THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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'Mind A Bit Of A Suggestion, Gov'nor?' — *Marquis Childs*

Dewey Still Steps Cautiously

BREAKING his long silence on national issues, Governor Dewey has come part of the way out of his shell. Speaking Thursday before the American Legion convention in New York, he issued a bold call for universal military training and spoke guardedly on the subject of foreign policy. He let it be known that he favors the principle of the "bi-partisan foreign policy," which, under the circumstances, is saying very little.

However, to those Americans who have been looking anxiously for signs that Republican leaders appreciate the gravity of the world crisis and recognize the need for the measures to which the Administration is committed, the Dewey statement does offer some reassurance. It is notable that, although the Governor did not mention the Marshall Plan or come out boldly for a broad program of international action in the interests of American security, at least he refrained from saying anything that might be construed as opposition to our present foreign policy. His criticism was confined to the point that Republicans aren't consulted often enough by the Administration.

There is, perhaps, some cause for concern over the tone of Dewey's comments on the way the two major parties have worked together to implement the bi-partisan foreign policy. "The overall results are not as good as they could have been, because in many important matters there has been virtually no consultation, and bi-partisanship has been ignored," he said.

The Governor will have to be more specific or leave the impression that he is seeking to place himself in a position where he can turn either way, depending on how our foreign policy fares in the months ahead. If things should go badly for us in Europe, he then could place the entire blame on the Democratic Administration by contending it had failed to consult with the Republicans.

The facts are, of course, that our foreign policy is a true bi-partisan product. Republican influence was a preponderant in the decision to oppose Soviet Russia. The policy that was formulated to carry out that decision has suffered chiefly from the Republican tendency to exploit popular domestic issues at the expense of financial and military measures required to back up our foreign program.

Governor Dewey has now strengthened our bi-partisan security program with his statement on military training but he still hasn't answered the question whether the party understands all the implications of a bi-partisan policy that will carry America through the present world storm.

Justice For 'Court House' Lee

TO the non-military way of thinking, it has taken the Army command an ungodly long time to call that paragon of "brass," Lt. Gen. John C. H. Lee, to account. "Court House Lee," the GIs called him, and unhappy memories of service under him must have been revived for thousands of former soldiers who have read the dispatches reporting that his Italian command is under official scrutiny from Inspector General Wyche, who was sent to Leghorn at General Eisenhower's request.

"Court House" Lee has done perhaps more than any one individual to imbue Americans with a cynical attitude toward Army officers, and to agitate them over the extent to which "rank" and "caste" prevail in the armed services. Their feeling on this score will not be improved by the fact that the War Department waited to be prodded by newspaper publicity in the present investigation. The principal agitation results from disclosures made by columnist Robert Ruark. Among other things, Ruark has charged that General Lee maintained a disciplinary center at Pisa, Italy, where swordboxes and other barbaric means of disciplining prisoners were used.

It is unfortunate that there seems to be no disposition or no means to make the investigation broad enough to cover the whole case of "Court House" Lee. There should be a complete airing of his conduct in World War II, going back to his spit-and-polish administration of the Service of Supply in England in 1942 and covering his alleged "dictatorship" as head of the European Communications Zone. The probe should go to the bottom of the widely circulated stories that he appropriated special privileges for himself and instituted a system of unusually hard discipline to obtain respect for rank.

Though the heat is on now, the public's hope in the thoroughness and usefulness of the present investigation isn't heightened by indications that beribboned General Lee may still be able to nestle comfortably on the bosom of the War Department. It is rumored that "Court House" is taking advantage of the old soldiers' prerogative—he is going to retire. Perhaps the traditional luck of generals may favor him to the last, but his retirement cannot be a very happy one after he has time to read the published stories of his inglorious record in World War II.

The Strong, Silent Congressmen

THE vacation between sessions of Congress has always provided a welcomed respite for tired solons, and those who are excluded from a free holiday as members of some junketing committee find their relaxation at home by shaking hands and beaming fondly at their constituents. It seems to be an occupational ailment of these veterans of the legislative wars, however, to limit their "mending of the political fences" to this gay camaraderie rather than explaining to the voters the precise reasons for their position on major issues of the session.

Perhaps it is just too hot to bother with such weighty subjects after seven months of battling the Republicans and fighting off the lobbyists, or perhaps their taciturnity stems from a guilty conscience, but we have noted few returned Congressmen who will offer anything but the most pious platitudes about the job which they performed in Washington.

