EDITORIAL PAGE
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Quick Triggers

The widespread criticism of our military leaders on the Western Front which followed closely behind the German counter-offensive has not been intemperate, and there was reason enough for Secretary Stimson to remark that it had been restrained. In other wars, public reaction to military reverses has often been violent, and the search for scapegoats unrelenting. But even in this instance there is an air of unreality about the plaints.

We cannot know, for example, that this or that intelligence function was not performed. As Samuel Grafton points out, the failure (if there was a failure) was greater than that of local intelligence on any front. It goes back to the fact that the German armies were not nearly so badly battered as we thought in last Summer's campaign — and that they had the advantage of a lull all around their borders in which to gather strength and mount an offensive.

And, as Secretary Stimson says, it is much too early to pass judgment. Men far removed from that snow-clad, mountainous front can have no conception of the problems our armies are facing. This, of course, is not World War 1. We face a far more formidable enemy, even though he is completely surrounded. And the voices out of the past, lifted by retired Generals on both sides of the Atlantic, seem somehow out of order.

It seems far more rational to us to accept the obvious fact that no armies can be invincible, and to regard the German offensive as one more opportunity to destroy the enemy—as our leaders on the ground suggest. We are still too prone, we suspect, to become critics at the slightest reverse, and gay optimists in the presence of favorable headlines.

Something New

From the president of the American Bar Association comes one of the most provocative suggestions made in a long time. Did little reader see the news story—the one in which the man said that Congress must return to the "snuff box and wig era" if it was to regain its dignity and authority? Well, that's not the one; at least it is not the provocative part.

That came further down where the gentleman proposed that Congress create a Bureau of Legislation to function under its own direction and to investigate and draft all subordinate rules and regulations needed to supplement any acts of Congress."

As the branches of the Government now operate, Congress r'ars back and passes a law which the Executive snatches and enforces according to its own notion. An example, *e pluribus unum*, is the Wage & Hour Law.

The character of this law and the intent Congress had in mind in writing it are clearly indicated by its formal title, the Fair Labor Standards Act. What Congress sought to do, explicitly, was to put a floor under wages and along with a ceiling over hours — in short, to prevent the exploitation of the underpaid and overworked. But in its enforcement the Fair Labor Standards Act has become a good deal more.

Its limitation on hours has been applied to higher-grade employees who may make two, three, four hundred dollars or more a month, but who, if they work more than 40 hours in any one week, must be paid time and a half, and voluminous records kept on every employee's work-week. The enforcement of the act has taken in a lot more territory than Congress intended, and while its main purpose has been accomplished, the interpretation given to it by the Wage & Hour Administration has made it so much of a chore and a nuisance as to detract from its public acceptance.

It was, we believe, precisely this sort of thing which the Bar Association's president had in mind when he suggested a Bureau of Legislation. Congress would follow through on its shots. Instead of passing laws and forgetting about them, the boys would set up an agency to see how they were working out, how they were being administered, and how they should be administered to carry out the Congressional intent. The suggestion is worth full study.

A Shortage

Chamber of Commerce" directors, hearing the proposal of the health and recreation division of their planning committee, endorsed the proposition that Charlotte had need of enlarged hospital facilities for Negroes. That much, by now, should be apparent. A recent News survey pointed out that just 100 hospital beds—all of them at overcrowded Good Samaritan — were available to Negro patients in Mecklenburg. And that's not nearly enough; it figures up to 2.3 beds per 1,000 for Mecklenburg's almost 45,000 Negroes.

The Chamber's committee, headed by E. C. Griffith, recommended that at least 100 additional beds be provided. But Mrs. E. C. Marshall, a tireless and most helpful citizen who almost manages to support Good Samaritan alone, is of the opinion that the minimum should be 200 more beds. And it has been her idea all along, as a matter of fact, that this distressing shortage should be relieved by building a new wing at Memorial Hospital for the use of Negroes—to the end that they might have the benefit of the splendid equipment there.

Mrs. Marshall's suggestion sounds first-rate to us. If and when we are able to provide additional hospital facilities for Negroes the only two logical steps to consider will be expansion of Good Samaritan (now operated by the Episcopal Church), or addition to Memorial.

But the wing at Memorial, utilizing the direction of our only public hospital administration, seems to be far more desirable — and no extraneous issues should be allowed to stand in the way. We suggest to the Chamber that it give serious consideration to these alternatives, and confer with the trustees of Good Samaritan, who have had wide experience in the affairs of both hospitals.

