in Algiers, he is being fawned over for all he is worth.

By U. S. commanders are giving him the "consideration" that his rank and honorable career — one suspects that our aims are to cultivate the friendship of the No. 2 man of Vichy. From the record, that won't be hard to do.

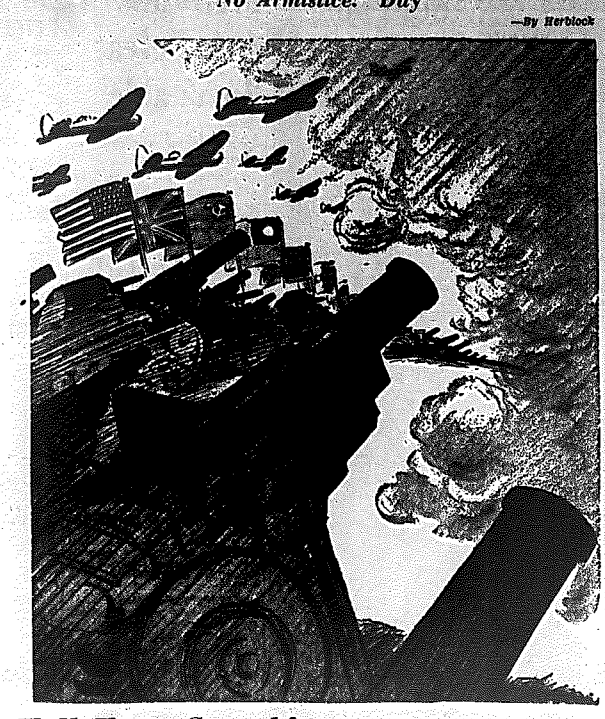
The little Admiral (also Minister of Defense and Vice Premier until Marshal Petain assumed command yesterday) rose from obscurity through a policy of unprincipled vacillation. He was described a year ago as "a man with the principles of a cat, one who glibly shifts his position according to the wind in power at the moment." The Gatliff windwane was obliging in turn to Blum, Chauvettes, Daladier, and then Hitler. He made progress.

On the night, France collapsed he put on such an orgy of eating and drinking in a Bordeaux cafe that many of his officers resigned in shame. When the Germans took over he was ready for power. A rich man through inheritance, a wearer of the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor (which he had voted himself), he suddenly became an Anglophobe — and it could not be laid entirely to the English bombardment of his fleet at Oran.

In 1939, when Britannia still ruled the waves, he was an anti-British man, spent so much time reviewing the British Navy that he was accused at one of renouncing French naval policy and supremacy. But when he considered that the British had lost their grip on the high seas, he pivoted swiftly. Of Dunkirk's tragedy he said: "That was glorious. I also remember Oran. That was shameful!"

Some time after an audience with Hitler in Bordeaux, where he was a popular guest, he was out with his new theory tailored to the moment: "The Germans are more generous and understanding of the needs of humanity than the English."

Now, a pampered prisoner of the United States in Algiers, his command goes and his territory surrendered, he has a golden opportunity to conquer new fields by making big eyes at America and her people. Under present conditions, a new shift of the Darlan emotions can do us no harm, may do us a great deal of good so far as the French Navy is concerned. In this case, the heaviest battalions are American, and so the little man who is the bilthe spirit of gollatle France.



Hull Knew Something We Bought Safety In Africa

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON THE State Department it is felt strongly that its policy toward Vichy, and particularly toward Vichy-controlled colonies in North Africa, is resulting in saving American lives in connection with the present operations.

In February, 1941, he negotiated the agreement with General Weingand which permitted the French colonies to buy some civilian materials in the United States. Four French ships were used in this traffic. They carried in French North Africa clothing, cotton cloth, sugar, tea, kerosene and coal. Since March, 1941, three tanker loads of kerosene, low-grade gasoline and small-size fuel have been delivered. The French ships brought back some needed war materials such as cork, tartar and red squill, a common rat poison which has much important medicinal uses now. Two of those ships are in New Orleans now, where they have been since August waiting for clearance.