One dignified legislator, we hear, was questioned by a reporter about his stand on the Marshall Plan. His reply, issued with a blank expression on his impassive face, was a laconic "Yes". We assume that this little battle of wits indicates that the gentleman in question had heard of the Marshall Plan, which was undoubtedly an intellectual achievement half of his constituents cannot claim. When quizzed further about the Taft-Hartley Law, a subject which some Congressmen now avoid like the plague, the same representative of the people neatly ducked the issue by announcing that his position on the labor law could be found in *The Congressional Record*.

Now, gentlemen of the Congress, we don't think you need be so coy about this business. Anyone who is interested can easily look up your records. The people who elected you are more concerned about why you voted as you did. Since Washington is far away, they cannot expect you to heed their opinions completely while you are there, nor can they compel you to give them the whys and wherefores when you are supposedly snowed under with work. But now that you are home, and have nothing to do but recline in your porch chairs and tour the district, they have the right to a thorough exclanation, and they deserve more than this pontifical, "hear-no-evil, see-no-evil, speak-no-evil" routine you are unfortunately inclined to give them.

Another Voice

Fritz Should Resign

PRINCIPAL R. L. FRITZ JR., of the Hudson High School, led the fight for better pay for North Carolina school teachers during the last session of the Legislature. As a result of that fight, the "rebels" in the North Carolina Educational Association upset custom, turned against the Association's leadership of the past, and elected Mr. Fritz president. We liked that. It was healthy. And Mr. Fritz deserved the presidency of the Association.

Then it developed that Mr. Fritz was guilty of a misuse of school funds. That he has admitted. He managed to wangle the $64 out of from $1,300 to $1,600 on false statements. He did not take the money himself but distributed it among others in the form of a bonus. Unfortunately, however, his wife received the largest share of this money.

Further investigation may reveal that Mr. Fritz acted with the knowledge of his superiors. Already he has borrowed the money from his brothers and paid it to the State. Those who know him say that he is a man of fine character. All these things are in his favor. But the fact remains that by his own admission he was a party to what amounts to a fraud against the State. That cannot be tolerated on the part of a public official. That was the position of the State Board of Education—though so far without success.

Now Mr. Fritz plans to sue the board to determine its authority. In the meantime, a great many of the teachers have rallied behind their association's president. Such loyalty is commendable but it is unfortunate that the teachers were put to any such test. For the sake of the cause for which he led the fight last Winter, Mr. Fritz should have submitted his resignation without delay.

It is hard on a man who has spent his life in the schools to be deprived of his right to practice his profession. It is especially hard on him if—as his friends say—his wrongdoing was unintentional and for no personal gain. But integrity in government and the cause of the schools are each more important than the fate of this unfortunate man. We hope he will have every opportunity to present his case in the best light possible. We hope that the board's authority will be tested in the courts. We hope that Mr. Fritz can make a comeback in one field or another. But in the meantime, he would be a bigger man in our eyes —nearer approaching the figure he appeared during the teacher pay fight—if he would resign as president of NCEA and resign his principalship until all legal processes had been completed. There's too much at stake for Mr. Fritz to consider his case merely a personal matter.—*High Point Enterprise.*

People's Platform

Pushing Up House Prices

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

AS time goes on it appears less and less likely that many were predicting for the end of the year. During the past month inflationary forces were shoving the cost of living index higher. Price increases in coal and steel were soon followed by record quotations for corn, which augurs for a sustained high food price level, and consequent fading of hopes for wage leveling.

Lumber prices, on which the industry was pinning much of its hopes for sizable declines, have not taken the expected toboggan. Only in the lower grades and in green and odd-sized lumber did prices dip substantially, and even in this classification a firming-up has already set in.

Reflecting the need for homes, and the slowness of completions, prices of existing houses are showing more buoyancy again in most areas. The man on the street should understand the reasons why prices will not fall drastically. He must understand that he is paying for shelter in some form every month of his life, and that he might better buy that new house now and enjoy security and convenience than to wait for an improbable price slash.

As a group the public should be informed on the fact that new home construction is not out of line with our inflated dollar. (Incidentally, the National Association of Home Builders this month released an interesting study to show that liquid assets of individuals are up 220 per cent, average individual income is up 119 per cent, while the cost of new houses is up only 82 per cent). It is a generally accepted opinion that building costs are roughly divided 60 per cent for labor and 40 per cent for material. Actually this is a fallacy. From the time the tree is cut in the forest and the ore is dug in the mine the labor has begun and labor of various kinds continues until a home is completed. So the actual cost of a house is really close to 90 per cent labor and 10 per cent material. Labor costs are now nearly double prewar and still rising.

Anyone who is hoping for reduced building costs in the foreseeable future is just indulging in wishful thinking. Competition and improved methods may effect slight savings but the amount of reduction will be negligible.

