THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Hocus-Pocus

The American quandary, we [illegible] growing as the war grinds nearer to climax in Washington, where sights are clearest and pressure greatest, you may see this curious miracle wrought. Or you could have, had you been looking on Wednesday.

In the House, after days filled with wrangling, the guardians of the people voted to draft nurses between the ages of 20 and 44. A compelling action, this indicative of the stern determination of the country to push on to victory, at whatever sacrifice. Women, and a special class of women at that, were being drafted for the first time. War was getting down to Sherman's basic tenet.

And in the Senate, a few stately rods away, the guardians of the people turned thumbs down on two bills designed to compel men between the ages of 18 and 45 to work in essential jobs or be drafted.

The hands, you see, are quicker than the eye. And you can't really make out, from this double performance, exactly what the country wants, and what it is struggling for. Confronted with a great shortage of nurses in the armed forces, it moves to yank thousands of them away from jobs which are surely pretty essential—despite the fact that working nurses have volunteered at a rate to put other groups to shame. But, confronted with the need of more men in the armed services, and the waste of precious manpower outside the services and essential industry, it turns its face.

What is this? Draft the nurses and pass the non-essential workmen. Who speaks for the nation? The House grabs the women, the Senate passes the men. Are women, and nurses, people?

What about an Office For The Coordination of Inter-Congressional Affairs, before it's too late?

Passing On

The poll tax, like the six-inch soda biscuit of yore, is about to join its fathers, and another moss-grown Southern tradition may soon be no more. When the season opened, there were eight poll-tax states in Dixie, where you had to pay your money before you made your choice at the polls. Today there are seven—and in two more states the old head tax is going down for the last count.

Georgia, prodded by Governor Ellis Arnall and a militant league of impassioned civil-rightists, flung it off last month and broke a record stretching back to Revolutionary times. In two weeks Virginia's Assembly will hold a special session to submit an amendment removing the tax as a prerequisite to voting for service men, and thus the door is opened there. For that state of affairs you may credit the play, or a healthy assist, to Editor Virginius Dabney of *The Richmond Times-Dispatch*, who has been carrying on a guerrilla warfare against the plagued tax since he first sat down to type.

And in South Carolina, the very stronghold of this infringement upon the citizen's rights, there is every indication that there will be free voting in the election of '46. The Senate has already passed the decks for a referendum, and it needs only House approval before the people of the state will be asked to vote on it. The last agencies, of course, will be scrambling to see (with poll tax-paying only voting on the whether the tax should be lifted), but the end result will clearly clear the political air to the bottom.

After that, assuming that right thinking on both sides of us, there will be only five unredeemed poll tax commonwealths in the Republic. There's progress for you.

The $2 Question

There is, we suppose, a good deal of the United Nations left in us. Up here in this space, where the sunlight is unusual and strange in suffusing all the landscape with candor, we long ago recognized the rights for what it always was and still is—the pleasing of a legislative principle to match self- or class-interest. Nevertheless, there is a trace of it left in us as in most Southerners. Didn't they fight for it?

Thus it is, with awareness that prejudice may be leering over our shoulder, we raise again the question of why the Federal Government, with its depressing burden of debt, should be expected to come to the financial aid of North Carolina whose State Treasury is running over with dough? That's a simple question, and we'd appreciate a simple answer to it.

North Carolina recently blueprinted for itself a statewide program of hospital and medical care. Its Legislature, practically sitting on stuffed moneybags, considered needs and means and decided to undertake such limited portions of the program as it thought could be put into effect now within the restrictions of a balanced budget. Yet a native North Carolinian, Frank Graham, president of the University, and one who knows better than the next one what it is for a people to have wants without the means to gratify them, was soon suggesting in an address to the Southern Conference for Human Welfare that the Federal Government should grant financial assistance to Southern states for hospitals and health centers, along with schools.

Well, maybe so. But we still wonder why the Federal Government, with its depressing burden of debt, can afford or should be expected to do for North Carolina what North Carolina, its debt almost obliterated, declines to do for itself. We wonder also if Federal aid wouldn't cause North Carolina to lock up its purse and say, Let Sam do it.

Later on, perhaps, the dogs of Illinois that eat up plastic auto-license plates can be trained by the finance companies to put on the bite.

Bob-Tailed

Governor Broughton's far-reaching plan for improving hospital and medical care in North Carolina came out of committee a shorn lamb, but that it came out at all meant the winning of a pitched battle. Only Governor Cherry's forthright support of it brought it through the first test.

