THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

And Evening Chronicle

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W. C. Dowd, 1855-1927

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 1943

On Two Fronts

No, Mr. President, Things Abroad Aren't Like This

Columnists who know say that an editorial from the usually good-natured *Washington Star* has caused more heart-burning resentment in the Administration, and especially in the White House, than anything written in the U. S. press in months. A Bell Syndicate author says it has stabbed right at the heart of all our domestic woes, and has the President rankling, and thinking. The editorial:

A man who was fascinated by what the President said about there being no difference between the fighting front and the home front dropped by the Star office this morning and said he had the queerest dream. It seemed he was on the fighting front, which was just like the home front, listening to the generals talking to war correspondents. One general said we were going to advance next day and another general said we were going to retire. Another general said that was a lot of bunk. He had charge of the gasoline supplies and he knew we were going to stand still.

About that time another general came in whom no one there had ever seen before. He said he had just been put in charge of gasoline supplies and we were going to make a flanking movement yesterday unless it was put off until next week. Another general said that before we postponed the flanking movement yesterday we should make a thorough study of the gasoline situation.

'Do you imply by your remarks that I have not had such a study made?' asked another general. 'And who are you?' asked still another general. 'I am in charge of the paratroopers,' the general replied, adding, 'Boys, you may quote me.' 'And what have you to do with gasoline?' he was asked. 'Nothing, that is why I am talking about it,' the general said. 'Anyway, the gasoline is stolen.' 'Who stole it?' asked another general. 'You stole it,' said another general who up to this time, had remained stonily silent. But that, he said, was off the record except for background purposes.

General Eisenhower walked in then and transferred all the generals to different divisions and lined up the correspondents and had them shot in pairs. The generals were O. K., he explained, but the correspondents caused all the trouble by listening to them.

The Star visitor said that when he woke up he grabbed a newspaper and read that some automobile club official in New York promised that everybody would have plenty of gasoline in two weeks and he wanted to know if General Eisenhower had said anything about that. He went away mumbling to himself about not knowing which front he was on, but he wished he was on the other one.

Can you understand a President, becoming Upset over a little Dream?

The Retreaters

Jap and German Philosophers Glory in Withdrawals

Kiska and Kharkov. Half a world apart, the armies of freedom sweep to new victories. These two are milestones, and not the everyday variety of victory. One, in the final stages, was bloodless; the other took a great toll of human life. In the Aleutians, the Japs withdrew quietly, slyly. When the American troops landed, there was no welcome for them; Kiska had been evacuated after terrible pounding from air and sea, and after the capture of Attu had made it untenable. In Kharkov, the Russians blasted their way through the streets, making the enemy pay.

After Kiska, the Japs laughed Tokyo radio was doubled up with its vast merriment. This good old retreat, ha, ha. So well-executed. The Americans had dropped their bombs and sent in their shells to an empty island. Funny old battle of Kiska. So sorry, no Japanese there at all. Nippon was having a great time at its own expense. An outpost of invasion and defense upon which she has set great store has passed from her grip. Losing, she taunts the enemy. But perhaps that is a natural reaction.

The Germans did not laugh. They hurried to announce the fall of Kharkov for the second time, beating the Russians to the punch. But there was a similarity between the reactions in Berlin and Tokyo. All of this retreat was good to see. So beautifully done. It is an art of war above all others, this retreating. We have retired, they said, to previously prepared positions. We walked back, and did not run. We have won a moral victory. We did not flee. We retreated. Do you understand?

We think we understand, and are happy to have it so. We will gladly give to the enemy, in the battles of Kiska and Kharkov, the credit for sublime tactics of retreat. Seldom, in this war, has the task been better performed. For our part, we will settle for the inglorious fate of the conquerors, who drive back this prating enemy without finesse, without the need for making grand claims, accompanied by nervous laughter.

Casualties

On the Home Front They Still Exceed Battlefield

There were just a few lines in *Time*, the magazine. Just enough to put a scowl on the face, or a low whistle in the mouth. Enough, perhaps, for a comment to the wife; not enough for amazement. Nothing to startle an American. At home, we are accustomed to such little items. We don't scare easy, at home.

The lines quoted some figures. 22,500 war workers had been killed in traffic accidents since Pearl Harbor. U. S. war dead on all fronts were only 16,013. To some, that revelation might have brought puzzlement. But it brought the shock of grief to very few; only those families who have sustained casualties in the great battle at home were angered.

Let it be noted that, though speed limits have been reduced drastically, tires have been worn thin, and travel has dwindled to an almost invisibly low point, the fatalities are still dangerously, criminally high.

This great waste of life in the country will not cease until murder on the highway is put on the same level with murder anywhere else. Somewhere down the line, America must discover that most of its denizens who have been operating automobiles are unfit for the open road —or for anything else.

