EDITORIAL PAGE
THE CHARLOTTE NEWS
W. C. DOWD JR., PUBLISHER
J. E. DOWD, EDITOR
BURKE DAVIS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR
DECEMBER 27, 1944

Emancipation?

The Interstate Commerce Commission is on the verge of handing down a decision of momentous importance to the national economy—and to the South in particular. There have been hints that this decision, concerning freight rate differentials, will be entirely favorable to the South. Drew Pearson, who is so often far in advance of the news, says positively that differentials are out, and that the South will enjoy equality with other sections of the country.

That will be great news for a domain characterized by Henry Wallace as colonial. It will mean victory in a fight which has been waged with increasing fury for several generations, and victory for the Southern Governors who have been laboring over the problem for the past two years. It will mean the removal of an artificial barrier to trade. It will open the way to fuller industrialization of the Southern states. But it will likewise mean defeat for the Southern railroads, if this thing comes to pass.

We recall that, in the current (and apparently waning) campaign to reduce North Carolina income and corporation taxes, there was cited the case of a large corporation which located in Virginia rather than North Carolina because of high Tar Heel taxes. Investigation showed that the saving in freight by locating in Virginia was many times greater than the saving in taxes — and that lone instance indicates what a tremendous effect a freight rate revision may have upon the South at large.

These rates have been, in effect, a sort of tariff imposed against the South by the more thickly populated and highly industrialized sections of the country. When they are rewritten the East and Midwest will lose an advantage. But they will surely come to realize in time that it is to their benefit that the South grow and expand its industrial life. It is time enough that we became a nation, rather than a confederation of regions. The expected ICC decision will go a long way toward making possible that new unity.

It develops that the Allies are not unanimous on turning in the old Europe for a brave new model. Cousin Winston thinks maybe a repaint job would do.

A New Wrinkle

A group of prominent men, headed by the University of Chicago's President Hutchins, Beardsley Ruml, and William Benton of *Encyclopedia Brittanica*, are trying to give the country surcease from radio advertising. They're having their troubles, of course, as opposition arises from broadcasters now in the field. But the idea itself, of eliminating commercial plugs from broadcasting, would certainly have its attractions from the listener's point of view.

The present scheme is to sell subscriptions to listeners, and to offer them musical programs and special features for five cents a day in the slot. And no advertisements whatsoever. As a newspaper and an advertising medium, *The News* is of course cognizant of the necessity of advertising to the newspaper, magazine and radio as we know them today, but there are exceptions in all three fields, and what these pioneers plan is a venture in entertainment unaccompanied by any plugs.

That brings us to reflection upon the development of radio and its adaptation throughout the world. Most of us had forgotten, or never knew, that radio in the United States was largely in government hands until the last war, and that it was only after that period that frequencies began to be assigned to private enterprise. In Europe, and through the rest of the world with some South American exceptions, radio has developed under government control.

The British Broadcasting Company, for example, is and has been under government control. Its listeners are freed from commercials, but they must pay the price of listening to programs which are reputedly inferior to our own. This entails a tax on listeners, whereas the American scheme is to let the advertiser pay the bill, and give listeners complete freedom in every respect—except for those commercials. Here is the genius of the American system, that the advertiser pays the freight. And the penalty is simply that the air must be filled with those plugs. And even in face of that dreary entertainment prospect, we'll chose the American system, if it comes down to a choice.

Boon Times

There probably never has been before in the history of this country a period of such magnanimous giving. The air is full of smoke from the burning of church mortgages. As fast as one worthy cause attains its quota, another is launched.

It's a lush day for eleemosynary institutions, not to mention a rare opportunity to ring in that ringing word. Vicarious solicitors are astonished at the ease with which they obtain what they came for, or more than they had dared ask. A good many donors of the type have programs of giving, budgeting their benefactions down a long list and welcoming new prospects. It's a phenomenon.

There are several reasons for it, the most creditable being simple generosity. People, to do them justice, like to give when they've got it, and that suggests a second reason. In these war-prosperous times, they've got it.

The main reason, however, known for its potency by all men who have ever mapped out a fund-raising campaign, is the income tax. Well-to-do individuals, reflecting that Mr. Morgenthau will drain off half or more of their upper bracket income, give gleefully, thus neatly reducing taxes. Many corporations, having reached the point at which taxes become almost confiscatory, give plentifully and painlessly.

It is no discredit to them, mind you; but it is a fact these days that the major impulsion for large contributions traces to form 1040-A or its companions. Giving-out-of-taxes has been a marvelous boon to institutions and charitable undertakings, and our advice to them is to get all they can while the getting is good.