As it stands, the program has been whittled down to a hospital and medical care commission (which will require $100,000 of the $150,000 appropriation); a contingent appropriation of a million dollars for the biennium, to provide $1 per day for indigent hospital patients; authorization of a four-year medical school at the University in connection with a 400-bed hospital—but no appropriation to go with it. The only money requested aside from that for commission expenses was $50,000 for a student loan fund.

On every count, the voting was close, and amendments came near to wrecking the whole plan. Even now, there is no announced plan of future building of hospitals throughout the state, to serve regions now lacking hospital facilities. This is, in short, but a start. Perhaps it is just the start we can afford at this time, in view of other great demands upon the State Treasury.

And it is such a start as will inevitably lead to expansion of the program, and to eventual fulfillment of the vision seen by Governor Broughton and the medical men who sponsored the campaign from the beginning. The details, we are sure, will take care of themselves. But we are somewhat concerned that there is not at least inclusion of approval for the hospital building program.

That big item, it seems to us, is most vital of all. For whatever we can afford at the moment, it remains that the greatest needs are more hospital beds and more physicians. And the quickest way to get them is to put up hospitals in outlying areas where they are needed. They will attract doctors themselves, and immediately serve those North Carolinians in greatest need.

Closing the hot spots might make Broadway as quiet as the upper Wisconsin village where a constable cleaned up night life conditions by shooting the owl.

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON

OPA, never famous for its tact, recently hit a new low when officials threw three Congressmen out of a meeting of the Strawberry Growers Industry Advisory Committee. Present at the meetings, besides the growers, were Representatives Jimmy Morrison of the Louisiana strawberry district, Harold Earthman, Democrat, and John Jennings Jr., Republican, both of Tennessee.

The three Congressmen had been asked by the strawberry growers to attend their meeting with OPA. The strawberry people have been having OPA difficulties—the Florida and Louisiana growers feeling that the ceiling prices imposed last year are not high enough to cover crop loss through poor weather, while growers in other states now ready for planting don't know what their ceiling will be.

Some are convinced that OPA price heads Geoffrey Baker, formerly of General Foods, and John Gismond, formerly of the Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co., are out to protect the profits of the processors and handlers of strawberries, rather than the growers. They point to the high retail price for both canned and frozen berries, although the ceiling price they have been working under was 32 cents per quart for most of the season.

North Carolina farmers were so angry about the ceiling last year that they let about a third of their crop rot in the fields. Most growers are willing to let the 32-cent price stand, but they have no assurance it will, and OPA has indicated that this price may be cut.

Last week's meeting had been underway for about fifteen minutes when Frankling Gindick of the OPA food price division, who was serving as chairman, suddenly announced, "we have got to stop this meeting a minute while we ask the Congressmen to leave."

When the Congressmen showed no disposition to leave, "Strawberry Champion" Gindick asked them to step into the hall, where he told them "the law" prohibits their attendance at industry advisory committee meetings.

To this, Louisiana's Jimmy Morrison replied, "I'm a lawyer and a Congressman, but I've never heard of that law. Will you show it to me?"

Gindick said he was referring to a ruling by the Attorney General, but Morrison insisted upon seeing the ruling or hearing it from the Attorney General or one of his staff. Finally Gindick gave up and called Mrs. Ethel Gilbert, head of the OPA Office of Industry Advisory Committee, after the Congressmen refused to go to Mrs. Gilbert's office.

"You gentlemen will have to leave," Mrs. Gilbert told them. "The Attorney General does not want Congressmen at industry advisory meetings."

Again Morrison insisted upon proof that the Attorney General had made such a ruling; to which Mrs. Gilbert replied, "you are taking advantage of a lady, Mr. Morrison."

Morrison, however, stood his ground until Mrs. Gilbert explained, "this is a rule I made. I control policy for these meetings, and will not let Senators and Congressmen attend."