The American goods did not arrive in large quantities because of numerous difficulties. But the United States was allowed to maintain supervisory in French North Africa, and the distribution was made with its propaganda value in mind. We were authorized to check for ourselves to see that none of the goods fell into Axis hands. In the process we made many contacts, learned who could be counted on to be sympathetic, and probably simplified some of the problems for the occupying forces that are arriving. It is more than coincidence probably that Algeria, the administrative center of this work, accepted the American Army forces with only brief and minor resistance.

The push on to Tunis which will be necessary in order to advance toward Rommel's rear and to come closer to Italy will be made easier to the extent that we have made friends in the French population.

Tunis is about half French and half Italian. Axis defeat is essential if the French population there is to remain in control. Therefore we are likely to have friends there. President Roosevelt's special message to the French authorities at Tunis, asking them to allow us to go through in pursuit of the common enemy, is prompted by the belief that we do have friends there, won by our past policy of assistance.

The State Department and the military were collaborating closely in the Vichy policy. Secretary Hull followed it in the face of much popular criticism. For a time there was doubt about it in some other quarters in this Government and among the British. As plans advanced, these doubts pretty well subsided and the practical value of the policy was recognized.

Perhaps it all worked out in the best possible way. The government did what it felt would help the actual operations. Popular criticism, Vichy made unnecessary any effort to sell the country in favor of now riding roughshod over the Laval crowd.

In The Park

Just Two Of A Kind

By Saki (H. H. Munro)

IT was autumn in London, that blessed season between the harshness of Winter and the impenetrability of Summer; a beautiful season when one buys bulbs and sees to the registration of one's vote, believing perpetually in Spring and a change of Government.

Morton Crosby sat on a bench in a secluded corner of Hyde Park, lazily enjoying a cigarette. Out of the corner of his eye he noticed with some interest the hesitating hoverings of a human figure, which had passed and re-passed his eyes several times. He was a man of middle age, with a grizzled beard, and the furtive, evasive eyes of the new-comer bespoke the professional cadger. For a while the new-comer fixed his eyes straight in front of him; a strenuous, unseeing gaze; then his voice broke out with the insinuating inflection of one who has a story to retell.

"It's a strange world," he said. "As far as I am concerned," said Crosby, "the strangeness has worn off in the course of 26 years."

"Ah," said the greybeard, "I could tell you things that you'd hardly believe. Marvelous things that have really happened to me. No demand for marvelous things that have really happened," said Crosby discouragingly. "The professional writers of fiction turn these things out so much better. For instance, my neighbors told me incredible things that their Alberts and Chows have done; I never listen to them. On the other hand, I have read 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' three times."

The greybeard moved uneasily in his seat; then he opened up new country. "I take it that you are a professing Christian," he observed. "I am a Protestant and I think I may say influential member of the Mussulman community of eastern Persia," said Crosby, making all occasion himself into the realm of fiction. The greybeard was obviously disconcerted. "Persia. I should never have taken you for a Persian."

"I am not," said Crosby; "my father was an Afghan."

"An Afghan?" said the other, smitten into bewilderment for a moment. "Afghanistan. Ah! We've had some wars with that country; now, I dare say, instead of fighting it we might have shared something from it. A very wealthy country, I believe. No real poverty there."

"It possesses, nevertheless, a number of highly talented and ingenious men from it. A very rich country, I believe. No real poverty there."

"If I had not spoken so disparagingly of marvelous things that have really happened I would tell you the story of Ibrahim and the elephant."

To A Stripper They're All Alike

By GUYF ROSE LEE

WHEN people ask me about the difference between the carriage trade audience and the regular burlesque audience, I have no answer. All audiences are alike. They have played to vast audiences, saloon audiences, people's Fair audiences, and 44,000 audiences. There are no real differences that I can see.

Of course, I have never played in a club for a Theater. Goodness and there may be an entire world of people I haven't yet discovered. Perhaps if I learned Camille, or a university act, I would find it.

But I'm not interested. I'm completely satisfied with my customers. I like to recognize the ones who come back week after week to see the same performance. At present, I'm playing in an uptown, top-price house. A few years ago, I did much the same act down town in the old Grand Place of Fourteenth Street.

