# THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1947


## Truman's Pants And Wall Street

UNDOUBTEDLY the most serious charge which the Moscow press has yet leveled at President Truman is the one in the *Weekly Literary Gazette* which says that he "wears his pants shorter by two inches than the accepted standards". All the other counts in the latest Soviet indictment are relatively innocuous beside this disclosure that the Missouri high water mark still shows on the Thirty-Third President of the United States.

We feel certain that few people in this country will be alarmed or resentful over the Russian accusation that Mr. Truman is the tool of Wall Street. Since we already have it on reliable Republican authority that he also is a tool of the CIO, this creates just the sort of political complication that the American democratic system was designed to produce. How the Communists can speak of Mr. Truman as being "unnotable" in view of his success in serving two such antagonistic masters is something of a mystery, unless you are familiar with the Marxian reasoning processes.

For our part, we are grateful to the Soviet propagandists for reminding us of Mr. Truman's versatility and boldness in serving as a tool of the various interests that make up American life. He has contributed something to honest and perhaps more effective government by ignoring the old Wall Street bugaboo to place leaders of the financial community in important positions where their influence and responsibility are clearly fixed in the public mind.

It is entirely to President Truman's credit that he has made no effort to conceal the "Wall Street" influence in his Administration. Whether that influence serves the country's best interests is a question for the people to decide, but at least they are being given a chance to assess the blame or credit on the basis of the record. Meanwhile, the rapprochement between Washington and Wall Street that has been going on openly has been significant chiefly as an indication that the enlightened element of the business community is coming more to the fore. It is also a sign that we have grown up enough as a people to recognize the fact that there are men in all walks of life whose capacities are needed in public service, and whose devotion to American ideals is not entirely conditioned by their private interests.

We are not greatly perturbed by the Russian reminder that Mr. Truman was "the messenger boy, bank clerk and tool of the Pendergast machine". Although we have worried over his role in this respect for a number of years, the Russian *Gazette's* piece had the effect of making us review the record of Truman's actual service to Boss Pendergast. That gave us a fresh appreciation of what a vast difference there is between an American and a Russian tool of the ruling powers.

The Russian charge that Mr. Truman is "straining for the laurels of the Corporal from Munich" might have upset us more if we hadn't been studying a new picture of our President doing knee-bend exercises on board an American warship. It seems to us what he really is straining to do is to keep himself in conditioo to set a walking record.

In short, the only thing that bothers us about Mr. Truman is the shortening of his pants. We ought to have a statement from Washington about that.

## Mecklenburg Stages A Rally

OLD HANDS in the political game must have batted their eyes in disbelief when they read that the Mecklenburg delegation voted together as a unit in supporting the slate which made a clean sweep at the State convention of Young Democrats in Raleigh last Saturday. We still are marveling at the sounds of harmony that come from the Capital in the wake of the gathering which unanimously elected a new set of YD officers, including Flora Powell of Charlotte as national committwoman.

We long ago had abandoned hope that the doughty Mecklenburgers, always the first to start a scrap and the last to abandon it, would ever change their ways, and we are not certain that the present reform represents anything more than a temporary lapse. It has seemed to us at times that our political representatives felt they were obliged to ride off in all directions at once in order to uphold the reputation of Mecklenburg County as the home of independence. They have carried the ideal of individual freedom in the extreme of making it appear that agreement among themselves is unconstitutional, or at least an unthinkable violation of tradition.

Countless opportunities to advance the legitimate interests of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County have been lost through this tendency of our political workers to fly apart and seek alliances with politicians from other sections. It has dissipated the influence of both City and County in party affairs of the State and in the General Assembly, as well as in national matters. It has muffled our voice on policies that were adopted and deprived us of recognition in the selection of candidates and organization leaders. It has created the curious spectacle in which the largest city in the State and one of the larger counties refuse to exercise their natural leadership.

