

# THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

And Evening Chronicle

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1942

## Demonstration

### Churchill's Bombers Thunder Echoes of His Words in Italy

Even as Winston Churchill expressed to the world his esteem for Benito Mussolini and his tottering empire, his great bombers were raining their way over the long familiar hills across the icy Alps, on their way to Turin. The raid was on a less ambitious scale than usual, but the plunging bombs sounded as fierce punctuation marks to the Prime Minister's words. The block-busters were taken from England, deadly pledges that Italian trials were only beginning.

Terrible as were the blows at industrial Italy's factories of war, frightening as they were to the people of the North, they were no less a blow at Hitler's Germany—a powerful second front demanding the Corporal's earnest attention. For Italy, she trembles under the prospect of complete annihilation from the air, is certainly held together by the German will and by German troops. Left alone, she would crumble in a day.

Either because a revolution of an unwilling people is ripe, or because Mussolini can see that he has reached the end of his rope, an Italy walking alone might capitulate without a fight, and within a few weeks. Under the rain of bombs from Britain, it might frantically sue for peace if it weren't for the presence of the masters.

Hitler's problems with the weak-willed people he cannot understand, and as it grows in intensity, Britain is likely to exert a heavier pressure upon the people than their watchful guardians can match. It was toward that time that Churchill looked Sunday. He demonstrated that the Allies saw plainly the Achilles Heel of the Axis, and that they knew how to strike it in its helplessness. Turin's baptism of fire is nothing to what will come over the Alps and up from Tunisia through the Winter.

## Mirage

### State Surplus Looks Good Today, but Tomorrow?

The first underground rumble predicting the course of the new State Legislature hint that the High Command already has its eye on that \$19,000,000 surplus in the vaults, and is planning to do something about it. Bolstered by such a reassuring amount of cash on hand, the legislators may already be plotting to send relief to the little man who pays and pays.

Specifically, the State income tax is being talked about in uncompromising terms. The idea seems to be that, in view of crippling Federal taxes, and with a fair State harvest already in North Carolina, some relief should be given. Revenues of many kinds are sure to dwindle as automobile traffic decreases and commodity sales slant downward. The time of plenty is temporary, and fleeting.

Second, any attempt to suspend income tax payment would bring a veritable army of merchants up in arms. The sales tax, they would cry, should have been the first to go. That irritating measure is still on the books as an emergency tax, and has been paying his dividends, but it's still an emergency measure, and standing while the income tax fell, it would call forth a great clamor.

It seems to us that the only answer to the changing times is not only to keep the \$19,000,000 surplus as a backing against the transition to come, but to continue collecting all available revenue

so long as it can be collected. Any move to suspend any tax will meet with considerable popular acclamation, whether in war or peace, but the opportunity to please the populace must not be allowed to steer the State into a difficult future situation.

If the strath on the individual is great today, it may be as nothing when compared with the hardships of state finance tomorrow.

## Apology

### Solicitor Carpenter Not Negligent in This Instance

The News has discovered, after making inquiries upon its own initiative, that it unjustly accused Solicitor John Carpenter of negligence in a case that was tried ten days ago. It was the case of Robert "Eightball" Barnes, one of the two Negroes whose feet had to be amputated when they were confined in a convict camp "dark house" some seven years ago.

The charge against Barnes was attacking another Negro with a deadly weapon—to wit, an icepick. Judge J. A. Rousseau gave him a sentence of two-to-four years, suspended on condition that he not violate any law of the State. It was natural, we said, that Judge Rousseau should show mercy to one so cruelly maimed by the State, but what he did not know, we said, and what Solicitor Carpenter evidently did not know or had forgotten or, in any case, had not told the judge was that the defendant had served a term for second-degree murder committed some years after his "dark house" travail. We argued that a convicted murderer, however pitiable, was not deserving of lenience when convicted of new crimes of violence.

The judge, we said, and the judge in the case we learn that Solicitor Carpenter had, indeed, informed him of the defendant's record, which was taken into full account; that the sentence was suspended as much because there was perplexing doubt of the Negro's guilt as for his pathetic appearance. That, in sum, Solicitor Carpenter was not remiss in any particular.

We are glad to make this correction (which Mr. Carpenter has not sought) and to apologize for the injustice of our accusation.

## Madam Ickes

### Vigor, at Least, He Would Bring to the Labor Dept.

In a popularity contest featuring Madam Perkins and Harold ("Nix") Ickes, Corcoran and Cohen would be the likely winners. Neither the President's Secretary of Labor nor his Secretary of Interior (and PWA Administrator-plus) enjoys the country's affection to any marked degree. But Old Ick for the Labor portfolio in the Cabinet might not be so bad, at that. On the other hand, he might.

Showing the argument that almost anybody would be better than the incumbent, enough is known of the Ickes character and general mortality to assure that he would at least make an entertaining Secretary of Labor. He is, even his enemies concede, a fighter. He is scrupulously honorable in his own way, although that way has not, in the past, prevented him from using emergency powers and appropriations for quite different purposes from what Congress intended. He hates crookedness and despises false pretense, and would miss a guess if as Secretary of Labor he did not upturn enough of both qualities to keep him forever on the war-path.

