EDITORIAL PAGE
THE CHARLOTTE NEWS
W. C. DOWD, JR., Publisher
J. E. DOWD, Editor
BURKE DAVIS, Associate Editor
DECEMBER 11, 1944

"Worst Of Luck"

Last Thursday, the home islands of Japan lay in the limited peace and quiet of a nation at war. The skies were clear, and though the little people below labored, or grieved at the sight of the telltale kites of mourning before their homes, there was no alarm on the third anniversary of Pearl Harbor. At some time during the day, we know not what o'clock, little men who listened picked up the tell-tale sound of a B-29 overhead—one lone plane, scouting. It dropped its token load of incendiaries and wheeled away, its crew watching the fires behind until the horizon cloaked them.

And then, likely at about the same hour, the dread tremors of the earth were felt. Seismologists all over the world read the signs and wrote down their strange formula:

XRm.—6.54 Y Sec—720Km.

The answer was easy, by that empirical formula of Professor Omori. There was a quake in Japan. Tokyo spent the day denying, but finally confessed a tidal wave, a landslide, slight damage. All Americans could do was hope, and remember 1923!

In that year, on September 1, one of the world's most terrible disasters befell Japan. Tokyo and Yokohama were all but destroyed. 99,331 people were killed, fires and tidal waves swept the islands.

Knowing little of what Japan suffered from this passage of elastic waves through the earth's crust, we can at least wish the homeland of the enemy the worst possible luck—and reflect with some satisfaction that this natural disturbance, rather than sending a charitable America rushing to aid the people of Japan as in 1923, will only aid and abet the deadly B-29's in their mission of destruction.

Bond Fires

There are some little facts about war bonds that every man, woman and child should know. And in the role of peddlers of vital information, we hasten to make our oblique contribution:

1. A good many patriotic citizens have been burning their bonds, thus canceling the Government's debt to them.

2. The Treasury is pleased with this show of patriotism, but fears for the sanity of its bookkeepers. For——

3. The Treasury has a record on microfilm of every bond purchaser. A buyer's equity in bonds cannot be destroyed, even by fire. The sales are marked as debts on Federal ledgers, and will remain there forever unless the Treasury is notified of each bond burned.

Therefore, if you are moved to destroy a bond and wipe out the Government's debt to you, please get in touch with Washington. Otherwise, you may eventually cost us more in bookkeeping expenses than you save us in the heat of a patriot's fire.

But we offer this only as information. We do not stand for fewer bond fires—or for the establishment of a new Federal agency to control this new field of expanded Government authority. We want to hear nothing of a BBA. Burnt Bonds Authority.

Epochal Question

At this week's Council meeting a delegation is to appear and recommend action on a city planning program. Formulated by the Charlotte Planning Committee, which is composed of representative citizens, and approved by the Chamber of Commerce directorate, the primary proposal which will be submitted to the Council, is that an official City Planning Commission be created as an auxiliary agency of the City Government, be given its assignment and any necessary appropriation, and set to work.

This is, to our way of thinking, the most momentous decision to be put up to a City Council in many a term. The only way to describe the issue graphically is by means of the old and hackneyed simile of the crossroads, for, verily, it is a crossroads in the development of that very promising city of Charlotte, N. C., which has now been reached.

Which shall it be? Shall we continue in the old path of haphazard development, leaving the appearance, the convenience and the utility of the city to the vagaries of individual notions and opportunism? Or shall we branch off sharply, resolving that insofar as the growth and improvement of the city may be directed in the largest public interest, we shall apply that direction?

It's late in the day, to be sure, but it could be later. The post-war years will witness in Charlotte an expansion such as will, we do believe, work a metamorphosis in the size, and looks and tempo of the town. Shall we begin now to show an interest in the form of this expansion, or shall we sit back and look on?

That is the question the Council must answer on Wednesday.

Whispering

Congress, in case you weren't looking, moved to increase the income of its members last week by proposing a jump in the pay of its clerks. It suggested that allowance for clerk hire be upped from $6,500 a year to $9,500—and that wasn't for the benefit of the clerks alone, though they, too, have suffered from higher living costs. This little subterfuge means a raise in Congressional pay, and it has to do with nepotism.

First, it is likely to abet the lamentable practice of kick-backs from clerks to Congressmen (modeled after the scheme of lame-duck Rep. Kleberg of Texas). Second, by increasing the pay of a single clerk from $3,900 to $5,000, it enables Congressmen to increase the family income, because wives or relatives are on many a Congressional payroll. Though a good many of them earn their salaries, there are all too many cases in which these family clerks seldom or never appear in their offices.