Second Stand

When Dr. George Gallup went before the House Campaign Investigating Committee this week to explain away the constant inaccuracies of his poll he was not undergoing a new experience. He has felt previous compulsion to clear his throat and offer alibis for past failures.

In 1940, Dr. Gallup had missed pretty badly with his scientific approach. He explained that circumstance in a letter to *The New York Times* late in November. He said that he was surprised by a one per cent jump in Roosevelt's strength on the Saturday before election, and went to the trouble of making a re-check on Sunday, by means of a hurried poll. That one showed a two per cent decline in Roosevelt strength, and he accepted that, threw off his predictions. He confessed that a Sunday morning survey would not , equately cover the lower economic brackets, and called it not an error in research method, but "mismanagement."

This year, of course, he missed as badly — with six of the nine states shown as leaning toward Dewey going to Mr. Roosevelt. And he explained to Representatives that he doctored early returns favoring the President—because he expected balloting to be light. Later, when he saw that voting would be heavy, he did not make the indicated correction, because there was "a definite Dewey trend."

He could not confess that his final forecast was his own personal opinion, rather than a poll result (he was a Dewey adviser), but he added that the reason he underestimated Roosevelt strength in twelve of thirteen states was because the intentions of migrant workers fooled him. He put some of the blame on PAC, which did a "really good job."

The Doctor manages to sound no more convincing now than he did four years ago. And he's certainly no more accurate.

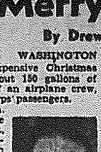
The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON

THIS is the story of the most expensive Christmas turkey in the USA. It cost about 150 gallons of high-octane gasoline plus the time of an airplane crew, plus the time of nineteen Marine Corps passengers.

The turkey belong to Brig. Gen. Lewis O. Merritt, commander of the Marine Corps base at Cherry Point, N. C. On Saturday, Dec. 23, just before Christmas, the General was in Washington, D. C., and his turkey was in North Carolina.



On that same day, also, a big Marine Corps R4D transport plane was scheduled to take off from Cherry Point, N. C., to Washington at 10 A. M. But weather held it at the airport. A bunch of enlisted men, women Marines, and young officers, anxious to get home for a Christmas holiday, waited at the airfield. They were blissfully ignorant of Gen. Merritt's turkey. The only thing they thought about was getting home to a possible turkey dinner themselves.

At 1:15 P. M., the weather cleared, and the plane was about to take off. But suddenly it was held up. Word came that Gen. Merritt's aide was driving from Kinston, N. C., with the General's Christmas turkey to be flown to him in Washington.

So the plane waited again. The nineteen Marines, homeward bound, fretted and fumed. But all they could do was wait. Finally, the aide and turkey arrived, the precious bird was put aboard, and at 3:20 P. M., after two more hours' delay, the plane took off.

Bring Back My Tuck

Then suddenly, as the plane was only 45 minutes out of Washington, it circled in the air, and went back to North Carolina. The pilot had received orders that Gen. Merritt would eat his turkey not in Washington, but in Cherry Point.

So there was nothing but for the nineteen Marine passengers to go back with the turkey. They had been trying to catch airplane and train connections in Washington, but the General's turkey came first. He had taken a plane back to Cherry Point, learned that his turkey was in mid-air on its way to Washington, so the big plane was ordered back again.

Finally the plane landed at Cherry Point, the turkey was unloaded, and the nineteen passengers at last took off for Washington arriving there at 8 P. M. They had started on their trip at 10 A. M., been delayed three hours by weather and about six hours by turkey.

A total of about 150 gallons of precious high-octane gasoline was used up, to say nothing of the motor gas used by the General's aide in driving from Kinston to Cherry Point, about 60 miles.

More Congressional Pay

In the many years this newsman has been covering Washington, one inescapable conclusion he has reached which probably won't be too popular with the American public is that members of Congress deserve high salaries.

Despite all the criticism that is heaped on Congress, despite the fact that all of us like to make Congress the whipping boy and the goat, the real fact is that the average run of Representatives and Senators do a conscientious, hard-working, intelligent job. There are, of course some sour apples in the barrel which spoil the reputation of the rest. But this observer, who has watched Congress operate close-up for years, is convinced that the average Congressman earns well over his salary.

