EDITORIAL PAGE

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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It's About Time

It strikes us that the appointment of a committee of medical experts to study Memorial Hospital's role in the battle against infantile paralysis is an idea so sensible that it should have been thought of long ago.

For the second straight year the hospital has come in for public criticism by Dr. Ross Cameron, public health officer of this county. Last year Dr. Cameron contended that the hospital was not complying with the State law requiring that transfer of patients with communicable diseases from one county to another be done with the approval of the health officers of both jurisdictions. Presumably this obscure and little-used law was observed thereafter, for there were no more complaints from Dr. Cameron.

It is not quite clear just what his criticism is this year. He was all set to make specific recommendations at Monday night's meeting of the Board of Health. Administrator Carl I. Flath of Memorial Hospital was also on hand with his story. Neither got his chance, for the matter was referred to the committee as it should have been.

The whole affair has been unfortunate, viewed from every angle. Published reports, obviously stemming from the Health Department, have implied that the hospital is not taking due precaution against possible spread of the disease. Such insinuations, unless supported by sound medical facts, are damaging, for they may be accepted as fact by a public which knows little of the mysterious disease.

If Dr. Cameron's criticisms are justified, the committee's report will doubtless support him. If the hospital has been following best medical practices, it will come out in the clear. In any event the people of Charlotte will know the true state of affairs.

In the whole unfortunate business, the real issue has been overlooked. This city has become a medical center. As such, possessing the best hospital facilities and the top medical men in the area, it has a duty, not only to its own sick and afflicted, but to those in surrounding areas.

Many Tongues

We daresay The Chicago Tribune, when it learned that the Supreme Court had sided with The Chicago Sun and against the Associated Press, was tempted to headline the story in this way: "AP No Monopoly, Three Justices Say." Three Justices did hold with the AP as against only five who teamed up to decide (on different grounds) that the AP's by-laws were in restraint of trade because its service was not available to some newspaper which might choose to establish itself in head-to-head competition with another newspaper which already held an AP franchise.

Justice Roberts, who dissented, declared in his written opinion that he was unable to determine upon what ground the majority based its decision. Chief Justice Stone joined with Roberts. Justice Murphy also dissented, but for a reason different from Roberts'. Justices Frankfurter and Douglas concurred with the majority, but for different reasons which they presented in separate briefs. Justice Jackson took no part in the case or in the Harry Bridges case, which the court decided 5 to 3 in Bridges' favor. Chief Justice Stone dissenting and being joined in his dissent by Frankfurter and Roberts.

In the welter of such learned confusion, lay individuals need feel no hesitancy in opening their traps, wide. We should like to open ours long enough to say that democracy, as the Supreme Court is evolving it, is in danger of becoming a system wherein doubt and uncertainty are guiding lights, where established practices have two-strikes on them when they come to bat, where this court, in its desire to upset the status quo, is as pre-fixed in its opinion as ever an old-time jury sitting on the case of Farmer Brown against the railroad company for having negligently and without due precaution destroyed his property: to wit, one cow.

Liberalism? Well, we yearn toward the light, too, on good days. But somehow we just can't go tracking off after the liberalism of a Supreme Court which, for all its synthetic composition, can't even agree what it was put there for.

Boost For Planning

We had in mind for today a piece on the proposed War Memorial, new library and so forth. We had outlined it, mentally, something like this:

1. The undertakings are highly desirable, and essential to the continued progress and enhancement of the city.

2. We can more easily afford them than we can afford to do without them, but—

3. Before anybody can commit himself to the entire program, he would need to know the specifications of (a) where and (b) what and (c) how much.

That was the piece as we had outlined it, but the City Council's action in its Sunday session brought a new development. What the Council did was, in outline, to affirm the high desirability of the proposals, but to instruct the City Planning Board to report in 60 days on the details of (a) where and (b) what and (c) how much. One thing more the Planning Board was asked to do.

That was to survey the field of needs and wants and determine if there were other desirable or essential improvements which should be given consideration at the same time.

What the Council's action means—and the conclusion is plain—is that the projects for which Mayor Baxter has stood chief sponsor have been sent back for the consideration and recommendations of the Planning Board. The Council seemed to be saying: Here; if there is an agency to which has been delegated the responsibility of city planning, let's make use of that agency.