The change that was manifested in Raleigh last week was brought about largely by Young Democrats who learned something more about teamplay while they were defending independence in the armed services. A new trend in Mecklenburg County thinking was indicated earlier this year at the American Legion convention in Wilmington, when our delegation voted as a unit. Mecklenburg didn't win in that contest but it made a showing that encouraged the movement for the unit principle.

At Raleigh, the results and potentialities of the united Mecklenburg front were forcibly impressed on all the delegations. Before the convention opened there were prospects of a heated battle over offices. Then the word went out that the powerful Mecklenburg delegation had settled its differences in caucus and was casting its 30 votes in a block for one slate, and there was wide scurrying to line up with the strongest group.

The example of the Young Democrats may be studied profitably by all our public officials and political workers. It represents something more than a step toward a more efficient brand of practical politics. The times demand that the City and the County assume larger responsibility and authority to meet the problems of industrial society. Progress toward that end cannot be had until we learn to throw our weight together.

## It May Be Cheap At $19 Billion

AMERICA'S bill for European recovery under the Marshall Plan has been reduced to $19,330,000,000 over a four-year period, at the last report. That doesn't include some $3,000,000,000 that will be handled as loans through the International Bank. Even so, it represents a reduction of about $10,000,000,000 from the figure first set by the 16 European nations that will participate in the plan. That's a worthwhile saving for about three months of haggling over the price, to say the least.

It it not possible, however, to be entirely satisfied with this result of hard-headed dealing by the American experts who showed the Europeans how to scale down their demands. Two questions remain to be answered. One is whether we still are kidding ourselves about the eventual costs. The other is whether we are asking the right question. The main thing to ask, it seems to us, is not how much will it cost but will it work.

Full details of the plan will not be made public until the week-end and it will be some time after that before it is possible to answer the big question. However, yesterday's summary of the Paris report on the plan to "put Europe on its feet by the end of 1951" held out the hope that the program would bring production revival, internal financial stability, maximum cooperation among the sixteen countries and a solution of the trading deficit with the American continent, particularly by exports. If it will do that, then it will be cheap at $19 billion or even $29 billion. It will then represent not a colossal hand-out, as so many Americans still are inclined to think of it, but a highly profitable investment.

There is reason to believe that America will go on asking the wrong question: How much will it cost? In fact, it is evident that a good many Americans still are asking the question if it is necessary to do anything. They argue that Europeans must work out their own destiny and aid, from us only postpones adjustment to postwar realities over there while at the same time it exaggerates our own shortages, causes prices to rise, etc. This attitude is discussed by a Washington business writer, J. A. Livingston, who comments that it "denies the existence of an ideological war with Russia. It imolies that it makes no difference to this country if Russia dominates Europe. And it ignores any moral obligations of this country to help Britain and France. Do mutual responsibilities cease when bombs stop dropping?"

It should be added that this state of mind also ignores entirely the fact that America's own economic future is tied up in the Marshall Plan, and the further fact that if the plan isn't undertaken there will be none of the prosperity that the save-ourselves-first advocates dream about.

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It is not to be lightly disregarded—Comrade Molotov's remark that the Marshall Plan will fail—as the comrade is a determined man.

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A Princeton dean thinks the same scientists who study other diseases should study labor troubles, like inflammation of the Lewis or hardening of the management.

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The old time farmer who spent elbow grease in fighting grass is now taking care of the grass and letting cattle graze it.—*Jackson (Ga.) Progress-Argus.*

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"So well versed in our history was a British actress, applying for citizenship, she could name Benjamin Harrison's Vice-President." Benjamin who?

'Now, Here's What We Say To Russia—'

*Mistakes In London And Washington*

## Wanted: A Political Instinct

By SUMNER WELLES
Former Under-Secretary of State

NEW YORK

IN his "American Memoir," which evokes such nostalgic memories of the age of confidence, Henry Seidel Canby speaks of "the marvelous political instinct of the British people."