And when you consider his expenses, he earns about double his salary. In the first place he has to maintain his wife and kids in Washington, and also keep a home back in his district. When he moves them back and forth it costs money. True, he gets railroad allowance for it, but usually he has to take several trips a year, which more than eats it up.

Biggest expense, of course, is getting re-elected. And in election campaigns he has to accept contributions from a lot of people which puts him in hock to the moneyed men of his district if he doesn't have a will of iron and a complete disregard for his re-election chances next time.

Meanwhile the cost of living has gone up, and salaries for almost everyone else have gone up—except the poor Congressman and Government officials generally. Nothing, in the opinion of this columnist, would give greater impetus to better Government than a salary boost to the men who have to make democracy work.

Seems To Be A Fertile Breeding Place

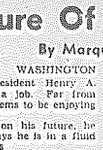
The Future Of Henry Wallace

By Marquis Childs

WASHINGTON

IN LESS than a month, Vice-President Henry A. Wallace will be a man without a job. For from being dismayed by the prospect, he seems to be enjoying it to the utmost.

When friends offer him advice on his future, he smiles his shy, whimsical smile and says he is in a fluid state and rather liking it. If he has any specific plans for his future after Jan. 20, he keeps them very much to himself.



Several important positions have been suggested for him. One that interests him as much as any is that of Secretary of Commerce. It is oh office, he believes, in which a man with imagination could make an important contribution.

In the old days when he was Secretary of Agriculture he went over to Commerce to see his friend, the late "Uncle Dan" Roper. In the rather diffident way that is characteristic of him, Wallace suggested to Roper the creation in the department of a Bureau of Industrial Economics which would do for industry what the Bureau of Agricultural Economics has done for agriculture.

"Uncle Dan" was never very interested in the proposal, but you can be sure that Wallace has not abandoned the idea, and if he were to move into the two-block long Commerce Building that was the handiwork of Herbert Hoover he would undoubtedly try to start such a bureau.

It happens, of course, that the solid, substantial figure of Jesse Jones is planted in the office of Secretary of Commerce. Suspicions of efforts to oust him, which have included a campaign of rumors that his health is not equal to the job, Jones paid a conspicuous visit to the Press Club recently to demonstrate to newspaper men that he was still up and about.

Jones apparently has no intention of resigning. It would take a direct Presidential request to bring that about, and such requests have been extremely rare. Even under prodding from his backers on the left, FDR would be more reluctant to move against a long-time associate.

To suggestions that he step into the confused food and agriculture situation, Wallace is cold. Some Wallace admirers have felt that the best move he could make would be to demonstrate his effectiveness in a field in which he knows his way completely.

As Secretary of Agriculture, Wallace proved himself a capable administrator. Under Claude Wickard, the Department of Agriculture has retrograded, losing powers and functions in almost the same way that the Department of Labor under Secretary Frances Perkins has been chipped away.

But Wallace is not interested. The job of food production has been done and well done, he says. There are bound to be conflicts in any such far-reaching program, but they can be settled along the lines already laid down.

Sometimes, as he sits in the book-lined office in the Senate Office Building which he will soon surrender to Senator Harry S. Truman, his successor, Wallace lets his mind range over all the things he might do. Half in earnest, half in jest, the Vice-President remarked the other day that he might go over to France and play volley ball with the boys in the forward rest areas.

There is nothing so relaxing the Vice-President believes, as volley ball. And he should know, since he is probably the world's most widely traveled volley ball player. He played in Mexico during his trip there four years ago. He played in Soviet Asia, in China and in Alaska both going and coming on last Summer's trip.

Anyway, Henry Wallace is not forcing his destiny. He is letting the future come to him as it has before.

War Is No Football Game

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

IF WE have learned anything about modern war, it is that there are no touchdowns in it. The analogy between the war on the Western Front, and a pair of football teams, sweeping forward and backward, alternately gaining and losing ground, is hopelessly false. That analogy makes us cherish every yard gained, and mourn for every yard lost; it makes it seem like a complete, overwhelming reverse that cities in Belgium liberated at great cost in blood, should have been recaptured by the Nazis.

But we are not conducting our military operations in Western Europe in order to win territory; our purpose is to destroy the German armies. In a sense we "failed" in Belgium the first time, because we failed to destroy the German armies. They got away; and our present failure is our first failure come home to roost.

It is bitterly depressing, and a real blow, that the Germans should have broken through, to make a huge bulge across many square miles of territory once liberated; but, in strict military terms, we should have mounted a stalemate almost as much, and have been just as sorrowful if we had merely held the Germans, and they had held us, for that, too, would have meant that our problem was unsolved, that the German armies were still unbroken.