Both audiences seem remarkably similar — it may be that my particular talents draw the same kind of customers regardless of the price of admission.

In the old days, for instance, I discovered that on Mondays a short, stocky man with very little hair would sit in the third row on the aisle. He was there every Monday and always occupied the same seat. He never smiled or nodded to me, but I knew he appreciated the act that all my actors had learned to look for him.

Occasionally he'd be a few minutes late. I could see him lingering in the back of the theater and I knew he timed his entrance purposely. He liked the little buzz of the chorus girls, giggling and nudging one another as he sauntered down the aisle. With great dignity, he would seat himself and, after adjusting his coat and placing his hat under the seat, he would take a handful of candies from his pocket.

They were imported candies, wrapped in gay-colored paper. They were for me. Not a boxful, nor a bagful, but a handful. He didn't send them backstage, either; he presented them to me personally over the footlights.

Why And How Censor's Code

This is one in a series of articles setting forth the provisions of the new censorship code as provided by the new act. Director of the Office of Censorship. We feel that it will answer virtually all questions asked by readers about news in wartime. — Editors, The News.

5. Enemy Attacks The voluntary censorship Code requests that only official statements be published regarding the sinking or damaging of ships from war causes; or regarding other enemy damage to military objectives, such as docks, railroads, airfields, and the like. The less the enemy knows about the effectiveness of his gun, bombs, and torpedoes the less solid ground he will have for planning future attacks.

Enemy forces often are out of communication with their bases. Very often they rely upon radio and other means which are left vulnerable unless someone tells them. Detailed stories about ship sinkings, told by survivors and others, can do immense harm. Information about cargoes and details will form an index to our supplies of strategic materials. Information about the precise effect of torpedoes will tell the enemy how effective his weapons are.

"It is the hope and expectation of the Office of Censorship" says the Code, "that the columns of American publications will remain the freest in the world, and will tell the story of our national successes and shortcomings accurately and in much detail."

6. Air Attacks The voluntary censorship code asks that newspapers publish only official statements during a raid; and that the greatest care be taken afterward to exclude unverified reports and sensationalism. It may be assumed that any air raid on continental United States would be for morale rather than military effect. If the enemy can spread panic, he will have accomplished his purpose.

An attacking plane usually flies high and cannot always be certain of its exact route or location. If the enemy is told that his planes were on the target or off the target, or that they followed this or that route, he will make good use of that information next time.

If a raid comes, the city under attack will be actually in the war zone. Many things representing good judgment in ordinary cases will not apply at such a time and place.

7. Planes The voluntary censorship code requests that nothing be said except on official authority regarding the disposition, movements or new characteristics of our fighting planes, or the activities of the Civil Air Patrol or the Ferrying Command.

With so much of this war being fought in the air, and so many battles turning on air support, it is no more than common sense to be extremely cautious about every disclosure relating to air forces.

Planes and their armament and equipment are being changed constantly as a result of experience and scientific development. The tempo of these changes will vitally affect the outcome of the war.

Our planes will be kept flying and will be able to surprise and cripple the enemy most effectively if public discussion of movements and other details is kept to a minimum.

8. Fortifications The voluntary censorship code requests that the location and nature of fortifications, bomb shelters and camouflaged objects be kept out of the news except as announced officially. It stands to reason that the more the enemy knows about the strong and weak points on our coast line, or about the number and location of our anti-aircraft guns, the better he will know how to attack.

In this global war the news that the United States is setting up defenses at various points of the world will call attention to expected operations.

Even if many people see some of these fortifications, that doesn't prove that the information has reached the enemy. Actually the enemy is thankful for small bits of information. One enemy agent may see a part of the picture; but if every newspaper presents a part of the picture, or if radio stations broadcast parts of it, it will be easy for the enemy to put the pieces together. That is what his intelligence services are for.

Side Glances

"Yes, I enjoy working in the war plant! There's several of us young lawyers on the night shift and we have some great arguments!"