With all of their occasional blind spots, such as Ireland, no modern power has shown a surer political instinct in comprehending the psychology of foreign people than Great Britain. Like so many of the other benefits we possessed during the age of confidence, that invaluable asset in the conduct of foreign relations seems to be vanishing.

Whatever much Mr. Bevin may differ with Mr. Churchill upon every other conceivable subject, he surely agrees with him that American good will is essential if a genuine partnership between the English-speaking nations is to be preserved. Yet Mr. Bevin would seem to lose no opportunity of alienating American sympathy and of provoking American antagonism.

**SCORNS PUBLIC OPINION**

The course which Mr. Bevin has pursued in Palestine has shocked American public opinion. Indignation was caused by his indefensible reflections upon the Jewish citizens of New York. Now the American people have witnessed the pitiful odyssey of the steamship Exodus, and they have been involved by the British Government's obduracy in forcing the Jewish refugees she carried into concentration camps in the very country from whose horrors they had fled.

All of these events have aroused deep resentment among non-Jewish as well as among Jewish elements in the United States. This resentment is making it increasingly difficult to maintain the intimate understanding between the two countries which is so necessary in this time of stress.

To this disservice to Anglo-American relations must now be added Mr. Bevin's recent demands for the redistribution of the American gold reserves and for the enactment of some new form of lend-lease.

Statements such as these, made at the very moment when Britain must have additional help from the United States, have awakened Congressional suspicions, renewed the memories of war debt irritations, and started a wave of that old anti-British feeling which it was hoped had been permanently stilled.

**LACKS UNDERSTANDING**

Mr. Bevin seems to have little interest in American public opinion and no understanding of the factors by which American sentiment is moulded. He lacks political instinct in his conduct of foreign policy.

In this defect he is only surpassed by his Russian colleague, Mr. Molotov. That deft appreciation of the reactions of other peoples which marked Soviet policy in the days of Maxim Litvinov is no longer discernible.

American Presidents and Secretaries of State have also all too often lacked this essential in their dealings with foreign peoples. It is a quality needed more than ever before as the United States undertakes for the first time to play a determining part in shaping the destinies of the world. There are few signs that our Government possesses it today.

The methods employed in our crude and much-vaunted interference in Greece's purely political affairs, however desirable our objectives may have been, have needlessly antagonized every sector of the Greek people.

**INCREASES ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT**

The way in which we intervened in Paris while the Marshall Plan was being prepared has rapidly increased anti-American feeling in Europe. The comment of a European delegate, quoted by Frederic Kuh in a recent report, that Will Clayton gave the impression of being "a Southern plantation owner cracking the whip over a pack of hungry European sharecroppers," typifies the response of some of America's most loyal friends in western Europe.

The Administration's willingness to permit General Clay and his military advisers to operate as though Germany's neighbors had no right to see security when plans for western Germany are formulated has seriously awakened the democratic parties in western Europe that are co-operating with this Government.

What have been the results of General Wedemeyer's recent "diplomatic" survey in China, and of his published statement upon its conclusion? The Chinese Reds are proclaiming that his mission constituted flagrant proof of American intervention in China's sovereign affairs, and a dangerous rift has been created between Washington and the National Government.

The military mentality predominates in Washington.

The debt of gratitude the American people owe their military leaders is immeasurable. But it must be admitted that with rare exceptions generals and admirals are not noted for their willingness to make allowances for the susceptibilities of other peoples. There is an increasing tendency in our diplomacy to assume that, because the United States has the armed force and the dollars upon which the safety and the recovery of other peoples presently depend, the right of these countries to determine their own internal policies and their right to be treated as sovereign equals, may be wholly disregarded.

What is needed in Washington is the knowledge that different peoples react differently to the same conditions; a willingness to allow for the sensibilities and even for the prejudices of other nations; and above all, that spirit of tolerance which comes from the realization that the American people and their government are not omniscient. The combination of these qualities would make for a surer political instinct in the conduct of our foreign affairs.