—RALPH H. B. BOOTH.

Unfair To Seasoned Workers

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

REMEMBER those war-time dreams of a bright tomorrow after the war? Maybe I missed the boat, but it seems to me that someone has failed miserably. Living costs still can't be reached with a stick—and some wages have fallen below prewar levels.

In a nation which has attained mature economic and educational standards (we thought), we are now faced with a disheartening—even tragic—and adolescent maltreatment of seasoned workers in the labor market. This is in direct reference to the current trend on the part of industry to employ only those persons between the ages of 18 and say, 35, on jobs requiring little or no skill or very short training periods.

Unemployed persons in the county number in the thousands and are composed chiefly of men and women between the ages of 40 and 65. Why? These people may not have college degrees or even high school diplomas, but they have experience in one field or another which could prove a gold mine, I believe, to some wide-awake industrialist who is smart enough to accept this challenge to employ older persons. Whoever had the brilliant idea that 40 is old, and that a woman over 40 can't sew as well or make as good sales as a younger girl . . . or, that a man past 40 is no longer able to drive a truck or manage a service station? Are we obsessed with the idea of producing quantity instead of quality?

Employers must think that cheap labor may be obtained through the hiring of younger persons new in the labor market. Cheap labor indeed—with turnover among young workers far in excess of that among older workers. Sixty-five cents an hour seems to be the prevailing starting wage for learners. That runs up to the enormous salary of $26 for 40 hours. And with a big income like that, we simply won't miss deductions for tax and old-age. Of course, groceries for a family of five might be bought for $20 per week, but I don't believe we've had a law giving us privilege of establishing nudist colonies in Mecklenburg or any other county. Postwar expansion? Dreams come true? I'm dumber than most people, but it looks like nightmares to me.

—C. C.

Don't Count On A 'Quick Burn'

McCOLL, S. C.

Editors, THE NEWS:

IN reply to J. L. Mulwee, whose letter appeared in this column Aug. 26, allow me to say here and now that I am no Dante. I have never been to the lower regions, and as a result I am in no position to state whether there is fire there or not, but I do recall reading something about a lake that burns with fire and brimstone where the wicked will burn forever and ever.

This does not sound like a quick burn up job to me. If you think it does, read Rev. 20:10, and there are other references to eternal punishment which do not sound pleasant to me and although I can stand plenty of heat (Southern California or even tropical Africa suits me fine), I have no desire to risk a few million years in that hot spot where his Satanic Majesty reigns supreme. So I am going to walk the straight and narrow, just in case.

—THOMAS C. McNEIL.

The People's Platform is available to any reader who cares to mount it. Communications should be less than 300 words, typewritten if possible, and on only one side of the paper. Libel and obscenity will be deleted; otherwise anything goes. Each letter must be signed although, in exceptional cases and upon request, we will withhold the writer's name.—Editors. THE NEWS.

Clay Shuns Pomp

BERLIN

IN a glass and stucco building on the outskirts of ruined Berlin are the offices of the man who has been called America's viceroy in Germany. This is a title singularly unsuited to Gen. Lucius D. Clay. The term "viceroy" calls up pomp and circumstance, the display of imperial power. That is not Clay's style.

One MP is at the gate of the courtyard before the main entrance of the building. He is there to inspect credentials. Another MP is at the main door. This is the only military display at the headquarters of the man who is commander of American troops in this theater and military governor of a large area of Germany.

He must, of course, maintain prestige in a part of the world where the outward signs of prestige count for more than they do back home. He has a private plane and a private train equipped with living and office quarters which he uses to shuttle back and forth between here and Frankfurt, principal headquarters for the American zone. His house in Berlin is not pretentious, and his three or four German servants he pays out of his own pocket.

EARLY AT DESK

By 8 o'clock each morning, Clay is at his desk. He hardly ever leaves his office before 7 in the evening. Since he takes no lunch, except when he is required to attend formal luncheons, that makes a long day. At least a half dozen times his efficient secretary, WAC Captain Margaret Allen, brings in coffee, which is offered to the visitor too.

Clay's father was a United States Senator from Georgia. Clay got an early schooling in the politics of Washington. Then came West Point and, after that, service with the Army engineers.

He was educated in another kind of politics in the New Deal era. Repeatedly Clay went before Congressional committees to explain this or that public works project. It gave him an invaluable background for what was to come later.

CUT RED TAPE

Because of that background he was ordered to a desk in Washington when the war broke out. He knew how to cut through the tangle of red tape and delay both in business and in government. Clay fought the battle of the War Production Board. Because his goal was to boost war production and consequently to cut civilian output, he frequently clashed with the civilians who sat on the opposite side of the table.

