THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

W. C. DOWD JR., Publisher — J. E. DOWD, Editor — HARRY S. ASHMORE, Associate Editor

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1946

Rental Clearing House?

If our editorial cries on housing have been muted lately it is not because we have had a change of heart, but because we are as confused as the rest of the citizens who are wrestling with the problem. We still believe the City has failed to meet a clear obligation to the returning veteran, and the fact that the Federal Government has also failed has little, if any, bearing on the case. The intentions of everybody concerned may be honorable, but in six months they have produced no housing, only involved explanations for inaction.

Inadequate as it is, the only positive step being taken here is the Share-The-Homes Campaign now running into its second week. Although the volunteer workers under Colonel L. L. Boyd obviously cannot produce the sort of accommodations the returning servicemen have every right to expect, they did find quarters of sorts for 70 families in one week. A furnished room is a poor reward for a fighting man, but it represents a considerable improvement over a park bench.

Colonel Boyd has called for the establishment of a permanent rental clearing house to carry on after the volunteers have retired from the field. "The efforts of this campaign are far-reaching and continuing," he wrote Coleman Roberts, suggesting that the Chamber of Commerce finance the project. There are a good many benefits to be derived beyond the placing of an occasional family, not the least of which is the opportunity to keep the critical housing shortage constantly before the public.

Share-the-Homes is a stop-gap, of course, and it can have little permanent effect on the housing shortage that grows with every shipload of returning troops. No man wants to keep his family penned up in a room or two for long, and his quest for adequate housing will go on even after he has managed to get his children in out of the rain. And, in the end, the fact that he has to depend upon the charity of the community for the shelter that is his due will only contribute to his increasing bitterness.

Still, in this period when confused conversation has become the standard substitute for action, Share-the-Homes is all we've got. It's considerably better than nothing, and it deserves the Chamber's financial as well as moral support.

Colonel Kirkpatrick

When a man like Thomas LeRoy Kirkpatrick dies the community loses a good deal more than a single useful and talented citizen. With his passing the living history of the town begins to sift, like dust, into the dry pages of the histories; old, treasured memories kept alive by the men who shaped our past fade with their death.

The Colonel was one of a generation of lawyers who practiced in an almost forgotten tradition. His courtroom oratory made him famous, but his activities were never limited by the bounds of his profession. He accepted public responsibility as part of his career, sometimes holding office but more often taking the lead, as a private citizen, in a variety of community projects.

Colonel Kirkpatrick's lifetime spanned the period of Charlotte's greatest growth, the stirring time then a little country town became, almost overnight, the largest city and the financial capital of the region. He served as Mayor from 1914 until 1917, and it was then, during those war years, that the plans were laid that led to the great expansion of the twenties. In the years that followed, when he held no office, he was in the forefront of every campaign for civic betterment.

He earned his military rank as an officer in the National Guard, but he would have fallen heir to it if he had never borne arms; he was the product of a simpler time when Southerners recognized their natural leaders by conferring upon them a military title commensurate with their dignity and standing in the community. And the title of "colonel", of course, was reserved for only a few—it stood at the top of the scale. No man ever bore it more naturally than Thomas LeRoy Kirkpatrick.

Point, Counterpoint

The UNO has begun to resemble a state legislature in mid-session, or the Congress of the United States on one of its more active days, and the name-calling and finger-pointing seem to worry some of the more delicate observers. If Mr. Bevin doesn't stop pounding on the table, they fear, Comrade Vishinsky will pick up his marbles and go home.

Of course, Mr. Bevin's attack on the Russians, and Comrade Vishinsky's counter-attack on the British, are really defensive measures. It's an ancient political device, this practice of pointing to somebody else's dirty linen in order to distract attention from your own. And it is even more effective when you can get an innocent bystander to lay down a smoke-screen for you, the bystanders in this case being the Ukraine and Egypt, the improbable filers of complaints with the Security Council.

The United States has escaped this rough treatment only because our own delegation has been bathed in sweetness and light. But the time will come when Mr. Stettinius and company will have to take sides and there will follow a great rattling of skeletons in the American closet. Some unlikely member—probably the Bessarabian delegate—will arise to remark that it is rather odd that a great peace-loving nation continues to manufacture atomic bombs long after the war has ended, and the fat will be in the fire.

Actually, the alarums and excursions in London are as welcome as the first lusty yells of a new-born baby. The UNO is meaningless unless it reflects the true feelings of the member nations, and certainly mutual distrust underlies the diplomatic deals of this century, no matter how shiny the words in which they were wrapped.