Unless those now in charge of American foreign policy recognize the need for a basic change of attitude in their dealings with our democratic allies, we may well fall to achieve our national objectives.

## Quote, Unquote

A WRITER says that one way to keep young is to associate with young people. But what's an old fellow to do if young people don't want to associate with him?—**Roanoke Times.**

Representative Bender foresees a "phony crisis". Page the ghost of Senator Borah, who foresaw a phony war one time.—**Lynchburg News.**

It is harder to make money last than it is first.—**Little Rock Gazette.**

*Joseph Alsop*

## How Freedom Can Die

ROME

BY what strange process can the Communist Party come to power in an ancient and proud Western European nation, with a vigorous, hard-working, and strongly Catholic people? This is an important question, both in Italy and for us in the United States. It is especially important now, because if the strong current evidence that the Kremlin has altered its directive to the Western European Communist Parties—that here in Italy, for example, Palmiro Togliatti is instructed to take power as soon as possible.

Within this rather wide frame, Togliatti, Thorez and their colleagues of the Italian and French party executives are reasonably free to act, subject only to absolute obedience to any further indications of opinion from Moscow.

**DRAW THE LINE AT WAR**

The best guess (and it is of course a complete shot in the dark) is that Togliatti's present directive can be paraphrased in ordinary language approximately as follows: "Take power quickly if possible. Use the party influence with the labor unions to promote the maximum of political and economic disorganization. But on no account risk a civil war or the suppression of the party."

That important final qualification requires Signor Togliatti and his fellows of the high command to move delicately as well as swiftly. To be sure, the Communists possess a powerful paramilitary force in Italy. The best of the Communists' wartime partisan units, numbering an estimated 20,000 men, have been almost certainly kept in a state of secret training and readiness. Wartime leaders—international brigade veterans like Pietro Secchia and the notorious Colonel Moscatelli—are reported still ready to function.

Yet these Communist forces are regarded as defensive for the present and, for the future, as the cadres of a new secret police. Togliatti wants no civil war which would invite external intervention. It is generally agreed that a Communist bid for full power will not be made except in conditions of such disorganization and misery that all opposition is effectively paralyzed.

Precisely for this reason, Signor Togliatti must nightly thank God, to whom he is surprisingly polite, for the state of nervous, handwringing indecision avoarently prevailing in Washington. If America gives Italy wheat, coal and the dollars to pay for them, Togliatti has not yet even a good fighting chance. The triumph of Signor Togliatti can be almost mathematically foretold if America remains paralyzed in the present emergency.

**GOVERNMENT WILL FALL**

The first result, of course, will be the fall of the de Gasperi Government, as a direct result of its inability to give the people bread and work. This will occur relatively shortly. There will follow a general scramble from which almost everyone predicts the emergence of what is called "government of national crisis." The phrase is certainly an odd one. First of all, the government of national crisis will contain representatives of all parties, especially including the Left Socialists and Communists. Its diversity alone will condemn it to impotence. And just to insure that impotence is really total, it is further predicted that this government of national crisis will be headed by the kind of antiquated, vaguely dilapidated but available elder statesman who would guarantee feebleness in any case. The Communist candidate for the job, who is already known, is the aged former Premier Nitti, and Nitti also seems to be considered the most likely choice by Socialist and Christian Democrats.

In such a government of concourse, the Communists will take politically vital posts like the Ministry of the Interior which carry no responsibility for economic policy. For the purpose of such a government will be to provide a ripening period of decay—of increasing hunger, unemployment and chaos. When the ripening period is over, in the Spring, will come the national election. And then, if all this is permitted to happen, the Communists can take power, only masking their absolute control by a few Socialists and other stooges carefully trained to imitate Hungarian models.

*Samuel Grafton*

## Debating Society

NEW YORK

THE U. N. has, for the moment, ceased to be an agency and has become an arena. It is a place of confrontation, a field outside the down, at dawn. It is an appalling thing to have to say, but the world might have been a little more at ease last week if the meeting of the General Assembly had not taken place, if it had been postponed because the roof leaked, or the planes did not arrive.