It would be as great a mistake for management to support his appointment on the assumption that he would give labor unions the housecleaning they need as it would be for labor to accept him on the theory that he would tell management where to get off. If we know our man, Ickes would go falling wherever he saw what he did not like and no squeamish considerations of law or political brotherhood would restrain him.

Old Ick as Madam Secretary of Labor would bring vigor, of a certainly, to that moribund department. For the rest, let transgressors quake.

In the East, a sarcastic letter-writer to the press asks what's nicer than a deck of cafeteria punches, sprinkled with paper discs from the counterman's punch.

## Premature Shouting

# We've Just Begun To Fight

By Raymond Clapper

PLEASE excuse the harping, but everybody is shaking hands with himself that the war is being won, which is all right except for the next thought, which is that we can let down because it will soon be over.

The closer we come to victory, the more stuff we need to give every knock-out punch. The point is to try to explain why it is you can't expect to be getting more sugar and coffee, and other things that depend on shipping, just because the war is going our way. The fact that we are in action and are driving ahead means more shipping must go into supplying the fronts, hence less shipping to bring you coffee, sugar and some other things that are well known when you can have them without getting in the way of the war.

For every man we landed in North Africa seven tons of shipping were required. For every man we have there, we will need to set aside a ton and a half of shipping to keep that man supplied.

Judge Patterson, Undersecretary of War, said recently that the North African expedition carried more than 700,000 different items of equipment, including bridges and locomotives. From now on far more than half, in weight, of the supplies that go to North Africa will consist of fuel and lubricants. That means tankers, and less chance than ever for more gasoline on the East Coast for automobile driving.

And it would help in this country a lot if the OWI and censorship shook loose with more background on that kind of thing. The election and the griping about gasoline rationing, show that we are a long way from taking the war into these terms.

We are coming into the time when casualties will be heavy and when the expenditure of war material will make far greater demands on our civilian economy than we have felt thus far. The gasoline griping shows how ill-prepared

we are to accept these deprivations which are still to come as we go deeper into the fighting.

The impression I get from looking over some of the British material is that they are releasing a good deal more detailed information on the background of the war than we are.

The political censorship which has been going on both here and in London is unfortunate. As usually happens, you get the raw anyway, and now the British correspondents in the United States are complaining about American censorship of their copy on political matters, and American correspondents in London are complaining about London's political censorship on their dispatches to the United States. In the course of the raw the dirt comes out anyway. Not only is nothing gained by this political censorship but you build up the suspicion on both sides of the Atlantic that a lot more political discussion is still bottled up.

Instead of that kind of political censorship, we would be putting in time to much better advantage prying some things loose around here that would help people understand the war, and what it is taking. Speeches like that of Undersecretary of War Patterson, describing the enormous number of military items that went into the North African expedition, will do more good than all the political censorship that can be imposed.

The kind of information that Judge Patterson revealed could be provided about much of our war activity. It would enable people to understand this war in terms of the things that go into it. If enough of that were done, it would take the wind out of the arguments who are trying to drum up opposition to gasoline rationing and other necessary inconveniences caused by the war.

We haven't completed the selling job on the home front by a long shot. Washington is going to have to dish out less honey and more facts before the job is done.

## The Hunting Season

—By Herblock



## A Busy Government

# Promoting Labor Disputes

By Paul Mallon

WASHINGTON, D. C. (AP)—The government is busy agitating these successful workers at this time in violation of the Labor Stabilization Agreement for shipyards.

Of the great new independent shipbuilders in this war, first to disappear was the Vincent National Higgins in New Orleans. He was 100 per cent AFL and the country sang his praises.

By Government direction, (shortage of metal, they said) he was put out of the shipbuilding business, and now he has an airplane contract. Mr. Kaiser's troubles with the Government seem to be following a similar peculiar line.

If anything was needed to finally extinguish the National Labor Relations Board, which has been dead anyway since the war started, this should be it.

### Up Goes Ickes

Meets, Bill Green and Phil Murray were called into the White House like a couple of walking military secrets to get the news Interior Secretary Harold Ickes was in for the new Labor Secretary. They went in the back door.

Mr. Roosevelt did not ask them about his choice. He told them. The idea, therefore, was the President's own, which is all right in a technical way, the Cabinet is his personal business, although his selections must be confirmed by the Senate.

If Mr. Green had his fingers lightly crossed that Ickes would not be able to exist. While Ickes has seemed to lean toward AFL in his political activities, the AFL had no trouble with him when he headed the Public Works Administration, dealing largely with AFL unions.

And, after all, the appointment of any man would mean that the Labor Department of this Government would cease to be a women's and children's bureau, and assume the importance of a labor ministry, even if it did not handle manpower and draft.

Nevertheless, who will have to give any particular observer here large odds if you want to bet that Ickes, within six months, has not called the remnants of an old independent union of welders, who went on strike out there a year or so ago, to anti-AFL, but must work under AFL, all of which is no doubt true.

The AFL says the welding and CIO group amounts to no more than 2 per cent of the total number of workers.