A Threat?

Plea for Representation Carries a Deep Undertone

A letter published on this page yesterday, written by a local representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, seems to us worthy of close attention. The Negro author, speaking for his people, affected a calm, rational tone, asking that Negroes be given a larger place on the Charlotte Planning Committee. His view was that the Negro Section, tacked on at the tail end of the Committee, should be done away with, and that Negroes should take part on an equal basis with whites. He wanted Negro members on the executive committee.

The author did not shout, but attempted to reason. In one or two instances, however, he came very near to threatening dire results if his demands were not answered. In those spots, his letter read like NAACP literature:

If Post-War Charlotte and Mecklenburg adopt such divisive plans as are evidenced in the organization of this General Committee, then we may expect growing conflicts, dissatisfaction and uncontrollable unrest.

And again:

Certainly, helpless minorities are not in position to force their wills on the majority. But if the majority does not protect the helpless minorities and see to it that they have every vested right of the Constitution and every gift of the Republic to which they belong, they prove themselves unworthy of ruling, and place themselves in imminent danger of losing the intrusted powers.

There, the plea sounds more like a warning. What does the writer mean by "uncontrollable unrest", for example? And by the majority being in "imminent danger of losing . . . powers"? *The News* was happy to print the letter, as letter or plea, and is prone to agree that the Negroes have a case. We do not understand, however, the between-the-lines sentiment, the rush for Negro privileges now, and the threat that perfect Democracy must come, soon, or we will soon know the deluge. That part, we didn't like.

Paper Profits

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON

MOST people don't know it, but while the Canadian newsprint trust has managed to hike the cost of newsprint again, one of the largest newsprint companies—which will benefit from that raise—has a man right inside the Office of Price Administration. The OPA had to okay the price increase before it could be made. The newsprint representative inside the OPA is Hugh Phillips, formerly with the International Paper Co., one of the leading members of the Canadian newsprint group.

Phillips says that he has severed all connection with International Paper and receives no remuneration from them. He acknowledged, however, that: "I am frankly partial to the industry viewpoint, and of course, I have many old familiar friends throughout the industry." He also points out that the industry had had sledding after its founding in the Twenties because of the depression, and was not able to wipe out early construction costs. He emphasizes that Scandinavian newsprint was very harmful to the Canadian industry, which has made no money in the past. Part of Phillips' job is to advise on whether the OPA should permit an increase in newsprint.

Twice during the year, newsprint has gone up, 84 each time. Simultaneously, President Roosevelt has been declaring for a roll-back in prices. International Paper, while paying no dividends on common stock since 1930, pays its top officials $412,250 annually, plus additional benefits of $112,500.

Jesse Jones Suite

If you are very desperately hard up for a place to stay in Washington and are flush with cash, just go to the Statler Hotel and ask for the "Jesse Jones Apartment." It will cost you $65 for one night, but some business moguls are paying it when they can't find any place else to lay their heads.

The apartment is a penthouse originally designed for Secretary of Commerce Jones, and when it comes to de luxe suites it is really something. It has a grass lawn all its own, high above the streets of Washington, where you can sit out and have a mint julep on a mid-Summer evening. It also has a little promenade walk, and rooms decorated in exquisite taste. It happened that when the Statler was originally planned, Jesse Jones said he would like to have a permanent apartment in the hotel, so they designed this suite especially for him.

Then a rule was adopted that there could be no permanent guests, all had to be transients. This left Secretary Jones out. As a result the apartment is frequently empty, except when some desperate and flush business baron comes to town. Otherwise it is occupied intermittently by Mrs. Statler or members of the Statler Board of Directors.

Fury In The Air

U. S. air operations out of England are now by far the most extensive and toughest operations of the U. S. Air Forces. Fliers who have seen action in four theaters—China, the Pacific, North Africa, and Europe—say the first three are child's play compared with the current flak-and-fighter opposition of Germans.

The first flight a year ago was made without the loss of a single U. S. plane. The Germans were caught off guard by the daylight raid. But such things don't happen any more. It is no secret that U. S. losses on each raid over the continent are high enough to hurt badly, though not high enough to stop the operations. War correspondents in Britain declare that U. S. airmen who fly these missions are the greatest heroes of the war. They have to face more fighting fury, face it with more skill, than any other men in this war—whether fighting on land, sea, or in the air.

The mental strain is so great that when men get themselves keyed for a raid, and then the raid is called off, they react by dropping into a mood of irritation and despair. Bombing raids over Germany recall the comment of Raymond H. Geist, U. S. Consul General in Berlin, when he returned to the U. S. two years ago: "Victory in this war will go to the side which gets out of the cellar first."