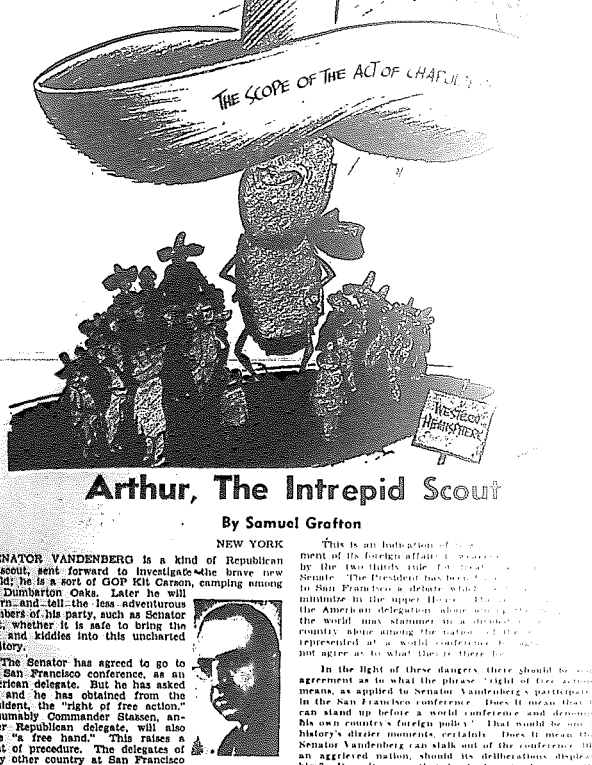
"By what authority?" asked the Congressman from Louisiana. "The OPA appropriation bill is due to come before the House within a few weeks," Mrs. Gilbert replied. "The authority you Congressmen gave me—believe me, I use it."

John Jennings, Tennessee Republican, finally gave up in disgust; but Morrison and Earthman returned to the conference. They were followed by Mrs. Gilbert, who announced that so long as the Congressmen insisted upon staying, there would be no official action at the meeting, even though the growers had traveled hundreds of miles at their own expense. Finally the two Congressmen left.

When the strawberry growers met last year at OPA, Morrison and Senator Tom Stewart of Tennessee were on hand—and were permitted to stay throughout the meeting.

"I'd rather have a hot band than that war stuff—I'm getting general Patton mixed up here with the battle of Waterloo."

They Make 'Em Broad In Mexico

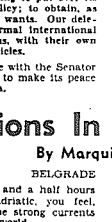


Arthur, The Intrepid Scout

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

SENATOR VANDENBERG is a kind of Republican scout, sent forward to investigate the brave new world; he is a sort of GOP Kit Carson, camping among the Dumbarton Oaks. Later he will return and tell the less adventurous members of his party, such as Senator Taft, whether it is safe to bring the wife and kiddies into this uncharted territory.



The Senator has agreed to go to the San Francisco conference, as an American delegate. But he has asked for, and he has obtained from the President, the "right of free action." Presumably Commander Stassen, another Republican delegate, will also have "a free hand." This raises a point of precedure. The delegates of every other country at San Francisco will undoubtedly be bound to follow out the stated foreign policies of their countries. Only the American delegation will be allowed to be a kind of debating society; only our delegates will be free to advance private ideas of their own, as distinguished from the official ideas of their governments.

The British delegation will speak for Britain; the Russian delegation will speak for Russia; but Vandenberg has made it clear that Vandenberg reserves the right to speak for Vandenberg.

This is a strange setup, surely. Every other delegation in the world will be in there fighting to put over its own country's stated and declared policy; to obtain, as nearly as possible, what its government wants. Our delegation alone will introduce into a formal international conference an array of private citizens, with their own purely private and personal foreign policies.

Great Britain will have to negotiate with the Senator from Michigan, and Ecuador will have to make its peace with the former governor of Minnesota.

This is an indication of [illegible] ment of its foreign affairs [illegible] by the two thirds rule for [illegible] Senate. The President has been [illegible] in San Francisco a debate which [illegible] minimize in the upper House. [illegible] the American delegation alone among [illegible] the world may stammer in a divided [illegible] country, alone among the nations of the [illegible] represented at a world conference [illegible] not agree as to what they are there for.

In the light of these dangers there should be [illegible] agreement as to what the phrase "right of free action" means, as applied to Senator Vandenberg's participation in the San Francisco conference. Does it mean that he can stand up before a world conference and denounce his own country's foreign policy? That would be one of history's dizzier moments, certainly. Does it mean that Senator Vandenberg can stalk out of the conference like an aggrieved nation, should its deliberations displease him? Does it mean that he is free to denounce the results of the conference, after being a part of it?

The phrase "right of free action" [illegible] things. But its meaning is curious in context. [illegible] Vandenberg has come forward as an internationalist, and it would be a strange internationalist who is not agree to abide by the results of free [illegible] action.