German Gamble

Viewed historically, there is nothing new about the fierce German drive in the West—nor should it cause undue alarm, despite the fact that it means heavy casualties. For all that the German fighting man is looked upon as a stolid, almost plodding scientist, given to following routines from staff manuals, he has in modern times become quite a bold and desperate gambler.

German gambles were dismal failures in the first World War, for unrestricted submarine warfare, a last-ditch measure of 1917, eventually brought America into the conflict and spelled doom for the Kaiser's armies. And in 1914, when Paris lay before them, the Germans scorned to take it and consolidate their gains. Instead, they drove ahead in an effort to destroy the French Army—and lost their gamble on the Marne. In this war, they lost the gamble of their air strength in the Battle of Britain. They lost a great gamble at Stalingrad.

The United States has often suffered heavy and grave losses in battle—though it had no such experience in modern times between the Civil War and Pearl Harbor. In the Revolution Washington met defeat as often as he won victory; his armies failed in the Canadian drive, lost New York, were whipped pretty soundly at Brandywine, Philadelphia, Germantown and Camden.

It was the same in the war of 1812—when we won almost no victories until the very end. Defeats at Detroit, Lake Champlain and the burning of Washington were heart-breaking, but they were overcome. In the Civil War the first two years of conflict saw many a defeat for the Union. Beginning with Bull Run, it was bloodily beaten in the Seven Days, at Second Bull Run, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, Chickamauga, Petersburg and Cold Harbor.

The men who have been driven back in Belgium and Luxembourg, fight today, and will fight tomorrow, in the same tradition. They are beaten back, and tactically they have suffered defeat. But, as earlier at Kasserine Pass, they will stem the tide and drive on to victory.

A hard peace for the Germans? Sure. Let's liberate them (Athens style).

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON

THOSE close up to the war picture are convinced that aside from faulty intelligence, there was no one single military error which brought on the swift and disastrous German break-through.

Undoubtedly some intelligence officers will be disciplined or broken for failing to evaluate the concentration of German troops opposite the First Army about a week beforehand. But there were other factors contributing to the reverse, none of which can be laid at the doorstep of a single commander. Basically they are factors which only General Eisenhower and General Marshall themselves could properly evaluate and act on.

Here are some of the inside, basic factors involved:

1. General Marshall himself ordered the U. S. offensive which began Nov. 8, and which continued with battering-ram tactics until Von Rundstedt turned the tide against us. Marshall, visiting the battlefront in October, saw that during the Winter the Germans could mobilize 100 new divisions, so it was wise for us to clear them off the west bank of the Rhine before Winter closed in.

2. There was and is no disposition to doubt the wisdom of General Marshall's decision. However, these battering-ram tactics cost men, also tire men out. The American system is to keep divisions on the front line, bringing up fresh men only for replacements. Thus the divisions now at the front have been fighting steadily since the landing in Normandy last June—with, of course, a lot of men coming up as replacements.

Nazis Rest Troops

3. This is considered an excellent system and gets results. However, the Germans immediately took out their battle troops after Normandy and sent them to rest behind the lines. The Nazi boys and old men we encountered in the Siegfried Line made us think the German Army was shot to pieces, but it wasn't. The experienced battle troops, now refreshed after a long rest, are taking the offensive against us.

4. The War Department itself was responsible for a lot of the favorable news which gave the public a general feeling of over-confidence. One of its most important items was that some 800,000 German troops were killed or taken prisoners during the clean-up of France, making a sizable hole in the Nazi Army. Of these, however, about 400,000 were Russian-Ukrainian labor battalions. Thus the American public had reason to believe that a large slice of the German Army was decimated.

5. Germany's new Royal Tiger tank is superior to ours and we have known it. It is extremely difficult to knock out of commission. However, we thought the war was going to be over soon and that we could finish up the job with the tanks already on hand—of which we had tremendous quantities. More recently, however, we have started building a big tank which can equal or better the Royal Tiger.

Robots Beat Planes

6. Robot bombs and rocket bombs can fly in any weather whereas airplanes can't. Also they don't require men. Thus the Germans have been able to bomb us from the air—by robots and rockets—while because of bad weather we can't bomb them. The Nazis lay out a square of territory in and behind our lines, then systematically pepper it with rocket bombs. They can aim them well enough to hit within certain areas.

7. The German system is to attack suddenly with tremendous force and heavy armor in one small area, they concentrated hundreds of tanks in their first attack. Once they broke through, they spread out. Also the Nazis had little to lose. If they sat behind the Siegfried Line they were sure to lose the war eventually, so they could afford this gamble.