Members of our own high command have counseled us many times to learn to think in these terms, but we still find it hard to do so, and persevere in our tendency to count towns, like poker chips, and to judge results by how many we have, and how many they have. It is almost morally certain that our answer to the German offensive will be not only a desperate effort to contain this drive, important as that is, but also other offensives of our own, some perhaps at great distance from the current German push.

We shall stop the German drive, not only by holding it, but by counter-action which will threaten the integrity of the German salient, in which time the Germans will discover that they have sudden business back home, as they did last Summer in France, and the Summer before that on the Orel-Belgorod front in Russia.

In the strictly military sense, our "failure" on the Belgian front was not due to the fact that we did not know the Germans were moving against us, but rather to the fact that we were not moving against them. The Russians were able to stop the Germans in eight days on the Orel-Belgorod front, in July, 1943, not because they had spent intelligence officers who knew that the Germans were coming, but because they had two offensives of their own mounted and ready.

If we wish to find a scapegoat for the German break-through, let us not blame it on a couple of officers in one town somewhere; that's football; blame it, rather, on the round-the-clock lull, and whatever Germans, undoubtedly legitimate, which were responsible for it, and which gave the German army a moment of initiative.

But the circle remains, and the Germans are within it, and a blow anywhere at the rim is felt at the center, and when those blows become numerous enough, and when our threat is high again, the Germans will not be able either to attack or to stop us—not though their own intelligence officers all have double domes and are equipped with X-ray sight.

SIDE GLANCES By Galbraith

"Guess I'll have to apologize for our Christmas candy—must be weak or something, because I didn't have any of the stomach aches they said I'd have!"

Everyday Counselor

By Herbert Spaugh, D.D.

ON Sunday, Dec. 31st, at midnight, the sand in the hourglass of 1944 runs out. It has been a memorable year in our history. Our personal lives have been greatly altered. Striking up the balances for the year, what does your personal ledger show?

Dr. Merrill Moore, Associate Psychiatrist at the Harvard Medical School, an earnest researcher on the problem of alcoholism, with whom we have had interesting and profitable correspondence, is now a medical officer in the United States Army. Just before embarking for overseas service he sent his friends these suggestive lines:

THE NOISE THAT TIME MAKES

"The noise that time makes in passing by
Is very slight but even you can hear it.
Having not necessarily to be near it,
Needing only the slightest will to try.

Hold the receiver of a telephone
To your ear when no one is talking on the line,
And what may at first sound to you like the whine
Of wind over distant wires is time's own
Garments brushing against a windy cloud.

That same noise again, but not so well,
May be heard by taking a small cockle-shell
From the sand and holding it against your head,
Then you can hear time's footsteps as they pass
Over the earth, brushing the eternal grass."

—MERRILL MOORE.

Earthly time has a way of slipping up on us, leaving us with many a task undone, with many things that we wanted to do untouched.

Every life should be so lived that if it were suddenly terminated, it would be finished—finished for that age and stage of progress. Youth has its tasks, so has middle-age and old age. Age has its own contribution to make. Each should fill the pages assigned to it in the book of life. Yet one can never go back and write on them when once they have been turned over.

The world is living too furiously for time-killing, time-wasting. One of my best friends carries a book with him at all times to read at odd moments when he is waiting for engagements. Those who say they haven't time to read the Bible might try carrying a Testament in the pocket. I know a well-known public official who has a Testament with him at all times. It is surprising how much Bible reading he does in odd moments, gathered here and there.

The expression, "I haven't time," is long out-worn. We have had 366 days in this year. What have we done with them? How will they stack up in the light of Eternity and in the sight of Almighty God?

City Hall Today

By Dick Young

THE other day I wrote a story about suggested street improvement projects and thus began an extended series, which will be repeated many times before the actual improvements are made on the ground. Such undertakings are slow of realisation and columns of newspaper space will be devoted to them before motorists get to skim over the brand-new pavements. I recall the reams and reams of copy I've turned out on any number of present-day improvements during the discussion period before the engineers and contractors got their rods and shovels in working order.