Perhaps the phrase means only that [illegible] free to make suggestions as he pleases [illegible] on the American team. If that is all it means, [illegible] shouldn't we be told so?

Otherwise there is something wrong and [illegible] bottom of this. For this insistence on an [illegible] specified freedom seems to sum up much [illegible] in some Americans, approach to a world [illegible] desire to be both faithful participants and [illegible] critics, to demand a world decision and [illegible] their own way, to be in and yet sounds a [illegible]

Statesmen At Work

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

[illegible], WASHINGTON, of Montana presents his views on the Work-or-Fight Bill:

I have listened to some of the arguments which have been made with reference to drafting all the boys who are overseas. I know that every Senator wants to hurt them as little as possible, but the body has a responsibility. We are of individuals, we are a Department, we are a Navy Department, no one group has a monopoly on patriotism.

The other day I received a letter from a boy who was in Germany. I do not have the letter with me. I mailed it. The boy wrote to me to inquire and wanted to know why the people of the United States was slaughtering for democracy, while I was there. I do not wish to see us lose the war, but I do not wish to see us lose the peace either. That is the way other people feel about it. I have talked that about it. My son was in the last war, married, wives and children compelled to work where some government bids they may work."

[illegible], Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy have told us what we should do. There is no reason why we should follow their instructions.

Shall we adopt Hitler's philosophy for this country? Shall we adopt Mr. Stalin's philosophy? The greatest manpower in the world is in Russia. There men and women are told that they must work. They are told that they must carry the hod, and that they must do other kinds of labor. They are told that they must go into the Army, or that they must do this, or do that. What has been their record in producing war materials as compared with the record of the United States of America, where we have free labor and free industry? What has been the record of any country on the face of the globe which has compulsory work-or-fight laws?

I know that there are those in the United States who say that after the war is over the only thing which will save us is a military dictatorship, or something of that kind. I refuse to believe it.

I believe that we can maintain this country as a democratic republic. I am opposed to any step, and will fight any step which is designed to give anyone power to establish either a military dictatorship or any other kind of a dictatorship in the United States. That is the direction in which we shall be headed if we enact legislation providing that a man may be sent to jail if he quits a job.

Questions In The Balkans

By Marquis Childs

BELGRADE

IN this Balkan capital, which is two and a half hours by air from Italy across the Adriatic, you feel, even in the course of a brief stay, the strong currents that are running in this part of the world.

In the principal square of Belgrade, are three huge posters of Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill. Roosevelt is smiling benignly. Churchill looks grim. Stalin has the imperturbable look of Stalin. These posters symbolize the change that has occurred here in recent weeks.

Many people in Yugoslavia, particularly people of property, have clung to the belief that the Americans and British would come into the Balkans with a substantial force and help restore the order that existed before the war. At least, they hoped that the presence of a strong British-American force would have the effect of restoring the pre-war status. Now that hope has all but vanished.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the man with real power in Yugoslavia is Marshal Tito, who has at his back the army of Partisans who are liberating the country. Tito himself may even have had a suspicion that the British and Americans intended to intervene. It may be one reason why he has put so much emphasis on Russian assistance in the war [illegible]

You see signs everywhere of the part [illegible] Russians have played in driving out the [illegible] whose savagery seems to have been even [illegible] here than in Western Europe. In one of the [illegible] squares in Belgrade is a large marble [illegible] the heroes of the Red Army who died for the liberation of the city. It was put up a few days after the liberation. Other markers throughout Belgrade [illegible] tribute to the sacrifices of Soviet soldiers.

The recent anniversary of the founding of the Red Army was an occasion for prolonged official celebrations. It coincided with the visit of Field Marshal Alexander, top-ranking Allied officer in the Mediterranean theater, and there were many parties at which representatives of the Big Three drank innumerable toasts. The influential newspaper Politika, which had a high reputation for independent liberalism before the war, hailed Alexander's visit as symbolizing stronger [illegible] operation between the three powers.

Undoubtedly the visit strengthened Tito's [illegible] He is anxious, particularly with respect to opinion outside the country, to be known as an independent course and is in no sense under the domination of Yugoslavia's powerful neighbor, Russia.

People's Platform

[illegible] per capita income 60 per cent of the national average and 32 per [illegible] the East's that we are [illegible] on freight rates and that [illegible] conditions are the na[illegible]

[illegible] these things they [illegible] definitive [illegible] They [illegible] imagination [illegible] political chos[illegible] [illegible] the [illegible]