If there had been no meeting we would have been spared much inconclusive storming, and gloom. For the U. N. no longer comes together for a specific purpose; it merely comes together. It is not always a happy thought to bring two parties known to be in anger into the same room. Often the most constructive thing to do is to keep them from meeting until circumstances change.

The fact that the member nations have to meet, according to a strict timetable, is not of itself a guarantee of peace. Sometimes if there is no fight scheduled, the chief result is that there is a fight. It is said that at least the United States and Russia are debating the great issues of the day before the conscience of mankind at U. N. That is not quite so.

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The two are under no compulsion to settle anything at these meetings, or even to speak on the same subjects. In terms of content, Marshall's speech and Vishinsky's had very little to do with each other. Each side does a sporting stalk of the other at these meetings, in an atmosphere indeed much like that of a grim sporting contest. The points put forth are not expected to be accepted; they are expected to be rejected. Marshall knows Russia will not abandon the veto; Vishinsky knows we are not going to curb our freedom of speech to put down "warmongers," a term he would certainly apply to all critics of Russia.

And the U. N. can be restored to its original function only by a peace treaty between Russia and the United States. It is true there has been no war between these nations. But it would be very foolish to have a peace treaty without the war. We have dropped many traditions in our time. Perhaps we can drop the one that says there has to be a war before the peace. Let us consider that there has been a stalemated war, and that we are now writing the peace.

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To do this, both sides would have to revise certain attitudes. We would have to give up the comedy routine in which we are continually rediscovering that Russia is Communist. What on earth did we think it was, theosophist? Mr. Vishinsky operates along this line, too, as in the speech in which he made his babyish demand that we suppress critics of Russia. He informed us, with every aspect of horror and surprise, that we have corporations in America, that these really make profits, and that some of them do not care for Communism. That's hot news, too.

But the whole point of the wartime alliance is that it was an alliance between a capitalist country and a Communist one. That's what made it so remarkable, and so promising. The same kind of accord between opposites is necessary to a stable peace. That's the problem. If it is the problem it doesn't exist, there wouldn't be any problem.

Mr. Vishinsky, is wholly unconvincing when he reacts to the discovery of corporations in America, as if he had found flies in his soup. What did he expect to find here? The smooth pretense that we ought to be in some way different from what we are is an absurdity. Mr. Vishinsky's problem to make peace with us as we are, just as it is ours to make peace with his country, if he fails, and war comes, the responsibility will be his responsibility, too; and he cannot avoid it by pretending to work hard at some other problem than the one which actually exists.

Our need is for a peace treaty without a war, to revive the original functions of U. N.; the alternative is war inside the house of peace.

*Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round*

## : Only America Could Produce La Guardia

WASHINGTON

I HAVE written several thousand words about Fiorello La Guardia while he was living; but, even though I can't do justice to him, I should like to write one more column now that he has reached the end of the road.

La Guardia is hard to write about because his life was so full, his character so varied. He was either on the crest of the wave or down in the dumps, either chasing fire engines or driving gangsters out of New York, either spending millions feeding Europe or nursing nickels to keep a roof over his head.

I have been sitting at the typewriter, trying to describe La Guardia but I'm not equal to it.

Letting my mind run back over the years—there was La Guardia the Congressman, sitting in the hair of both parties, fighting always for what he thought was right, always on the side of the underdog. Those were the carefree days when Fiorello used to cook spaghetti in Bob Allen's kitchen, and when a joke on my old friend Captain Eugene Regnier, military aide to Secretary of State Stimson, I induced La Guardia to tack an amendment on the War Department appropriation bill providing that "no money should be expended for the salary of a military aide to any civilian member of the Cabinet." Stimson, who had a weak spot for military folderol, nearly had a fit. Later we withdrew the amendment.