Without underrating the vision and enthusiasm of Mayor Baxter, who for two years has served as a sort of one-man planning board under his own steam, this appears to us as an entirely proper procedure, calculated both to assure the success of the Mayor's program rather than to impede it, and to take the Planning Board into partnership.

He Cusses, Too

The homecoming of General George Patton, we suppose, is unrivaled in American military history. Everywhere the welcome was tumultuous, as befitted a colorful and successful commander who had driven the enemy before him on every field. His return, after he had lived up to his reputation in battle, more or less confirmed the dream of destiny of which he has spoken so often.

He opened in Boston with a barrage of profanity, saying that he knew it was expected of him, and he swept across the country talking in the same hard fashion. In Los Angeles, there were those to complain that his profane address was a blight upon American manhood and a sorry example to our youth. We don't know what the critics expected, though we share their feeling that the general probably laid it on too thick. They surely had advance warning.

General George, so far as the record shows, has been a cussin' man all his life. We recall the story of his addressing the Ninth Division at Fort Bragg before its departure in such strong language that families and friends present were shooed out by MP's. And he's been at it ever since. Viewed from afar, his battle accomplishments stirred admiration in American breasts, but when the old fire-eater comes home, some folks find him hard to take.

Well, this tough talk by soldiers isn't exactly an innovation. Aside from Washington, Thomas Jackson and Lee, we can't recall a great American soldier, offhand, who wasn't likely to break out in purple language at any moment. It's a traditional prerogative of the warrior, and before anyone joins in the movement to purify the Patton English we'd best remember that fightin' men generally are cussin' men — and count ourselves fortunate to have a supply of such hellions on hand.

Statesmen At Work

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

REP. COOPER (Tenn.) Mr. Chairman, the pending bill, H. R. 3395, extends the Renegotiation Act to December 31, 1945, or 6 months from June 30 this year, the expiration date of the agreement act. This extension has been strongly recommended and urged by the War Department, the Navy Department, and Maritime Commission and every agency of the Government charged with the responsibility of prosecuting the war.

Let us bear in mind the purpose of the Renegotiation Act. The purpose is to prevent excessive profits being made out of this war. That is the reason for the act, and that purpose has been to some extent accomplished. Anybody who thinks that the people of this country want a few contractors to make excessive profits out of this war is just deceiving himself.

When this war is over and our fighting men come back, they are going to look at things and when they find that excessive profits have been made in this war, there are going to be plenty mad about it.

Mr. Chairman, reference has been made here to the excessive-profits tax. I have exerted my best efforts in the committee to try to get a more effective excess-profits tax than we have today. We know that our diplomatic missions are for the most part understaffed. They simply do not have the personnel to do an information job. They cannot take time out to tell the story of what America has done in this war.

That is one thing OWI is trying to do, and it is important that it should be done right now. This is not the moment to retire modestly and let others assume the credit for our far-flung achievement.

Many of OWI's most successful efforts have received little or no public notice. The agency has, for example, brought groups of foreign journalists to America on conducted tours to see our war plants, our power dams, our great, rich country.

The other day I met a half dozen Belgian journalists who had just completed a six-weeks swing around the country. They had all worked in the underground during the occupation, and they knew little or nothing about the American war effort.

What they saw here left them wide-eyed with astonishment. They were under the spell of America's greatness as they told of the impressions that crowded in on them during the all too brief journey. One of the group put it this way:

"We never really knew what America was like until we came over here. We had heard of your achievements, but I suppose we did not believe it. Now we know it is true."

Every member of this group is an editor or a chief editorial writer on the newspapers that today dominate the field in liberated Belgium. The results of their tour are incalculable; they will extend a long way into the future. And this was only one of many such tours.

Most people reading of the hundreds of thousands of pamphlets dropped over Japan from B-29s didn't realize that OWI prepared these pamphlets. That is one part of the job in the Pacific.

During the current fiscal year OWI has operated on a budget of $53,000,000, of which the agency is turning back $4,750,000. The Senate Appropriations Committee meets this week to consider OWI's request for $42,000,000. Here is an opportunity to undo the work of the wreckers who came to the House. We still have a long way to go

The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT TRUMAN got some unexpected but welcome words from an old political enemy when GOP Congressman Everett Dirksen of Illinois dropped in to see him following Dirksen's recent inspection trip around the world.