There are few who will deny that Congressmen are underpaid, or that we could expect more efficient performance of our legislative branch if its members were compensated on a scale based upon present conditions. The situation seems to call for Congressional courage. If the law-makers can bring themselves to broach the subject of pay-raises for themselves, they might solve this problem without resorting to a sort of legerdemain which involves all kinds of questionable practices.

Little Paragon

The better world may well be out of our reach, to be forged only in the fires of other, even greater wars. The international oil agreement may have been sabotaged by our oil industry; the international air conference may have failed because of the U. S. aviation industry; Europe may be doomed to an era of anarchy, because British and American policies are at odds. But the Norwegians, at least, have embarked us upon a new era of international courtesy and good-will.

Norway, surrounded by powers great and small, sat in on the international air talks because she felt she had a stake in the future of world aviation. But she looked around her in acute embarrassment, noting that representatives of tiny South American nations occupied seats like her own, while India, mother of 400 millions and proprietor of vast territory, was not represented at all.

So Norway, with an unfailing instinct, rose to suggest that she would be happy to forfeit her seat in favor of India. Little Norway saw that India had legitimate claim to her seat, or that of any other smaller nation, and so she behaved like a lady.

It may be that this kindly act will avail us nothing, that Britain either does not intend India to share our future in the air, or wishes her to be given a seat to strengthen the position of the Empire. Or it may be that Norway doesn't give a hang whether she sits with the big powers. But in any event there's a lesson for us here. If Norway's noble gesture could be emulated, and her spirit should spread, we'd be headed for better days, despite ourselves.

Statesmen At Work

(Excerpts From The Congressional Record)

In House debate on the so-called Gestapo Bill, New York's Hamilton Fish rose to pay tribute to freedom of speech—and to declare himself a liberal. Thusly:

Perhaps, if I were not a lame duck I might be hesitant to express my views in defense of freedom of speech, which we and our sons are fighting for all over the world, and which should be safeguarded at home.

It may very well be that these freedoms are being denied in America. I expect to vote for this bill because I believe in the apparent purposes of the bill. Those who commit sabotage, willful sabotage, should be punished and punished severely. But I may say that I am somewhat alarmed at the trend in a great country such as ours, built upon freedom and liberty, that we have strayed so far from the fundamental principles of Thomas Jefferson, and what he had to say against peacetime sedition laws. I hope that this trial, if it comes to an end, will be the last trial of this nature, a conspiracy trial in peacetime, on the basis merely of, what some American citizen had to say. If there is any one thing we hold dear on both sides of the House, it is the right to free speech. Whether the chairman of the Committee on Rules or myself disagree or not, I will always defend his right to free speech, as well as anybody else's right in Congress or out. I have been a liberal in politics all my life. What is a liberal? The word "liberal" comes from the Latin word "liber" which means free—free speech, free press, free men, free America. That is my political philosophy. The very people I am opposed to, the Communists, the Reds and the fellow-travellers, would destroy that. Anybody who stands up for free speech and is a liberal and against the Communists, dictatorship and totalitarianism is repudiated, attacked, pursued and smeared, as if he was doing something un-American, and against our American form of government.

And I uphold it for Communists, as well as Republicans and Democrats. I hope as a result of this trial, the American people will find out that it is an attempt to purge little Americans with no financial means and shut the mouths of those obscure and average Americans who dared oppose the foreign policies of the President prior to Pearl Harbor, who dared to attack communism, and even were openly anti-Semites, as much as I deplore that, they have a right as American citizens to be that or anything else, anti-Protestant or anti-Christian, I will defend their right to be what they want, as long as it is within the law of the United States and within the confines and limitations of the Federal Constitution.

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON

INSIDE fact about the troubles in Greece is that they date back to an understanding between Roosevelt and Churchill that the American Army would play second fiddle to the British Army in all matters affecting not only Greece but Jugoslavia. Churchill sold Roosevelt on the idea that this was a British sphere of influence.

This has been carried out—in fact, so much so that it was a cause of considerable embarrassment to U. S. military leaders in the Near East. When, for instance, U. S. Army officers wanted to send instructions to U. S. Army men inside Greece, they had to send them through the British in British code. They never could tell whether the messages were delivered.