But if the percentage was 20, 40 or 80 per cent, there could be no more unparliamentary violence involved in starting a labor dispute that

## Side Glances



Now you'll just have to clean up that cellar! With a man meter inspector it was different, but I'm not going to have a woman seeing any part of my house that dirty!

## Fate And France

# Sixteen Days

By Dorothy Thompson

WASHINGTON, D. C. (AP)—To be or not to be, that is the question! Whether 'tis better in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing end them!

—Hamlet's soliloquy.

IF THOSE who wish to regard the scuttling of the French Fleet as a victory, rejoicing in the cold calculation that Hitler has not got it, find comfort as they may. My voice shall not be added to theirs.

I see in the scuttling of the French Fleet the inexorable outcome of a drama of destiny, which, like all great dramas, develops directly out of the character of the protagonists. It is a tragedy, involving not a prince but a nation, and on a scale that has not occurred in history. It is a tragedy of indecision, ending, like Hamlet in suicide.

Does the world not see that France has fallen for the second time and fallen in the second act, exactly as she fell in the first? But the Second Fall is worse than the first. For the first occurred in a moment of despair; the second in a moment of hope. The repetition indicates a compulsion in the character to act as it does, to be irremediable of decision, and when confronted by the absolute necessity of decision, to commit suicide.

Since June, 1940, the French Fleet has been free to leave Toulon. It has been free to join the forces of De Gaulle, the life-work, and not the death-blow, of the war and a half year, this fleet under Admiral Darlan, has been speculating according to various considerations: the consideration of France herself; Can we, by neutralizing ourselves, save a corner of France from occupation?

The consideration of the officers of the fleet, who regarded the ships, not as an instrument of the Republic and people of France, but as their own, and to whom they belonged, and a personal property. Their policy was not to expose this property to the perils of war, but to hold it as an instrument of personal power and honor, bargaining purposes in the moment of peace—no matter who might win the war.

Not the reforming of the fleet in anticipation of such a critical moment as that of November 11th, moved Darlan and Darlan; on the contrary, they were moved by very different considerations. They replaced republican officers by para-Fascist officers, that is to say by officers who had the same considerations as those of the Admiralty, and the Admiral, and when Darlan suddenly changed sides, under the duress of events, while Petain continued his pro-French policy, the indecision became deeper than ever. Pulled in two directions, the officers of Toulon could only assert the preposterous notion that the fleet was a sovereign state, and neutral.

This neutrality lasted sixteen days and ended in suicide. Let us try to imagine those sixteen days in Toulon.

On November 11th—the anniversary of the triumphant armistice of 1918—the armistice of defeat was ended. With it ended the illusion that one could buy the neutrality of a corner of France.

What did not end was the continued illusion that the ships belonged to their commanders and were not inescapably involved in the fate of the nation, whose instrument they were.

On November 11th the French Fleet was still free to leave Toulon and fight for France. And the whole of France—the currents of French thought—must have been represented in that fleet, from the stokers to the Admirals. Among the officers and crews there were Petainists, Fascists, Nazi agents, De Gaulleists, Communists, democrats. The Fleet was the France of 1940.

And as in 1940, the rifts were irreconcilable, Darlan, from North Africa "invited" them to join him—without ever once taking a clear stand with the Allies, without ever once saying the word "neutrality" in his speeches was again that of neutrality—sell out away—but for what purpose? Escape, not battle!

The French officers, educated in Petainist collaborationism, still maintained the illusion of neutrality. They thought they could escape destiny by doing nothing. From being an instrument, they reduced themselves to a symbol. But to what symbol? In the paralysis in the inexorable moment of decision? It is death. They chose death. And there they chose.

In their death there was grandeur—as there was grandeur in the death of Hamlet. They were not traitors in their death. They were men. But they did not cut it a happy ending. Let us rather be quiet, filled with pity, and terror, and awe. In this war, death is inescapable. Act or you will die, is the lesson of the scuttling of the French Fleet.

And if anyone all those who speak of France not to treat this as a victory, rejoicing in the cold calculation and despair in France must be terrible beyond tears. Only if we can see the real root of the tragedy—if our State Department can see the roots of the tragedy—if all realize that the last remnants of collaborationism and indecision have been received by the clean sea, a new clean policy may emerge.

Our Darlan policy is a continuation of what perished with the Fleet. Let us give his due, his just praise, and our confidence to the man who fights to revive a twice deflated France: General De Gaulle!

## Visitin' Around

That Ain't Vaughn's Fault—It Always Was Varant (North Wilkesboro Hustler)

Mrs. Irene Welsh of Wilkesboro County has accepted the position as eighth grade teacher in the Wilkesboro School. Mrs. Welsh is taking up the work made vacant by Mr. Vaughn Jennings being called to the Army.

Now, Suppose You Sit Down And Start All Over Again (North Wilkesboro Hustler)

The price, by Mr. Hoppers of the Laurel Springs community, for pigs 7 months old, Poland-China Berkshire, here in truck straggling the Wilkesboro Livestock Sale of R. P. Riley, Monday, was \$8.

The Good Earth (Jonas Bleds Item, Morganton News-Herald)

Mr. and Mrs. Dock Wieman have been hauling their cabbage and potatoes for the past week.