Paratroop Miracle

There was one thrilling bit of untold history regarding the Allied landing in Sicily which now can be revealed. A division of U. S. parachute troops actually stopped about two Nazi divisions which were dashing to the seacoast to wipe out Allied landing barges. This occurred the night before the landing barges arrived. Had the partroopers not succeeded in holding up the Nazis, U. S. troops might have landed literally in blood.

What happened was that the paratroopers, coming down mysteriously at night, not far from the Nazi divisions, fooled the enemy into thinking he was outnumbered. Actually, a paratroop division is far inferior in numbers to a division of ground troops. But the Nazis could not tell in the dark how many Americans there were, got the impression that the sky was packed with paratroopers.

So they decided to camp for the night and get ready for a fight the next morning. But by daylight U. S. landing barges were safely ashore.

By Herblock

BEYOND SUNNY ITALY!

(Courtesy the War Department's NEWSMAP)

A Free Voice

Bracken Speaks Out

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON

NO MAN is closer to Winston Churchill than Brendan Bracken, his minister of information, who has just arrived in Quebec. That circumstance gives special weight to everything Bracken says in England, where his crooning is as authoritative in its way as Frank Sinatra's here. His presence at Quebec is good evidence that something besides military business is up.

When the newspaper men at Quebec had nothing to write about, and the lid on the Roosevelt-Churchill conference was tighter than ever, and they had exhausted every line of plausible speculation, Bracken called a press conference to tell them there was no news and in the process gave them a story good for page one in anybody's newspaper about how when Germany was licked, Britain would throw every ounce of her strength against Japan.

Of course it was no casual remark at all. Bracken was not just filling up a dull day for the reporters. He seized a clear day to try to rub a deep suspicion out of the American mind—the suspicion that British interests want to allow America to carry the load in the war against Japan. That suspicion worries the British a good deal. They have heard it voiced by numbers of Americans who have been in England this Summer.

The British want nothing to fester our close relations hence their effort to reassure the people of America on this point. The suspicion got its foothold from the remarks about partial demobilization that Churchill made in his radio talk last March. Bracken is reflecting Churchill when he says the British are going into the Pacific war with their navy and air force all out. They have large interests there that they must recover. Before it is over Americans probably will be complaining that the British are trying to hog the Pacific war.

Well, it's that kind of thing that Bracken is trying to deal with. He will try to determine the wind direction in the Presidential campaign. Numerous American publishers and editors have been Bracken this Summer and he has told them that while Britain will never forget the debt of gratitude which she owes to President Roosevelt for coming to her assistance in her death struggle in 1940, the British people want to work with the American people whoever may be the designated spokesmen of the two countries. His chief fear is that some over-zealous Britisher will try to take sides in the American Presidential campaign. One thing Bracken already is pounding into the head of every British Government official is to remember the unfortunate case of Sackville-West and keep his opinions if any about American politics to himself.

Bracken is not a British Elmer Davis. Our chief of propaganda labors under difficulties that even Bracken could hardly survive. Davis never knows when he is going to be smacked down by the White House. You would think it safe to denounce enemy royalty but Mr. Roosevelt the great democrat flew into a public rage when OWI fell short of flattering that miserable little figurehead of the enemy, the King of Italy. Bracken has Churchill's confidence completely and everybody in England knows it. He is a member of Parliament and goes into debate to defend himself. No Cabinet minister is anxious to make him trouble because of the unquestioned support that the Prime Minister gives him. That makes all of the difference in the world.

It is, of course, not only Churchill's backing that makes Bracken effective. He is a shrewd, tough-minded fellow with the impish outspoken nature of Churchill himself. At luncheon or dinner Bracken goes into a monologue of indefinite duration filled with wit, wisdom, inside information, and ruthless debunking of British Colonel Blimps.

His best monologue, however, is the one he gives about how every democracy should abolish its propaganda agencies and censorship offices the day war is over. He is the first bureaucrat I ever heard who didn't argue for his own immortality. Criticism doesn't bother Bracken because he considers it all either politically inspired or the fruit of ignorance.

Bracken doesn't take any of his propaganda work as seriously as he does collecting poetry and old furniture which may be another reason for his effectiveness. It gives him that casual touch, and sets him talking about what a poor propagandist he is. Everybody calls him by his first name.

Side Glances

"But, dear! That's my best suit—and there's still two more payments due on it!"

The End Comes

Germans Know

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

THE new stage of the war finds the Germans without a plan. They are engaged in a grotesque military enterprise, a war of attrition against superior forces. They kill and are killed, but on the pages of this bloody ledger, the Allied balance grows and must continue to grow. Each day that the German people prolong the war, or allow it to be prolonged, worsens their position. We are now able to say to them, unsentimentally, and without any need to pose as their friends, that continuation of the war means extension of the process of exchanging the lives of their sons for the reluctant services of enslaved Russian housemaids and Polish factory workers.