The big Illinois Congressman, himself a candidate for the Republican nomination, had received several thousand dollars of campaign contributions from his home constituents which he proposed returning to them. But they proposed that he use it to study U. S. foreign relations abroad.

Returning from that trip Dirksen concluded that the biggest problem we face is winning the peace after the war and hiring the right kind of diplomats (with enough pay) to do it. Dropping in to see President Truman, Dirksen said:

"You were a wagon soldier in the last war, Mr. President. So was I. (Both were in horse-drawn field artillery). We don't have much conception of how modern warfare operates. But we do know something of what our boys have gone through, and we've got to make sure that those who have taken it on the chin have not done it in vain."

"You speak my language," replied Truman, listening intently.

"Why don't you get a $100,000,000 appropriation for the State Department," Dirksen continued, "and build up a system of American diplomacy strong enough to represent this country? That's the first step in winning the peace after the war. We've got to hire good diplomats and give them the means of support.

"I am for economy," Dirksen went on. "In fact, I have opposed a lot of spending on the part of the Roosevelt Administration. But I consider a strong State Department to be one of the best investments this nation can make."

President Truman replied that there was a great deal in what the Illinois Congressman said. Foreign affairs, he continued, was one thing he was working on hardest; and he hinted, without exactly saying so, that he was giving State Department reorganization a lot of consideration.

Canol Pipe Line

One thing Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan likes to remind certain Army officers about is Canol—the fabulously expensive oil and refinery project the Army put up in Canada but never operated. This was the pet project of Gen. Brehon Somervell, head of Army Service Forces.

Just before he left for Europe last month, Senator Ferguson bumped into Gen. Somervell in Washington. The Senator winced a bit from the General's handshake, and Somervell began to kid him about not being tough enough to stand the various shots in the arm which all travelers bound for Europe or the Pacific must take.

"How much blood did you lose, Senator?" Somervell asked.

"Hardly any," Ferguson replied. "And those shots really don't bother me too much. You see, they didn't give me very large shots. They just put into my arm all the oil the Army's been able to get from Canol."

The General changed the subject.

Frank Jap Prisoners

Increased study of Japanese war prisoners tends to confirm recent observations of Portland Oregonian Editor Palmer Hoyt that, after the war, we probably will have a greater chance to convert the Japanese mind than the German.

German prisoners have been notoriously tight-lipped and unbending. The Western system of fighting contemplates the possibility of being taken prisoner, so German troops were schooled in advance in what not to say and what their rights were under the Geneva Convention. In addition, one German prisoner escaped from Canada early in the war and reported back to Berlin all the devices used by the British to make him talk—such as putting German-speaking British dressed in German uniforms in the same barracks with him. So for about a year the British couldn't get any information out of German prisoners at all.

However, Jap prisoners, on the few occasions they are captured, become most talkative. Their code does not contemplate being taken prisoner, so they are not taught in advance what to say. Nor are they protected by the Geneva Convention.

For instance, one Jap pilot picked up in the water, told an amusing story of how he was stationed on a small island in the Ryukyus when superseded by an officer of superior rank.

"Rank," he observed with refreshing frankness, "is a terrible thing."

Continuing, he told how he had been transferred from the island, anxious to get into combat and finally made his first combat flight in a fighter plane.

"I saw the American planes coming," he reported to his American captors. "I got one of the American planes squarely in front of my gunsights. But nothing happened. My guns did not fire. Then I was shot down.

"As I landed in the water," he sighed, "I could not understand why my guns had jammed. Then I realized that I never pulled the trigger. What a fool I am!"

This frankness on the part of Jap prisoners is not unusual. Just as the Jap naval landing troops interviewed by Palmer Hoyt wanted to become naturalized citizens of the U.S.A., so many Jap prisoners become quite co-operative once they understand they will not be tortured. Only trouble is there are so few prisoners. Getting Japs to surrender remains one of the biggest problems of the war.