8. However, it remains a fact that we had advance information of great Nazi activity for about a week before the attack came, though apparently we sized it up as preparation for retreat rather than attack. Also some of General Eisenhower's friends in the War Department had cautioned him that it was a favorite Nazi trick to turn and strike back when cornered.

Note — General Courtney Hodges, against whose First Army the blow was launched, is regarded as an average American general. He was not able to make the grade at West Point, but immediately enlisted in the Army and has worked his way up. He was a major in command of infantry in the last war, one rank higher than Marshall, who was then a captain, and has commanded infantry all his career since, having risen to be chief of infantry shortly before we entered the war.

Weather Note

When the House Military Affairs Committee took off from Washington on its trip to Europe, members had been told they'd fly the northern route to England, with a stop at Newfoundland. So they dressed in their heaviest underwear. A card game started, some of the members began to read one or two went to sleep.

Among those who chose sleep was Bolivar Pagan, Commissioner for Puerto Rico. Pagan slept through the pilot's announcement after the plane had been in the air about half an hour that the plans had been changed, that they would fly the Southern route with a Bermuda stop.

As the plane pulled in to tropical Bermuda, only a few hundred miles from Papan's homeland, Papan awakened and started to dig out his wraps. He put on a sweater under his suitcoat, a muffler, a heavy overcoat, a hat, gloves and spats. Those of his colleagues who noticed, decided to say nothing. They sat by and watched. When the plane landed Papan, with amazement written on his face, marched at the mildness of the mid-Winter climate of Newfoundland.

"I never heard of such a thing," he said. "Why you'd think we were way down South."

The Eternal Optimist

The German Offensive

By Marquis Childs

WASHINGTON

IT is now perfectly clear that the Germans in their recent offensive achieved a complete tactical surprise. Top officials in the War Department are piecing together the still fragmentary evidence to find out why.

There has been considerable speculation over the seeming failure of air reconnaissance to report what was necessarily a major movement of German forces within a relatively small area.

From still incomplete reports, it appears the failure was not that of reconnaissance. Aerial observers reported considerable activity behind the German lines at the point from which the offensive was later launched.

Military intelligence interpreted this, however, as indicating the intensive training of divisions of Volks Grenadiers, the second strong divisions cringed together from the bottom of Germany's manpower barrel. Instead, the activity reported by the aerial scouts represented the massing of crack forces the Nazis had held in reserve, including armored panzer divisions.

The fact is, and it underlies the faulty interpretation of the aerial reports, that military intelligence has consistently since the fall of France underrated the German strength. The number of crack armored and mounted troops that escaped the Allied trap appears to have been considerably greater than any G2 estimate.

While undoubtedly much of the preparation for the offensive took place under cover of darkness, still there was an intensification of movement reported by reconnaissance photographs. But American commanders simply could not conceive of an attack in that sector.

That was why this was the most thinly protected part of the entire line. German intelligence knew more or less precisely how thin the protection was. The Germans left behind in liberated Belgium hundreds of agents, some of them in the uniform of loyal Belgian troops.

The terrain over which the Germans moved is rugged and mountainous. It is the very last place in which an attempt at a break through had been expected.

Studying every scrap of information that comes from the battlefront, military leaders here are not overly disturbed. They point out that no army can have unbroken successes.

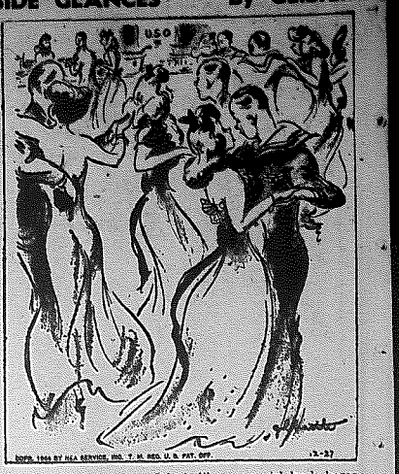
Reaction to the unexpected German move is colored by a somewhat childish concept of what war is about; a concept to which military men themselves have contributed. People talk and write as though war were a game. The analogy of the football field is used. We get pushed back 10 yards or 20 yards.

For more reasons than one, the analogy is false. The basic objective is not to gain territory. It is to destroy the enemy's striking power, and that can be done as well in one area as in another.

The attitude of military men here is based on the belief that the German attack can be stopped before it gets too far. Because of the difficult terrain, they are not so confident of pinching it off, but they are hopeful the thrust can be checked and the line held at a reasonable point.

Political as well as military considerations went into the timing of the German offensive. The hope is to set the Allies to quarreling over the conduct of the war. It is the moment when we must stand most firmly back of our men who are fighting this fierce battle.