Russian propaganda, British imperialism, American duplicity—all these things are definite and immediate threats to the security of the world and we can think of no more fitting a place to have them discussed than the Security Council of the UNO. There are certainly going to be some wounded feelings, but we have an idea the highest function of a Delegate is to suffer occasional public embarrassment. His discomfiture is revealing, not only to his enemies but to his friends, and most important, to the people at home who share it.

It may be that the sensitive Russians will walk out of UNO if the going gets too rough, pulling down the whole structure when they go. That would be tragic, of course, but not half so tragic as letting UNO degenerate into a monument to international hypocrisy. UNO's problem is to work out a system under which the nations of the world can live in peace, and it can't be done if the root causes of war are glossed over in the name of harmony.

Peace, at this moment in history, depends exclusively upon a complete understanding among the United States, Great Britain and Russia. It can be achieved only when each of the Big Three has abandoned a cherished dream—the Russians must call off their world revolution, the English will have to let the sun set at last on the British Empire, and the United States will have to give up its historic isolation and accept a heavy share of responsibility for the fate of the world. The abandonment of dreams and the shattering of illusions is a noisy process, accompanied always by loud and anguished cries. It is these cries we are hearing now in London, and there is every reason to be of good cheer. It may not look much like the synthetic product of the bad old days, but this can be the beginning of true unity.

From The High Point Enterprise:

Two Editorial Peeves

We started off the day in fine humor, but it didn't last long. Our at-breakfast reading of the morning paper left us quite peeved at (1) the Associated Press and (2) John Harden, the Governor's private secretary. Both were guilty of what we consider sad misuse of the English language.

The AP aroused a pet peeve when it called Paul Green's great play, "The Lost Colony," a "historical pageant." Phooy! It's no more a pageant, one of those sticky things, than "Hamlet" or "Rain" or "Able's Irish Rose." It's a play and a darn good one. Just because the thing is done outdoors doesn't make it a pageant and the AP ought to be ashamed of itself.

What peeved us at our friend of many years, John Harden, was the statement he made in defending Governor Cherry against some sort of dig by the *Fayetteville Observer*. It wasn't his defense but his words that got us. "I don't usually take issue with the newspaper boys because I have been one myself," he began. When? On the *Greensboro News* and the *Salisbury Post* John Harden was one of the best newspaper men in the state. But we'll be double hornswoggled if he's been a newspaper "boy" in the past couple of decades.

It's bad enough for some patronizing stuffed shirt in public office to speak of the "newspaper boys" but for one of our own, one of the best, to do it really goes against the grain. He reminds us of the president of the Fat and Forty-odd Ladies Book club who always opens the meeting with the words "Greetings, girls."

Madrid now tells us that Spain "won the war for the Allies by staying out of it." But we think getting Bulgaria in on the other side helped.

Drew Pearson

The President's Arithmetic On Steel Prices

WASHINGTON

LAST week President Truman held an important conference with the members of the steel fact-finding panel. Here's what happened:

The President asked the panel what their figures showed regarding the need of a wage increase. Panel Chairman Nate Feinsinger replied:

"Mr. President, you are very much on the conservative side. The Government figures and the figures provided by the steel industry completely support your 18-1 2-cent proposal."

"I'm glad that your facts confirm my decision," replied Truman. "I'm not going to change it."

Truman then asked about the need for a steel price increase. The panel suggested that other Government agencies which have explored the question in greater detail should stand up and be counted.

Truman agreed, but said he thought the figuring was fairly simple.

"It looks to me like I can do a little horseback arithmetic on that count myself."

He then began calculating on a pad of paper to the effect that if the industry produces 60,000,000 tons with a four-dollar-a-ton increase, they will have an extra $240,000,000. Against this, they estimate that an 18-1 2-cent increase would cost about $165,000,000. Balance in their favor, $75,000,000.

Mr. Truman added that there were several plans under consideration for settling the strike and asked the panel to draw up a written report which he hoped would be ready when he wanted it, which might be soon. The steel panel replied that it would be prepared for his call.

WESTERN UNION EXECUTIVE

A key figure at the recent Anglo-American Cable - Communications Conference in Bermuda was Rear Adm. Joseph R. Redman, Chief of Naval Communications during the war. He was chairman of a special committee named to consider the entire question of competition or monopoly in Atlantic cables.

Redman's committee recommended that Western Union be continued in its present dominating position as owner of three cables and lessee of five more—with 99-year leases. The Western Union operation was given high praise.