Capitol Chaff

Senator Tydings' friends say he has various explanations for his unexpected quick return from the Philippines after he expected to stay five weeks. Only trouble is the explanations conflict. One explanation is that Tydings had to bring back a peace offer from the Japs. Another is that he was acting as special emissary to Washington from MacArthur. Another is that he had immediate work to do in Washington on the question of Philippine independence. . . . Diplomats lifted their eyebrows when U. S. Ambassador Adolf Berle flew up from his post in Brazil at the exact time Secretary Stettinius was in San Francisco.

Most diplomats report when the Secretary of State is present, not however, Berle, who has never forgiven Stettinius for firing him as assistant secretary when he was in the middle of the Chicago Aviation Conference. . . . Speaking of the original Roosevelt Brain Trust, its members, with one exception are scattered to the four winds. Rex Tugwell is Governor of Puerto Rico; Professor Moley is a magazine commentator, formerly a bitter Roosevelt critic; and Berle is Ambassador to Brazil. Only original Brain Truster who quietly keeps sawing wood is Charles Taussig in charge of the State Department's office for the West Indies. You don't hear much about him, but he has done an excellent job.

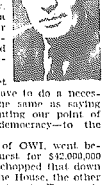
That Should Keep Him Happy For A While

A Note Of Caution

By Marquis Childs

WASHINGTON

IN THE ideal world there would be no Office of War Information because, of course, there would be no war. While we may be moving along toward the ideal world in their every billionths, we are still a long way from it, and meanwhile we have an overwhelmingly big war to fight.



Congress is behaving as though that war were about over. They are trying to chip away price control. The House has just thrown half of the Office of War Information out the window.

Now OWI is far from being a perfect instrument for waging war and peace. I have seen its imperfections and its limitations. Yes, now and then its fumbling and its incompetence.

But it happens that in this imperfect world it is the only instrument we have to do a necessary job. To abolish it would be the same as saying that we are not interested in presenting our point of view—the viewpoint of Western democracy—to the world.

Originally Elmer Davis, director of OWI, went before a House committee with a request for $42,000,000 for the coming year. The committee chopped that down to $35,000,000. Then on the floor of the House, the other day, 118 Republicans were joined by twenty Democrats to cut the appropriation to $18,000,000.

This will leave barely enough to continue the psychological warfare in the Far East. It will abolish entirely the OWI outposts in Europe and the Middle East and the office in New York that furnishes these outposts with the running story of American achievement and the American point of view.

What is more, it will do it in the most wasteful way possible. OWI has approximately 1,000 people scattered from the British Isles to Moscow and Bagdad. They would all have to be brought home and their salaries would have to be paid while they were waiting for

SIDE GLANCES

By Galbraith

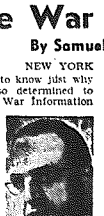
"Her face is so free from strain—you'd never guess she was keeping a maid!"

The War On OWI

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

ONE would like to know just why Congress is so determined to cut the Office of War Information in half. It can't be just a desire for economy; there is too much passion mixed up in it for that. Men who are merely economizing do not go red in the neck, and jump up and down on their hats, and scream.



No, there are other emotions involved; the sultry waves of Congressional anger which beat at the OWI call for other explanations; it is quite unconvincing to say that the House is merely being thrifty at the top of its voice. Besides, it is doubtful whether a dime would really be saved; General Eisenhower has just said that if Congress wipes out the OWI's European operations, the Army will have to take the job over, using "approximately equivalent personnel and funds." With that, all the talk about the money to be saved on OWI becomes an unconvincing gurgle. One is forced to the conclusion that it isn't the money, it's the principle of the thing that makes so many Congressmen so angry at OWI.

But what principle is involved? Why is Congress so cross with Elmer Davis' agency? If we were the only country in the world which had an Office of War Information, one might understand; throw it out, let's be like everybody else. But almost every nation has something of the sort.

Great Britain, which feels quite poor, has budgeted 8,321,000 pounds for her Ministry of Information in 1945. That comes to more than $33,000,000. Republican Representatives in Congress have led the fight to cut OWI to $17,500,000, and they have been noisily comparing that figure with the annual budget of the Associated Press; they have been comparing it with the amount of income taxes paid each year by Arizona, etc.; but they do not compare it with the only figure which is relevant, and that is the amount the British spend.