But one civilian who became his close friend and admirer was James F. Byrnes. When Byrnes became Secretary of State in July, 1945, one of the first issues to come up was whether the German occupation should be turned over to civilians—I. e. to the State Department. Byrnes decided he had enough troubles. He voted to keep control where it was.

The State Department did acquire, however, a policy-making function. Directives for the occupation were supposed to issue from State. Inevitably there was bureaucratic wrangling between the State and War Departments.

Clay, then the deputy military governor in the American zone, was the man in the middle, facing the day-to-day job of supervising the feeding, the denazifying, the re-education and the pacification of some 17,000,000 Germans. When vital decisions were not forthcoming from Washington, Clay made them himself. He had to. He was dealing not with words on paper but with human beings.

STOPS RUSSIANS

One of his decisions was to stop sending machinery out of the American zone into Soviet Russia as reparations. He took that step after a long struggle to get the Russians to live up to various conditions of the Potsdam declaration. Yet he remains on terms of personal friendship with his Russian opposite number in Berlin—Gen. Vasily Sokolovsky.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Patterson Deserves Thanks Of The Nation

By ROBERT S. ALLEN
(For Drew Pearson)

WASHINGTON

IN the practically daily welter of outcries and charges against men in high office, it is vital to keep in mind that there are many more Americans who have a lofty sense of duty and who serve their country honorably, devotedly and courageously.

Too frequently the distinguished deeds and records of these citizens do not receive the acclaim they so richly deserve. Selfless devotion to public trust, as a general rule, does not make smash headlines. But throughout the nation's history it has been such citizens, big and small, who have fought and won its battles and made the U. S. the mighty world power it is today.

It is the Merry-Go-Round's pleasure and honor to pay tribute to such an American by bestowing on him the brass ring for outstandingly patriotic and distinguished service to his country. Throughout his life, from the field of battle to high public office, he has met every test of selfless citizenship unfailingly, modestly and valoriously.

This great American is Robert P. Patterson, former Secretary of War.

In bestowing the brass ring on him, this column in a very small way is endeavoring to make up for the inexplicable failure to decorate him with the high medal he deserved when he retired from office recently. Far lesser men received DSMs and Legions of Merit. Why Bob Patterson was not so honored is a mystery. He merited it outstandingly on every count.

It can be said, of course, that he did not require such recognition. His kind of integrity, courage, and lofty sense of duty need no decoration to embellish them.

Also, in his lapel, Bob Patterson wears the gleaming pin of the Distinguished Service Cross that he won for extraordinary heroism in battle as a young company commander in World War I. A DSM would have added luster to this DSC, but could not have replaced it.

Yet, it would have been a gracious and eminently fitting act to have awarded him the DSM.

Iron Courage

THOSE who knew Bob Patterson, know that he unhesitatingly gave up a lifetime position as a U. S. Circuit Court judge to respond to the late President Roosevelt's request to assume the onerous and thankless responsibilities of directing the logistics branch of the War Department. They also know how he worked unflaggingly and fiercely to arm and equip his unprepared country.

But only a few members of his staff know of one particular act of uniquely outstanding fortitude and high sense of duty.

Patterson's only son was an AAF bombardier. The young soldier was a member of the crack squadron selected to make the first raid on the vital Ploesti oil fields in Romania. It was crucial to smash these installations in order to deprive the Nazis of desperately needed gas and fuel oil. For that reason, the attack had to be made at "tree top" level.

With the B-17s based 1,200 miles away in Italy, that meant, in effect, a suicidal raid. Any plane that sustained damage had practically no chance of getting back.

On the day the attack was made, Patterson was scheduled to leave Washington on an urgent secret mission in the Pacific. Before he departed, the War Department received word that the raid had been very successful but that more than 60 per cent of the bombers had been lost.

It would have been very easy for Patterson, as Undersecretary of War, to have ascertained the fate of his only son. All Patterson had to do was to lift his phone and ask for the information.

But he quietly left Washington without seeking or knowing what had become of his boy.

Patterson's concept of duty was so meticulous and inflexible that he would not use his position to gain information not available to the fathers and mothers of the other boys who made that attack.

A week later, far out in the Pacific, Patterson was formally notified by the War Department that his son's plane had been shot down. However, the boy had not been in it. Two days before the raid, he had been hospitalized as the result of an injury in a crash.

NOTE: All the members of young Patterson's plane parachuted to safety and were captured by the Germans. After the war, all were recovered in a prison camp.

Modern Prosthetics

ANOTHER thing that only close, friends know about Bob Patterson's service is that he is responsible for the Government's belated program to develop modern and effective artificial limbs.