And when U. S. officers wanted to send men by plane to certain points in Jugoslavia and Greece, they had to do it on British planes. This was part of the Churchill-Roosevelt agreement. But if the British didn't want to fly their planes, U. S. officers could not go.

It is now no secret that both British and American troops infiltrated back and forth inside Greece and Jugoslavia during the German occupation. Supplies were sent to the guerrillas in both countries and so were U. S. troops. Usually the troops were American citizens of Greek or Jugoslav descent who spoke the language and could work with the rebel armies fighting the German occupation. But everything had to be done under the British, and when the British found an American too friendly to the non-Royalists in Greece, he was quietly transferred elsewhere.

This policy was carried so far that today American citizens working for UNRRA in Greece must wear British uniforms. If they refuse to wear British uniforms, they are not allowed in Greece.

Reversed Too Late

Thus, though the State Department has now announced a policy of keeping hands off Greece and Italy as far as their type of government is concerned, actually this has come a little late. For more than two years, the Greeks were told by U. S. diplomats that the British views were our views. For instance, when the Greek Cabinet at Cairo, in the autumn of 1943, requested King George of Greece not to return until a plebiscite had been held, this column reported that U. S. Ambassador Alexander Kirk urged the Greek Cabinet to support the King.

NOTE—In August, this column quoted Greek guerrilla Premier Svolos as saying: "If an Anglo-American army comes in with the idea of keeping any part of Greece, we will fight against you as we never fought against the Germans. We fought the Turks in the mountains of Greece for 500 years, and we will do the same against you."

Stars In Politics

The activity of Orson Welles, Frank Sinatra, Ann Sheridan and other movie and radio stars in the recent campaign caused repercussions among the public. One irate movie-goer recently wrote Warner Brothers, demand that movie stars be suppressed when it came to expressing their political opinions.

To this Harry Warner replied:

"Dear Madam: In reply to your letter of the 8th, I am very much surprised that anyone would refuse to go to see a picture because the star in it had publicly expressed his political point of view.

"I think your letter would be fitting in any Nazi or Japanese country, but thank God there is an America where people can express their opinions publicly, no matter what their political affiliation may be.

"We advised all of our people that they certainly had a right to express their views, no matter what political party they favored. If you have a right to go and see whatever picture you want to see and express your views as to what you think about it, then a movie star certainly has the right to go to any political gathering and express his opinions."

Snowplows In Tropics

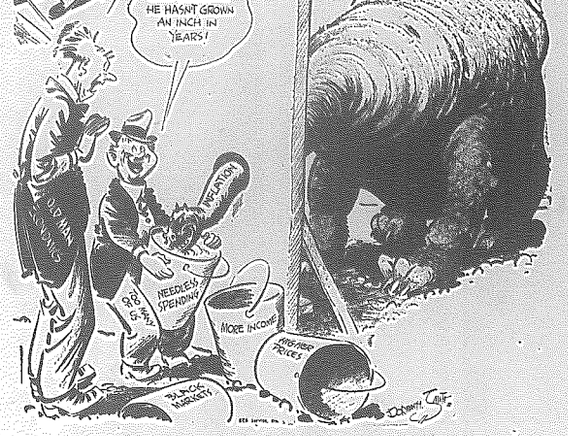
For weeks the Alaskan army has been yelling for a dozen highpowered snowplows to clear airfields in Alaska. Orders were sent for them nearly a year ago but, although the plows were shipped out in good time, they still have not reached Alaska. Instead, they are under thatched roofs in the tropical Mariana Islands. Here is what happened:

The plows were loaded last Summer on two ships whose holds were full of powder and shells. The ships sailed for Alaska from a port on our Pacific Coast. Shortly after they set sail, a frantic request came from the Pacific theater for ammunition of the type these ships were carrying—the Saipan battle was in progress at that time.

The ships were radioed to change their course and make for the Marianas. Unfortunately, there were no port facilities at the island to which they were directed, and the Marines and Seabees assigned to unload the ships had a major engineering job on their hands. They had to remove the heavy dual-motored plows on small lighters before they could unload the ammunition.

The plows were then to be reloaded on the ships and sent to Alaska. But the sun was too hot, and the men too busy. The ships sailed without the plows. The sun has remained too hot, and the men too busy. The plows are still lined up near the shore of a tropical island while our men at the Alaskan airfields battle snow without them.

Living In A Fool's Paradise



Senate On A False Scent

By Marquis Childs

WASHINGTON

THE Senate is due for something of a surprise when it finally gets that suspicious body calls on William L. Clayton for his views on foreign trade in connection with his appointment as an Assistant Secretary of State.