Then there were the days when La Guardia, a Republican, was defeated by none other than his good friend Roosevelt and the Democratic landslide which sweept FDR into power. Fiorello broke in those days, scarcely knew where the next meal was coming from, but he rode on the subway, saved his nickels, He passed up the juicy law fees offered him by questionable clients, and stayed broke. In fact, aside from his salary as Mayor of New York, Fiorello has been broke most of his life.

There were the depression days. La Guardia was struggling to balance New York's budget—and New York taxpayers owing the city $400,000,000 unpaid taxes. So the Little Flower, genius that he was, persuaded Jesse Jones to loan him RFC money with unpaid taxes as collateral.

There were also the days when La Guardia worried about his own election. Roosevelt never really came out strong for him, despite their close personal friendship, but 50,000 Democrats once wrote his name on the Democratic primary ballot—even though he was a Republican. . . . "If my parents had only given me a different name," moaned Fiorello. "That name costs me 250,000 votes at every election." . . . Despite the name, it was Fiorello who carried Tom Dewey alone on the GOP ticket in Dewey's first real plunge into politics. . . . And despite the name, La Guardia telegrahed FDR after the unsuccessful 1938 purge against Senators George and Tydings: "You should have planted a Little Flower in Georgia and Maryland.

**Was On Press Agent**

LA GUARDIA ran his public relations like the bandmaster his father was. "It's confidential," he used to tell the press. "Don't mention my name when you write it." . . . "When I've got anything to say, I'll say it myself," he announced, firing his press agent. . . . "I'm too young to be Secretary of War," he told reporters who inquired if he was entering the Roosevelt Cabinet. . . . "When I took over New York I fired the bad commissioners." La Guardia once cracked at his friend FDR, "in Washington they create new jobs for them." . . . And stationing Ernest Cuneo beside a fire alarm during one political speech, he warned: "Don't let anyone pull the fire alarm and get the crowd to run out."

Fiorello flew a flag on his car with one more star than General MacArthur. He raised Cain with the Army Department when they wouldn't let him supply a mounted escort to Philippine President Quezon. "Those white-spat boys say Quezon rates below a Senator," complained La Guardia. . . . While he visited Stalin two years ago, he sent other members of his UNRRA party to see Lenin's tomb. "I got as much out of Stalin as they did out of Lenin," he remarked later. . . . La Guardia's dislike of Herbert Hoover remained as constant at the end as during his days in Congress when he used to jibe at his "alleged" party leader in the White House. "Hoover brought back nothing UNRRA didn't already know," he said of Hoover's recent survey of Europe.

**Suffered Disappointments**

IN his later years La Guardia suffered two great disappointments. One was his failure to be made a U. S. Senator. The other was FDR's refusal to make him a brigadier general in charge of the Italian Military Government. Roosevelt had promised him the latter job, and Fiorello had his heart set on it, but the brass hats intervened.

Asked whether he would run for Governor of New York, La Guardia once replied: "I never take a step backward." Urged to run for President State, he answered: "I'm too busy running New York City." But when asked if he would run for U. S. Senator, he said: "I'd run like a fire engine." That was La Guardia's greatest ambition, and sometimes in Washington he would sit in the Senate gallery, looking down, watching with envy the debates of the world's greatest deliberative body—debates in which he was never allowed to participate.

Several weeks ago I had occasion to telephone La Guardia in New York. He was still the same old Fiorello, still battling, still complaining in that soeaky voice of his.

"The place isn't the same anymore," he said when I asked him why he didn't come down to Washington.

"Something's happened. There's too much timidity around the White House. Something's gone out of the place. I'm worried. There just isn't anybody out working for the people anymore."

That was the last conversation I had with La Guardia, a man who with all his grand-standing and all his hair-pulling spent his life even up to the very end working for the people. Son of an Italian immigrant bandmaster and a Portugese Jewess, he was a man such as only this country can produce. He was a great American. And America will be a lot emptier now that he has reached the end of the road.