Both the Army and Navy went to great lengths and cost to give the finest medical care to men who lost limbs. Special hospitals and rehabilitation centers were set up for amputees, who, at the height of the fighting, averaged as high as 1,500 a month. But at that point their efforts ended.

Nothing was done about modernizing the prosthetic devices upon which these handicapped men would have to depend the rest of their lives.

Both services gave the amputees the best artificial limbs that could be bought. But they still were obsolete, cumbersome and ineffectual. There had been no real improvement in artificial limbs since World War I.

In the Spring of 1945, Patterson, personally, finally took hold of this tragic problem himself. Over the hidebound opposition of certain Army brasshats, he set up a committee of civilian scientists, engineers and surgeons, provided them with ample funds, and put them to work to lift artificial limbs out of the ice age.

This committee on artificial limbs is still functioning. It is now jointly supported by the War Department and Veterans Administration. It has already made some notable advances, and other promising developments are in progress. If this long-needed humanitarian program can be continued a few more years, the 800,000 amputees in the U. S.—civilian as well as veterans—can hopefully look forward to devices that will be as modern and as efficient as an up-to-date electric washing machine, at least.

If that modest goal is realized, it will be due in a large measure to the humanitarianism and high sense of duty of a great American—Robert P. Patterson.

NOTE: All devices developed under the committee on artificial limbs are made available to civilians through Government contracts with private limb-makers.

Joseph & Stewart Alsop

The Vice-Presidency

WASHINGTON

THE job of selecting Harry S. Truman's 1948 running mate is "in the talk stage." The language is borrowed from a Presidential adviser, who has been participating in the talks. What it means is simple. The President and the other captains of the Democratic organization are already poking and sniffing at the selection of available candidates, like a set of careful housewives looking for a good brisket of beef on a badly stocked butcher's counter.

The specifications officially laid down for the ideal Democratic nominee for the Vice-Presidency are revealing in themselves. He is to be a vote-getting Easterner if possible, since Ed Flynn of New York and other party satraps have warned that their states will be hard to hold in the Democratic column. He is to be at least acceptable to the labor and liberal vote. And above all, he is to have "planned." Even the President, with his inherent modesty, feels that he needs a reasonably striking personality to play Theodore Roosevelt of 1904 to his own more up-to-date McKinley.

FEW MEET SPECIFICATIONS

Preparing sets of specifications is always agreeable, whatever the purpose. But the President and his advisers would make their choice no harder if they confined to the list desirable Vice-Presidential qualities the power to walk upon the waters. The fact is that no one in the Democratic Party meets the specifications which have been laid down thus far.

There is no great famine of aspirants, to be sure. Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson is so anxious to make the race that he has actually proposed himself to the President. The President, during his Cabinet colleague, took the suggestion in good part. Anderson is large, dignified, prosperous, honest, reasonably able and kind to animals. In ordinary times, he would make a perfect Vice-Presidential nominee. But these are not ordinary times. The howls from the satrapies could be heard at the White House all the way from Chicago and New York. The satraps cried that Anderson was unknown, and being Southern, might even frighten votes away in the key states.

Another who might like the job is Senator Millard C. Tydings, of Maryland. He boasts, however, an almost unblemished anti-labor record, so that his nomination would cancel out the entire gain made by the President's veto of the Taft-Hartley law. The President is in no position to throw political assets overboard like refuse.

PERHAPS JUSTICES

Then there are what may be called the wishful-thinking, or I-Am-a-Fruitive-From-the-Supreme Court candidates. A name viewed with genuine favor by the Democratic satraps is that of Chief Justice Fred Vinson. Although a Southerner, Vinson has a record that would give him real pulling power in the big cities of the North. Among ardent Democratic leaders, a nominate-Vinson movement actually started a month or so ago. But more practical councillors pointed out that the chief Justice greatly dislikes involvement of the bench in politics, and is far from needing to have his name examined. The movement died a-borning, as has the comparable movement to nominate that hardly perennial, Justice William O. Douglas.

Thus the problem, as now envisioned, boils down to a choice between the dark horses and the dark moon of fairly obviously available candidates. A dark horse being currently mentioned is Representative A. S. Mike Monroney of Oklahoma. Proponents of the dark horse strategy argue that the best course is to pick some one like Monroney, who may be unknown to most voters but possesses a good record and highly effectively personality.

TWO OR THREE

Again, however, the satraps want some one their people know. Consequently this game of "nine little Indians hanging on the wall" comes down to three little Indians hanging on the wall. These are Senate Democratic Leader Alben W. Barkley, of Kentucky; Secretary of National Defense James Forrestal, and Secretary of Commerce Averell Harriman.