Even the skimpy discussion above is enough to show that economy can't be the issue, and also that efficient administration of a world-wide information service can't be the issue; something else must be involved. What can it be? Well, we are all friends here, and there's no need to be shy; let us state the issue; it is perfectly plain that conservative opinion is making a token and symbolic fight against government, that OWI has go itself entangled in that fight, and is being irrelevantly cut to pieces, like a hex doll, to show what the ultra-conservatives would like to do to a number of agencies, if it were possible, at this time, to do it.

Those who don't like the government to have arms, to do things, also don't like it to have a voice, to say things. Let us make no mistake about it; this is an ideological fight. This business goes very deep; it is proposed that Radio Luxembourg, one of our chief senders, shall sigh and go dead, not because we don't need it to tell our story to a confused Europe, but as a kind of grotesquely inappropriate, strangled, silent monument to, say, states' rights, or something similar.

Deep, deep fears as to what may happen on the home front are entangled in this debate, and the strangled cry with which it is proposed to end OWI's career is only a paraphrase of the fate intended for other organs of central government. Those who favor this course are projecting a domestic quarrel on to the world scene; and they ought to realize that they, too, are conducting a kind of world information service. They will be telling Europe, in its moment of agony, that our great democracy has nothing to say to it, no advice to give; that it is helpless and still, because it happens to be torn from within.

Confusion is exportable, and when OWI's transmitters go silent, waves of doubt will cross the ocean, and will be picked up by men and women, without the need of radio.

People's Platform

Editors, THE NEWS:

Several editors have discussed with us lately the question of publishing the names of merchants who flagrantly and wilfully violate the ceiling price and rationing regulations.

Today I saw the attached editorial in which the editor of one of our Southern weeklies answers this question in a forthright way and tells why he thinks the publication of the names of wilful violators is a public service to the people of his community and to the patriotic merchants who are abiding by the regulations.

Because this editorial sums up so well the discussions we have had and, in addition, points up the public's attitude toward persistent and wilful violations, I thought it might be of interest to you.

Thank you again for the co-operation you have given our program. The service of the press during these difficult days has been one that has earned the gratitude of us all.

Cordially yours,
L. W. DRISCOLL
District Manager

Charlotte

(Note: The News has made it a policy since the inception of price control to give publicity to official charges, trials of violators, judgments, etc., and will continue to do so.—Editors, The News.)

Editorial from McKenzie (Tenn.) Banner:

The management of this newspaper is thoroughly in sympathy with the rationing program being carried out by the United States Government, and believes all Ceiling Prices should be observed. We lived through the inflation days of 1919 and remember those $15 shirts, $20 shoes and $75 suits. We don't want any of that now.

Along with backing the Rationing program, and supporting in every way we know the Rationing officials, we have been sympathetic towards our merchants, and refrained from publishing in our news columns reports of Ceiling Price violations. We felt that our merchants had to become accustomed to the new schedules and that infractions of the regulations would come as a matter of course.

However, we believe now that they have had time to learn the set-up and see no reason for violation of Ceiling Prices. We are therefore notifying our Rationing Board that effective as of May 12, 1945, this newspaper stands ready to publish the names of any merchants violating the Ceiling Price regulations.

In our mail today, we received from the Office of Price Administration information that a Carroll County merchant had violated ceiling price regulations and had paid $25.00 to the U. S. Treasury for the violation. We are not making public who this merchant is, but, as stated above, we stand ready from now on to give this information to the public.

The whole Rationing and Price Regulation program was devised to prevent a wild orgy of inflation that would ruin us and make sure of a period of prosperity. We believe most of our merchants realize the importance of these regulations and are obeying them to the best of their abilities. We as citizens should co-operate with them and not only should we co-operate, but we should demand that no more than ceiling prices be charged us and not hesitate to report any who violate these regulations.

Let's prevent inflation and save this country from another depression.

Quote, Unquote

MERELY because a man is a baseball player and a 4-F doesn't mean his draft board should reclassify him and put him into service.—Baseball's new Commissioner, Sen. A. B. (Happy) Chandler.

It is the irony to eliminate rent of the territory the Japs took. If the war should stop now, the Japs would be the winners.—Capt. Robert C. Siler, Cincinnati, Ohio.

I cannot see how, when they (the Japanese) are so tenacious