SIDE GLANCES By Galbraith



"It's nice of you to say I look like your girl back home—you see, I'm somebody's girl back home, too, and I hope my boy friend is saying that to some girl somewhere!"

Everyday Counselor

By Herbert Spaugh, D.D.

IF we don't learn the easy way, we'll have to learn the hard way. Most of us seem to choose the latter. Each generation could profit by the experience of its predecessors but it usually doesn't.

A child can be told a dozen times that the stove is hot, but he usually has to get burnt before he will stay away from it. For two thousand years, the world has been at this business of trying to get men to live peacefully with each other. Almighty God was so interested in this that He sent His Son to earth with a plan. He was called the Prince of Peace. We have just commemorated His birth amid conditions opposite to those for which He lived and died.

Whenever His plan has been given an honest trial amongst a group of people, it has worked beautifully. History is not lacking in illustrations.

This country was largely founded by men who believed in the principles of God's Rule Book, The Bible. A Christian democracy was the result. The evidence of this was incorporated in the great seal of the United States, adopted 1776.

We've allowed the Rule Book to grow dusty on our tables and shelves. Instead of spending our money to teach men to live by its principles, we have been spending it in the exploitation of material things. Now chickens have come home to roost.

The comparison of the difference in cost between the "Bible program" and the "Bullet program" is terrifying and enlightening. Recently in the press the cost of modern armament was revealed:

A 12-ton tank costs $40,925, or a very good annual Church budget.

A 30-ton tank costs $74,970, the equal of the cost of a beautiful church building.

A modern 50-caliber type machine gun costs $1,500, the equal of a minister's salary for a year.

A 20-millimeter automatic gun costs $4,000, the equivalent of a year's salary for four missionaries.

A 60-millimeter trench mortar costs $600, equal to the annual salary of many a church organist.

A 37-millimeter anti-tank gun costs $6,500, equivalent of the cost of a nice home.

A Springfield rifle now costs $60, more than the average church member pays in a year.

Read and ponder. We've constantly said in this column, that the best way to stop men from fighting and quarreling with one another is to teach them to love one another. No better book has been found on the subject that The Holy Bible. The plan is still there to teach men the way of kindness and service. If we persist in choosing the hard way, we'll have to pay the price, and what a price it is.

P. S.: It's still hard to raise money for religious causes, yet we spend it with prodigal hands for instruments of warfare. You figure that out.

A Waiting Game

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

LET us all remember how, approximately a year ago, President Roosevelt let himself be badgered into consenting to meet Marshal Stalin and Prime Minister Churchill at Teheran. The President seemed oh, so reluctant to go. Before he finally made the trip, he had the most conservative section of the American press virtually screaming to the effect that he was being unfriendly to the Russians.

The greater the uproar, the more shy about it the President seemed to become. When he went, finally, it was as if in response to overwhelming public pressure. This has always been a part of the Roosevelt method. He likes nothing better than to be forced by an outraged press into doing exactly what he wants to do.

There are signs that Mr. Roosevelt is playing the same kind of waiting game again. He is almost certainly, for example, waiting the British out on Greece. During the fortnight since the Greek crisis came to a head, a fortnight in which the President has appeared to do nothing, important things have happened. The crisis itself has become a war, it has passed out of hand, and the British have been forced to admit it. The new German offensive has further exposed the dreary emptiness and irrelevance of the Greek adventure, and has made British policy look as bad as it is. Domestic protest in Britain has increased, day by day. Viscount Samuel has risen in the House of Lords to suggest that Britain appeal to her allies for joint action on Greece.

And the President waits. Each day finds the British bogging down deeper into their error; and they are alone in it. Each day finds British officials, such as Mr. Ernest Bevin, making frantic efforts to prove, on flimsy evidence, that the United States has somehow authorized the Greek adventure. Official Washington calmly denies it, and the President waits. He don't do nothin', he don't say nothin', he waits.

The President has been accused of conducting an "indemocratic" foreign policy; one which he makes up out of his own head, or concocts in secret session with Messrs Stalin and Churchill, and without sufficient discussion before the public. But time and again, he has, in the way outlined above, allowed public opinion to build up spontaneously, to gather a full head of steam, and then triumphantly blow him precisely where he wants to go.

During the last two weeks, a wave of uneasiness has swept the western world, in regard to disunity among the Allies. The President has undoubtedly been uneasy on this score himself, and earlier. He could have acted, in some way, weeks ago, to cook up some come sort of hasty conference among the three great powers, and try to rebuild unity. If, instead, he has preferred to let the public share the uneasiness, and the doubt, and the anxiety, and finally come on its own motion, to a demand for unity, who shall say that his method is bad, or even that it is undemocratic?