The best the Germans can hope for now is to save their skins, to save their physical existence, their lives. But this is exactly what the war will not let them do. The war is worse than any peace which could be imposed upon them. It is unthinkable that any terms of peace would call for killing up to 3,000 Germans a day, and the daily shipment into Germany of 5,000 foreigners to take the places of the German dead. No government in the world would impose so criminal and deadly a program on Germany. Yet that is Hitler's program. He has no other.

If it were the Allied aim deliberately to destroy Germany, there could be no better method than the present war. There could be no better servant of that method than Hitler. If we were to take the most perverse underworlding among us, and put him in charge of Germany, he could not carry out a program for the destruction of German cities and German lives more effective than the program which is now being carried forward by the German leader. What gauleiter could we possibly install who could show the results which Hitler has shown, in the form of the destruction of Hamburg, of Essen, of Cologne, of the great dams?

If the Allies wanted to destroy Germany, they would be compelled to want the war to continue, to hope that it might not end too soon. It would be hard to obliterate a German port by a clause in a treaty, but we do it now in ten nights. It is inconceivable that a condition of the peace should be the obliteration of Hamburg, but the obliteration of Hamburg is a mere incident in the war.

The frustration of the German Summer offensive in Russia is part of the same picture of meaningless attrition. Here is what the Russian General Rokossovsky now says about the German army: "I have fought against the fathers. Now I'm fighting the sons. . . . I do honestly think the fathers were the better soldiers. Hitler has ruined the Germany army. The German army is not a real army. It is an ersatz army." In other words, if it were our plan that Germany should have no army after the war, then Hitler is the best agent for that plan.

Nazi Machine

Waning Strength

By Dorothy Thompson

WASHINGTON

THE Quebec discussions must have been taking into account, in planning the next moves, not only our own strength and the forces at our disposal, but also the power of resistance of the enemy.

The warning of James F. Byrnes, last week, that "even with Italy out of the war Germany will be as strong for a defensive war as she ever was for an offensive war," was a wise caution against the slightest slackening of effort, which could certainly prolong the war. Only in the prolongation of the war do the Germans see a chance for themselves—not a military chance, but a political one—of splitting inter-Allied unity and thus being able to win, if not the war, satisfactory peace.

To overestimate the enemy's strength is always a wise attitude unless this overestimation causes us to miss favorable military and political chances. In that case we do not shorten the war but prolong it. What do we know concerning the real strength of our Western enemy? Militarily, the greatest concentration of German strength is in Russia. Even with an estimated 211 German divisions, the Russians obviously have a margin of superiority not only in manpower, but in materiel, as the Germans themselves confess.

The Russians estimate that Hitler still has 91 reserve divisions, a third of which are garrisoned in Western Europe. This reserve is not large enough for the tasks ahead of the Germans. Otherwise it would be inexplicable why they would only attempt to hold Italy north of the Po. One can only imagine what a blow would have been inflicted upon us, had they defeated us in Sicily where they must have known that we would attempt to land. Had they driven us into the sea in Sicily, they would have excluded a full-scale invasion for months.

This symptom of weakness is the more convincing, since their withholding of forces was insufficient to prevent continued defeats in Russia. It would therefore appear that the German General Staff is compelled to dispose its forces to maintain an irreducible minimum at every critical point.

If this be true, then contrary to popular belief that we could most effectively attack the Germans at many different points, with relatively small forces, we could most effectively attack them in great force, at almost any point we might choose. The fact that we now can attack, in innumerable places, makes it impossible for the Germans to do anything except disperse their forces. And this is what makes Mr. Byrnes' analysis, it seems to me, not quite true. The enemy is not as strong in defense as in offense, because in offense they could concentrate their forces.

Furthermore, the German war plan was for an offensive war and it is always extremely difficult to fight an entirely different war from the one planned. Ludendorff recognized this in 1918, when he asked for an immediate armistice, knowing that his war, which was an offensive war, was lost. Also, though the German military intelligence should never be underestimated its strength has never lain in improvisation. The Germans have the faults of their virtues; they move effectively only according to long laid plans.

With their forces widely dispersed, they could seek two remedies: to shift their airpower from one danger point to another, and increase their manpower by further mobilization. Recent experience would seem to show their airpower to be insufficient every time it shifted, and that we have air superiority over all Europe. Increased mobilization was attempted early this year by the most heroic measures, but they have certainly scraped bottom. They have called up fighting men to such a degree that they have crippled their economic war effort and their internal social structure and morale. Half the workers now, at German benches are aliens—a most dangerous force when defeat begins to loom. Nor can they get the same results from this shift, for the alien workers are not enthusiastic, are less efficient, and demand greater supervision.

Their own internal propaganda indicates that they have nothing to offer the German people but the promise that if they resistively lose the war, they will pass forever out of history as a state and a nation. Does this propaganda of "strength through fear" work?