Once during the war, Admiral Redman had another occasion to discuss the question of Western Union operation. As a member of the Board of War Communications, he received from the Federal Communications Commission a detailed report on Western Union operation.

The FCC was critical, lambasted Western Union as slow and inefficient.

But the criticism was carefully hushed up—with the Admiral doing most of the hushing. On his insistence, it was first classified as "secret," then changed to "confidential." It still has not been released.

On Monday, February 4, Admiral Redman took over his new job. He is now a Vice-President of Western Union.

PRESIDENTIAL HUMOR

President Truman has been taking recent criticism in excellent humor. The other day he was talking with a group of friends and said:

"Apparently, no matter what I do I'm always in the middle. I say something about Palestine, and the Jews and the Arabs hoffer. Labor and capital get in a fight, and I am in the middle. The Russians and the British have an argument, and I am in the middle."

Suddenly the President paused, walked over to the door of his office, which connects with that of his secretary, Matthew Connelly, and called out:

"Hey, Matt, where can I buy a copy of Dale Carnegie's 'how to win friends and influence people?'"

CAPITAL CHAFF

Assistant Secretary of State Spruille Braden is being muzzled by the cautious pink-tea diplomats regarding some sensational documents showing how Germany aiding how certain Latin-American diplomats aided the Nazis during the war. . . . Forty-five small steel companies have now increased steel wages, thus sending more than 50,000 steel workers back to work. . . . Southern Senators seem to like the filibuster method. Last week Senator Bilbo served notice he intends to use it against the British loan and, in a secret meeting of the education and labor committee, Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana promised that there will be "a great deal of discussion" when the bill setting the minimum wage at 65 cents an hour comes to the floor of the Senate.

MERRY-GO-ROUND

Seen around the President's Birthday Ball: 9-year-old starlet Margaret O'Brien having a "date" with Admiral Nimitz. Last time she dated a brass hat was when General Marshall returned from Teheran via Chungking and Hollywood. Margaret asked him if he spoke Chinese. Absentmindedly he said he knew a few words, whereupon she began rattling off Chinese to the astonished head of the U. S. Army. General Marshall, of course, lacked the benefit of a Chinese nurse. . . . The steel barons may lose some of their biggest customers if Henry Kaiser's ideas go through. Engineers at Kaiser's Fleetwood body plant have been experimenting for weeks with aluminum to replace the steel in automobile bodies. To be sure of getting all the aluminum he needs, Kaiser has entered his bid with the RFC to buy the Government aluminum plant and aluminum rolling mill at Spokane, Wash. Reynolds Metal also has bid on the rolling mill, and the American Smelting Company is dickering to take over the aluminum plant at Troutdale, Oregon.

"Personally, I Never Heard Of Them Before"

Dorothy Thompson

The British Loan In Trade Insurance

NEW YORK

IT is greatly to be hoped that the British loan will pass through Congress with expedition. The world in which we live is economically devastated, and is in a condition of extreme political instability. No effort should be spared to ameliorate these conditions as rapidly as possible. Neither Bretton Woods, nor any international trade policy can become in the least effective until the special British situation is met.

The British Parliament has accepted the conditions of the loan, not without making some wry faces. The conditions mean the dissolution of the sterling bloc and the abandoning of imperial preferences. The extreme left, in the British Labor Party, which leans toward state controlled trade as part of a completely planned economy, and the extreme right which leans toward imperial autarky, would both be supported against the middle-of-the-roaders by the failure of the loan. There is, therefore, a political aspect to the loan, which should certainly be taken into account by the very Congressmen and Senators most likely to oppose it.

FILIBUSTER THREAT

A prolonged debate—with even a filibuster, as has been threatened—would be in the nature of a strike against any international financial reconstruction. The British cannot dissolve the sterling bloc, for instance, until America takes action on the loan. The international trade conference, highly necessary, cannot take place until then. The delay will already have necessitated postponement, and meanwhile everything is hanging in mid-air, as far as world economic reconstruction is concerned. Time si, therefore, of the essence. A breakdown in British-American financial relations, or a prolonged state of suspension with anger and querulousness, would create an international deadlock, promoting every sort of political and economic speculation.

The matter of foreign trade is of grave concern to American industry and American workers. Henry Wallace, who is certainly in favor of the largest possible internal consumption of American production, was one of the first to realize and say that full employment will be impossible unless the United States finds increased foreign outlets.