It is my impression that Clayton is a firm believer in free trade. In fact, his views are just about as radical and unorthodox as those of Cordell Hull.

If his viewpoint is to disqualify him to handle our foreign economic relations, it might be on the score that he is too firmly rooted in the conviction of free trade in a world which has moved a long way toward cartelization. Whoever has the responsibility for giving direction to our economic policy abroad is going to have to face the fact that many countries, Britain and Russia among them, intend to exercise stringent government controls over their foreign trade after the war.

By shaking our finger and saying naughty, naughty, we're not going to change any of this. And that goes for the Senate of the United States. We can be purists and perfectionists in these matters, but we're likely to find ourselves in a pretty lonely position.

That great statesman from Kentucky, Senator Happy Chandler, wants to know who won the election. He looks with deep suspicion on these minions of "big business," Clayton, the cotton broker, Nelson Rockefeller, grandson of old John D., and Edward R. Stettinius Jr., son of a Morgan partner.

Well, all right, who did win the election? Let's suppose that Stettinius had made his appointments on that basis. The most important single factor was the Political Action Committee. There can be little argument about that.

It so happens that the executive director of PAC, C. B. Baldwin, is a very capable administrator who has given good service in several important government positions. What if Stettinius had named Baldwin as one of his assistants? It would have been in many ways a logical appointment. As a matter of fact, Baldwin was named, with State Department approval, to an important administrative post in Italy just before he decided to cast his lot with labor's new political wing.

But if Baldwin had been named, that same Happy Chandler would have yelled to high heaven. So would a number of other Senators who are now being persnickety about Will Clayton.

The point I want to make is that it's impossible to find a Sir Galahad who is so pure that he has never had any views of any kind on any subject. If you could find such a white knight, he would be worse than useless.

One faction in the Senate doesn't like Archibald MacLeish. They say he's too liberal, and they don't seem to like his poetry. Another faction doesn't like Clayton and Rockefeller. They're too rich, apparently.

I suppose a lot of harm will be done by the delay in calling these men up for questioning as to their views. It's the attitudes behind this action that seems to me ominous for the future.

The People's Platform

Editors, THE NEWS:

I am writing in response to your recent request for opinions on the closed shop vs. voting for a Constitutional amendment abolishing the closed shop, I believe that the citizens of the Southern states of Arkansas and Florida have wisely taken a progressive step. They have thus advertised to the nation their belief in the democratic way of life.

It is indeed to be hoped that other Southern states will follow suit. I believe that we should likewise have an amendment to our Federal Constitution outlawing the closed shop. I believe that basically, inherently, the principle of the closed shop is wrong, that it is undemocratic and un-American.

In my opinion the question of union membership should be left entirely up to the individual worker. The day to any American the right and the privilege to work unless and until he joins a labor union, to place union membership above national defense, to place union membership on a dictatorial basis is nothing short of a national scandal and national disgrace.

It matters not to me how many workers join unions, it matters not to me which union they may join, but it does matter to me if they are forced into union membership whether they may desire to join or not. I firmly believe that the matter of union membership should rest, must rest, with the individual employee, as his conscience may direct.

—MARTIN S. PRATT.

Lumberton, N. C.

Defending FR And The News

Editors, The News:

I read with interest the letter of Mr. H. E. Phillips, concerning the letter that you recently received from President Roosevelt, thanking you for your splendid work in the Presidential campaign.

And I was very surprised, not only that anyone would have written such a letter, but also that The News would print such a letter." Personally I think that a letter from our Commander-In-Chief is the finest article that could appear on the front page.

And as for the unity between the people and the President, I thought that since the election battle was over, that all America was backing Mr. Roosevelt.

I thought that it made no difference whether you were Democrat, Republican, Socialist, Independent voter, or what have you, that as long as we have a capable leader that he would receive our full support.

But I am sure that no tears will be shed over the dissatisfied gent from Hickory.

—JULIAN BARBER

Charlotte.

SIDE GLANCES By Galbraith

"Oh, I'll listen to what you say was my father's favorite bedtime story if you insist, but I'd much rather hear a good gang murder story that's due right now!"

Everyday Counselor

By Herbert Spaugh, D.D.

WHAT has happened to your Prayer Band or Prayer Fellowship, inquires a correspondent. "Is it still open?"

It certainly is, although changed in form since it was first begun some years ago. At one time we mailed prayer lists to all members of the Fellowship; later we published them in The Everyday Counselor column.