Newspapers which, two weeks ago, were saying emptily that they didn't like Churchill on account of Greece and that they didn't like Stalin on account of Poland, and that they didn't like Roosevelt on account of he wasn't knocking Churchill's and Stalin's heads together, are much less belligerent today. They are beginning to murmur that maybe the three Allies ought to come together. And the President waits. He never seems to hear it the first time. He likes it to be good and loud.

It is as if, knowing that the world is real and its problems are real, he is willing to wait, to let the realities and difficulties penetrate to as many minds as possible, so that he will be as little alone as he can be in making the final decision.

It is easy to say that this means the President has no policy at all. I wonder. We have some memories to go by. Woodrow Wilson took a bold, pro-internationalist line, asked for a fight on the issue, and got it. But during the last election campaign, the Republican candidate actually accused Mr. Roosevelt of going too slowly, of not working closely enough with our allies. I have a feeling that when Mr. Roosevelt heard that, he must have hunted up a portrait of Woodrow Wilson in the White House, and smiled, and blown a kiss to it.

Far Enough

In the sparsely settled regions of the Sawtooth Mountains in California, a friend of mine was motoring out to see a rancher friend. Traversing a region of uninhabited wasteland, he came to a tiny cluster of four cabins at a crossroads. Stopping his car, he hailed a native standing beside the road.

"I'm looking for the town of Belden," said my friend. "Can you direct me to it?"

"Stranger," replied the rustic laconically, "don't move a damn inch."

—Reader's Digest.

Statesmen At Work

(Serious, facetious and comic excerpts from the Congressional Record).

SENATOR Gerald Nye (N. D.) Some firms and some men are making a lot of money—too much money—out of this war, just as happened last time, and just as we were promised should not happen this time. But the time to be on guard against corruption on a grand scale, I would remind and warn the Senate, is after the war is over.

Then is when the boys who know the right people plan to "go to town." And what a chance they will have. Just think of it—more than $15,000,000,000 worth of the best designed and equipped factories in the country to be disposed of. Almost as much real estate as there is in the entire New England States. Tractors, automobiles, railway equipment, ships, food, textiles, and everything conceivable right down to safety pins, and, one suspects, perhaps, a good many million cartons of cigarettes.

No one will hazard an official estimate as to the value of all this material and real estate, but the general understanding among Government officials is, as we all know, that it will represent a cost value of not a penny less than $100,000,000,000. Just think of that—$100,000,000,000 worth of Government goods to be disposed of, and in such a way as not to wreck our national economy. Talk about possible financial killings. There's the biggest melon-cutting ever to take place at any time in history anywhere on God's green earth. And there is not a slicker, a smarter-thing-for-nothing artist, a racial, a corruptionist, a member of the plunderbund in this country who has not got his eye on what is coming up of this nature, and who is not getting ready right now to reap an illegitimate harvest out of this coming aftermath of the war.

Teapot Dome will be kindergarten stuff alongside what the big plunderers are likely to do to that hundred billion dollar's worth of easy pickings.

The People's Platform

Editors, THE NEWS:

The U. S. has proved the most gullible and big-hearted nation in the world. In this war as in the last, the Allies have played Uncle Sam for a sucker and collected handsomely in vast new colonies and territories. Britain leans heavily upon us in a financial and military crisis, but promotes a very shrewd and aggressive policy in dividing up conquered lands and captured booty.

I think the majority of our people have begun to wonder just what we are really slaving, fighting and dying for. Is it for anarchy? We have a wonderful means of influencing the minds of the American people through the press and radio. But the reading public must realize that this American press could be as detrimental to the nation in the hands of profiteers and capitalists as it could be helpful when used to portray truth.

If this terrible war keeps on in the present direction, instead of everlasting peace, we will have continued strife until the oppressed people of the earth are given equal footing and social equality by the side of their fellow-men. . . .

If you think it is right for an island empire to own and dictate to the peoples of one-quarter of the globe, thereby reaping vast wealth for the few, then I have failed in my effort to place before you a plea for universal peace for generations to come.

SGT. AXEL ANDERS.
Maxton, N. C.

A Soldier Seeks His Girl

Editors, THE NEWS:

I am in the Army in Italy. I was just wondering if you could help me find a girl friend of mine by putting these lines in your paper. Her name is Margaret Reese. I lost contact with her when she moved from Greenville, S. C., shortly after I left the States. I would appreciate it very much if you would help me contact her by putting my address in the paper.

If you can do this it will make one soldier boy very happy.

—PFC. RALPH C. TRIPP.
APO 88,
Care Postmaster, N. Y.