CLOSED ECONOMY

In a world which is, at present, impoverished beyond imagination, and much of which—the Soviet Union and its satellites, for instance — is within a practically closed economy, the prospect is bleak at best. Certainly it is not in the American interest to promote any sort of autarky, whether rightist or leftist; but that will be the alternative to re-financing Great Britain, and, as a result of that re-financing, promoting the multilateral reciprocal trade ideas which have been one of the few consistent lines of American foreign policy for many years, finding their strongest supporters in President Roosevelt and Cordell Hull.

Fortunately, by far and away the best American foreign customer has been, for decades, the United Kingdom and the British Commonwealth. In 1938, for instance—the last more or less normal year—17 per cent of all our exports went to the United Kingdom, 15 per cent to Canada, and 13 per cent to the rest of the Commonwealth—45 per cent of our entire export trade. The same year imports from the United Kingdom were 6 per cent of our total; from Canada 13 per cent; from the rest of the Commonwealth 13 per cent, or a total of 32 per cent—strongly favorable to us, on balance. It is therefore essential to our own trade revival that we get our affairs with the United Kingdom and Commonwealth on a steady basis and quickly, for if we cannot do this with our best customers, we certainly cannot accomplish anything as favorable with anybody else.

NO BROAD CHOICE

The Congressmen who think to oppose the loan are, oddly enough, the very men who are opposed to "regimentation," "Socialism," and "Communism." Yet they sometimes appear to be God's gift to their own opponents, especially the regimenters. We have not got an infinite choice of alternatives. Any sort of freedom depends upon a degree of economic freedom. Economic freedom is inconceivable without multilateral, reciprocal trade; that is inconceivable without the re-financing of Britain. Money has to work in the world if it is to help create an expanding economy, and nothing is served by squeezing one's competitors too hard, especially if they are also one's own best customers. American prosperity has always risen or waned with world prosperity.

The argument that the British loan creates a precedent is specious. Every loan has to be considered on its own merits, and undoubtedly we shall have to re-finance a considerable part of the world if we want orderly, prosperous, evolutionary reconstruction. The alternative will be political extremisms of all shades, new forms and expressions of economic fascism, all with inevitable social and economic repercussions on and within the United States. Indeed, the economic and political instability of the world at large is the greatest threat to our own institutions.

TROUBLED WATERS

It is, therefore, to be hoped that the British loan will not, by further troubling the international waters, create new favorable fishing conditions for those few who do not want the rapid restoration of order and equilibrium. Whatever difficulties there may be in doing business with the British, are largely overcome by the conditions attached to the loan, and in any case, if we cannot do business with the United Kingdom and Commonwealth we shall encounter much harder problems with the rest of the world—and with less immediate and favorable results.

Marquis Childs

They Wonder About Allen

WASHINGTON

WHILE the controversy over the appointment of Edwin W. Pauley to be Undersecretary of Navy has made headlines, beneath the surface in the Senate another appointment has caused almost more stir. That is the appointment of George E. Allen to be chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

The RFC is the biggest business in the world. The transactions which must be approved by the chairman involve billions of dollars. The question inevitably arises as to the fitness of the man appointed to such a responsible position.

Allen is a genial Mississippian who was in the hotel business until 1933. Then, thanks to his Democratic connections, he got the kind of political job which means a pleasant official life with only limited responsibilities. He was made one of the commissioners of the District of Columbia.

THE GROUND FLOOR

One of the friends Allen made during this period was Victor Emanuel, a highly successful promoter and financier who, at the age of 47, has a dominating interest in many corporations. Due largely to Emanuel's friendship, Allen was given directorships in several of these companies. He has been a vice-president of the Home Insurance Co. of New York since 1938.

It goes without saying that a man with experience in banking and business is needed to direct the vast affairs of the RFC. One question certain to interest the Senate is the extent of Allen's business experience.

But Senate liberals, both Democratic and Republican, are looking at the appointment from another angle. They recall an incident in which Allen played a curious part.

That was in connection with President Truman's request to Congress to expand the unemployment compensation program. The President asked for many changes, including a maximum payment of $25 a week, so that unemployment insurance would help the jobless get through the reconversion period with greater ease.

CONFIDENTIAL MEMO

Supposedly, this was one of the cardinal points in the President's reconversion program. Yet, when the Unemployment Compensation Bill was before the Senate Finance Committee, Allen appeared at an executive session with what he said was a confidential memorandum from the White House.

In effect, the memorandum broke down the President's requested program into what was "essential" and what was "desirable." The "essential" part of the request covered a bare minimum, while included under the merely "desirable" were most of the expansion features.