Mr. Young

I well remember the stir that was created when the late W. S. Stancill, as commissioner of public works, announced plans for opening up and widening E. 4th St. At that time 4th St. was blocked between College and Brevard Sts. and he had the idea of opening up this two-block stretch, building an underpass beneath the railroad, and widening the street down to Sugaw Creek to provide a new thoroughfare into the heart of the city. Often I have wondered what would have been the result if this progressive plan had been blocked as was attempted. More traffic now passes over 4th St. than moves over Trade St. and the question of congestion on it is receiving police attention.

Stories upon stories were turned out on the 4th St. Proposal before the improvement was finally accomplished. The same was true of the widening and extension of Graham St. This outlet to the south and west via the connection with Morehead St. is a thoroughfare that present-day Charlotte could hardly be without. Yet City Manager J. B. Marshall and others who favored the plan faced all sorts of opposition and months passed before the work was started.

Perseverance will be required if the suggestions for street improvements, received this week by City Manager Flack, are eventually to be turned into realities. The piece-meal projects of the past which have been brought forth with no little pain, are definite indications of the need for a city plan. The suggested street extensions rightfully fall into the province of the new Planning Board, which the City Council created by ordinance two weeks ago and which it tried to name. It was most unfortunate that the three citizens, chosen by the Council for membership on the board were unable to serve and it was particularly unfortunate that their selection was announced before their acceptance had been received. But what has been done is done and there is no need for lamenting mistakes of the past when the needs of the future cry for attention. I trust that some other civic-minded citizens will agree to take the places of public responsibility and immediately launch the studies looking to the future development of Charlotte through improved streets, control of property uses, and direction of real estate developments. This board can have much to do with making Charlotte into a well-ordered, carefully planned city.

Statesmen At Work

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

REP. CLARE HOFFMAN (Mich.), speaking on an editorial written by John S. Knight, publisher of Detroit, Miami and Akron newspapers:

Let me read you some of the words of our mentor, who then, by his signed editorial, did so much to destroy the confidence of the people in their representatives. He wrote:

A Congressman is a man who played ball with the drys during prohibition, but never missed an opportunity to sample his friends' private stock. A Congressman is a man who will drink your liquor all night. A Congressman is a man who collects mileage from the Government for trips he never takes.

I do not know anything about the drinking, but Knight joins the Ananias Club when he makes that statement about collecting mileage which is never traveled, and many an individual who lacks his means of information has repeated that misstatement.

Knight continues:

A Congressman is a bumptious, slow-witted politician who depends upon smarter men to elect and re-elect him, a small chip in the big international poker game now being played at Washington. He is susceptible to flattery, devoid of backbone, lacking in principle, short on ability.

Aside from that, may I add he may be all right.

He usually labors under the delusion that our Government exists chiefly to perpetuate him and his kind on the public pay roll. In brief, most Congressmen are a total waste of time, money, and effort.

Is it any wonder that the average citizen, reading comments like that in a daily publication in a great city like Detroit, lacks confidence in the man he has always respected, he has always supported, believed to be honest, courageous and patriotic?

Bundles for Congress and the X gasoline rationing farce are but symbols of its restricted collective mentality.

I hope our leaders got that—and utter inability to sense the national temper before hearing from the people back home. A stupid, spineless, post-war Congress which yielded to the insistent demands of each selfish pressure group could very well throw this Nation into an economic tailspin from which there could be no recovery under our present system of government.

Here is some more:

The inept, spineless, Seventy-Seventh Congress now assembled in Washington should be a direct challenge to every good citizen to see to it personally that the Seventy-Eighth Congress will be a better one.

Quote, Unquote

THE crux of the United States foreign trade problem is this: How can other nations be provided with dollar exchange to buy American goods and to pay for American capital invested abroad? This problem arises because of the disparity between foreign demand for American goods and capital and America's demand for foreign goods.

—National Planning Association.

If peace is to have really solid foundations, there must be so great a determination never to fall under the sway of Nazi ideas that it will in fact amount to a political, social and moral revolution on the whole European continent.

—Edward Benes, president Czechoslovakia.

I only know one Japanese to give himself up. He came in and said he wanted to be an honorary member of the honorable British Empire. We sent him off to a doctor, as we suspected he was raving mad.

—Brig.-Gen. S. F. Irwin, back in London from Burma.

If 30 to 50 divisions of the Chinese Red Army could be equipped with modern armament and be given tactical and technical training by American officers we could annihilate the Japanese armies in northern China. We would need the assistance of the American Air Force to do this job.

—Gen. Chu Teh Chinese Communist army chief.