The method is now somewhat altered. Each one who writes The Everyday Counselor, presenting problem on which they desire the united prayer of the Fellowship, is enrolled on a Master Prayer List, and is asked to join daily in praying for the needs and problems of ALL listed here. Although the individual names and problems of those in the prayer Fellowship are unknown in detail to others in the Fellowship, they are known to God to whom the many daily petitions are directed. Members of the Prayer Fellowship are asked to report to The Everyday Counselor as their conditions improve. Directions for prayer are sent to each member of the Fellowship.

It should be said that those who faithfully persevere in this Prayer Fellowship always find an answer. Sometimes the answer is immediate, sometime its comes as a result of long and persistent prayer.

Many become discouraged and we hear nothing further from them. That is unfortunate, because according to God's promises and the proof of actual experience, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

These are days in which Christian people everywhere should exercise to the fullest the privilege of prayer and communion with our God. Through prayer we can have fellowship with loved ones far away. Through prayer we find strength to bear heavy burdens laid upon us. Through prayer we receive the faith to carry on amid trying circumstances. Through prayer we receive divine wisdom to solve problems which face us day by day.

Careful reading of the Gospels, reveals that Jesus found His greatest source of strength while here on earth in quiet communion with the Heavenly Father. Let's not become so taken up with secular things that we neglect our prayer life. Fortunate is he who has learned to live and work in a continuous attitude of prayer.

The Tough Guys

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

WE are being "tough" with Britain, and Britain is being "tough" with Italy, Greece and Belgium. We told the British off at the Chicago Air Conference, when we insisted on our right to grow mighty on the commercial airways of the world, almost without let or hindrance. The British have told Count Sforza off in Italy, and they are supporting unpopular governments in Belgium and Greece; it is understood that they intend to acquire bases in both countries.

Our attitude at the air conference must, to a certain extent, have made the British feel shaky about their futures. We refused to agree to an international organization with real power to control commercial air traffic. The air conference was a peculiar conference, in that it was an international meeting, convened, by us, to agree on the principle of no international control.

We have refused to give the British any fixed quota of the world's air traffic. The air conference is now over. Certain basic principles have been accepted, such as the right to fly civil aircraft over foreign territory, to land in case of need, etc.; progress has been made in setting up technical and safety standards; but an uncontrolled scramble for air routes will now begin. That is the way we want it. It is not the way the British want it. For in this game we have the aces, the heavy planes, the facilities for building more heavy planes, and friendly contacts in Latin America. One can hardly blame the British for experiencing a shiver or two about their futures, and for wanting a fixed quota for air trade. Britain has always needed the carrying trade, in order to secure enough foreign exchange with which to buy food.

And so, bewildered and shaken by Chicago, Britain reaches out for the bases she needs, and supports with arms the Governments she believes will be friendly to her, in Italy, Greece and Belgium.

If Britain's support of Pierlot in Belgium and of Papandreou in Greece, is discreditable, it is not so very different, in kind, from our own action of last week in concluding an aviation treaty with Franco in Spain. All these stories are alike, in that use is being made of undemocratic regimes, in order to secure commercial and other advantages.

The way to halt these incidents is not to sign New Years resolutions faithfully promising to be good, but to find some way to steer around the underlying British-American economic rivalry, which shows up in these particular forms.

It is not by scolding Britain that we will make her behave, for scolding her only increases her sense of isolation, throws her more desperately on her own resources, and makes it seem even more necessary for her to use whatever powers she has to fend for herself.

Mr. Stettinius' admirable statement of Tuesday was a fine theoretical contribution to the problem. He completely dissociated the United States from Britain's opposition to letting Count Sforza enter the Italian Government. He made it clear, without naming them, that Belgium and Greece are even more entitled to the right to choose their own governing officials. But the imperative reaction to this statement is that a major meeting between Britain and the United States is necessary.

We've Paid & Paid

THIS is a coupon from a railroad bond of 1880, bearing 8 per cent interest. The railroad was the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherford, and Mecklenburg County stood for $300,000 of the bonds, which do not mature until 1950. In an editorial last week we pointed out that this bond issue had cost us $900,000 in 1920—and will have cost us almost two million dollars by the time it has been retired.

Some anonymous reader sent us the coupon, and we reproduce it in hope that the very sight of it will stand beside the editorial as a moral of sorts. To wit: Don't let's pull a stunt like this again.—Editors, The News.