This came at a time when Senator Robert M. La Follette Jr., minority member of the committee, and others were trying to rally support behind the President's measure. The contents of the so-called confidential memorandum quickly became known in Senate and House. The effect was to pull the props out from under whatever support had been built up. The unemployment insurance bill has been bottled up in the House Ways and Means Committee for many months.

Samuel Grafton

New Look In Truman's Eye

NEW YORK

WHEN the war ended last Summer, a full-blown conservative program came into being almost overnight. It seemed to Spring from our trees and our rocks and our hills, and it went like this: We would keep the atomic bomb a secret and thus provide for national security. We would extend aid to foreign nations, but would use our competitive advantages to the full, and thus provide for our markets. We would avoid wage rises somehow, or any planned reconversion for labor, and thus keep our costs down.

It was a program of wheels within wheels, and while it may not have been consciously dreamed up as a whole by any one person, it grew naturally, as many people, and the present proof of its consistency is that if you scratch a curb-labor Congressman, you will almost surely find that he is opposed to extending a credit to Britain, and has decided views against letting any foreigner see our collection of split atoms.

WITH AN AXE

The drama of our time is the gradual disintegration of this program; and the way you can watch its disintegration is to see how President Truman moves. When the war ended, he cut our pipe-line of supplies to Britain, as if with an axe, and he hit so hard that he remained hunched over in a kind of anti-British attitude for some weeks. He was airy about the atom, too, and used to startle reporters by disposing of the problem with curt side remarks during flying trips and visits to carnivals. He had a formal pro-labor position, but he moved with great slowness and without much sense of urgency on the issue; he did not call his labor-management conference until the strike threat was well developed, and attitudes were well-hardened.

It is obvious that our President shared that strange burst of confidence which came over us last September, the feeling that a combination of scientific monopoly, wealth and not worrying could carry us through a rather gay little convalescence called reconversion.

But if you glance over toward the President now, you will see that he has given up this triple fugue, this three-way flight from reality. There is a look in his eye which indicates that he has left dreams and disorder behind, and is working now, however haltingly, for order and method. He is pressing hard for the $3,750,000,000 credit to Britain; he has joined Henry Wallace in favoring civilian control of atomic knowledge, rather than the stringent and secretive military control provided in the peremptory Johnson Bill; he is trying to curb the anti-labor Democrats.

AN OLD QUESTION

And suddenly one knows that we are dealing with what is only a new form of an old question, that of whether we can live a more orderly and co-operative life, both at home and abroad. We thought we had torn the old spectre of reaction and isolation limb from limb during the war, but he has reassembled himself, and when we turn abruptly, there we can see him, grinning down at us. He looks a little distorted, as is only natural, considering what he has been through; but he is the same, and perhaps we are much the same. The conditions and the names of bills and things are new, but we have been here before.

The People's Platform

The Strikers Did It

CHARLOTTE

Hip, hip, hooray for the 30-Month Veteran who takes a stand for the "Work or Occupy" policy. I'm surprised some official hasn't thought of this before. I thing we should have more vets like this running our country. Like the other "Working Girl" who has no sympathy for strikers, I'm also surprised that men in the higher brackets of power have let strikes run this long. I am a white collar worker and according to drug store gossip, that makes me practically an alien to the strikers. I don't exactly disapprove of unions, but I do disapprove of unions that behave as many of them have been behaving lately. Do they not realize that as soon as their salaries go up, so will prices? Then what happens to non-union members? Or do they care?

And to the man who thinks our soldiers rioting in far-away lands to come home are babies and mamma's boys: I take the soapbox beside the lady from Matthews and wonder why, if it's such a cinch to be away from home, your family, and everything else you grew up to love, he doesn't volunteer to go over and occupy. Talk from a man like that is cheap. Do you think mama's boy could stand up under months and even years of fighting? Stand up under more years away from home, hearing and reading every day of men here in the comfort and security, that the GI's incidentally, fought and some even died for, yet the home-front will strike for more money leaving the GI's dangling in Europe and the Pacific, until they get ready to go back to work to bring them home.

If a depression does follow this war, I, in my "by-stander's opinion" will hold it against the strikers.

—Another Working Girl.

(NOTE: You won't reserve even a teensie-weensie bit of your anger for, say, United States Steel, which brought on the biggest strike of them all by rejecting the arbitration proposal of the President of the United States? This seems to us a moment when a closed mind is certainly more dangerous than a closed shop. Eds. THE NEWS).

"Now, gentlemen—I'd like a proper professional expression!—Instead of looking at the birdie, I'll ask you for a $50 loan!"