

# THE CHARLOTTE NEWS



THOMAS L. ROBINSON  
J. B. DOWD  
B. S. GRIFITH

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1949

## THE SPUTTERING FUSE

WHILE Russian-American relations smoldered on the back burner last week, the brass, angry little democracy of Israel was making trouble. Tanned young officers bustled down the corridors of the cluttered, crowded Government buildings in Hakirya — their legs flying beneath skimpy shorts, arms pumping below rolled up sleeves.

Israel, for the first time, was embroiled with her arch-enemy Britain.

No one knows how it happened. On Saturday battle-hardened mercenaries who pulled Israeli planes over the southern area of Palestine had fired on five RAF planes, sent them spinning into the hard, dry earth.

Whether the planes came to rest in Israel or Egypt is in doubt. The British say they were shot down over Egypt; the Jews say it was over Israel. Who is to say where? What happens now?

We are committed to the support of England, but we are also committed to the young democracy of Israel, built with private American funds, offered de facto recognition by our Government, virtually furnished a huge loan for building purposes.

The United States is squarely on the spot. Must we, on the basis of cold-war

Mediterranean crescent is to be a democracy and, in effect, it is waging the same battle our forefathers fought in the 18th century. But our sympathy is somewhat strained when Israelis openly flout United Nations authority. Perhaps the citizens of the new state are justified when they declare the U. N. is not giving them a fair deal — but they are not giving them a fair deal — but they are not giving them a fair deal.

If some neutral authority — U. N. or U. S. — cannot intervene, the small war between Israel and Britain might well grow into something of grave importance. Britain may pour men and machines into the area (this began with a landing Sunday in Agaba) and in desperation Israel may turn to Russia for assistance. Conflict between Britain and Russia would draw America into the Near East crisis.

These are the mechanics of war; the tangled, unplanned circumstances that cause men to kill. Apparently, no one meant to start a war, but the shooting started. It is almost inconceivable that nations can be plunged into a life-and-death struggle because a soldier-of-fortune had an itchy trigger finger, but this may well be the case.

To prevent such "accidental" wars the citizens of the world cry out for a strong central authority. But the United Nations does not, at this time, seem equal to the task. The jumble of conflicting policies in the Indonesian situation is an example of U. N. weakness.

In Israel a new and potentially destructive powder keg is primed; the fuse is lighted. If we, the United Nations of the world, are to prevent such a sputtering life-long, then the future of mankind seems without hope; if the United Nations can act with wisdom and with courage in this latest of innumerable crises, the world may live for many years in peace.

The fuse burns . . . the world is waiting; it has not much confidence but a great amount of hope.

## CONGRESS LAGS BEHIND

ONE very good reason why the Congress is unable today to keep a very close check on the activities of the sprawling Government bureau is that Congress has repeatedly, throughout the years, refused to abandon its traditional organization pattern in order to keep abreast of the times. One of the chief stumbling blocks is the oft-criticized seniority system for choosing committee chairman.

There are two sides to the argument about seniority, and Rep. Adolph J. Sabath of Illinois, head of the Rules Committee recently, has expressed his views. He views it as "stands to reason that the longer a man serves on a committee the more he ought to know about legislation that comes before him. Why shouldn't the man who has served the longest be the chairman?"

That oversimplification assumes, of course, that all men are of equal intellectual ability and have an equal propensity for hard work. That, were true, Rep. Sabath would be entirely correct. As it is, the men we send to Washington vary from dolts to geniuses, and it sometimes

seems that the dolts are numerically superior.

A strict adherence to the seniority system in private business would be disastrous, since it would mean the automatic promotion of the oldest employees, no matter their capabilities or particular fitness for the task. It works the same way in Congress.

The length of a man's service in Congress does not reflect his ability or his energy. Rather it indicates that (1) he successfully avoids making enemies, which means he does as little as possible; (2) that his district is overwhelmingly Democratic or Republican; (3) that he has built a potent political machine; or (4) that he has found the secret of longevity. None of these is necessarily good, and none necessarily qualifies him as a committee chairman.

The Government long ago got too big, and too far away, for the taxpayers to keep up with it. It is fast getting beyond the grasp of the Congress, and will continue to do so, unless that august body is willing to work out some way to keep abreast of the times.

## TRIBUTE TO JUDGE PARKER

AN announcement that Judge John J. A. Parker will receive the fifth annual Carolina Israelite award for having made an outstanding contribution to inter-faith amity and human rights is a justifiable recognition of the eminent jurist's career.

The recipient of the award is chosen each year by a vote of the 4,000 subscribers to the Carolina Israelite. In previous years, Senator J. Melville Broughton, the late Joseph Daniels, Dr. Frank Porter Graham, and Ambassador Herschel V. Johnson have been honored, a distinguished group to which Judge Parker belongs by virtue of his service on the bench and to humanity in general.

Through his long tenure on the U. S. Circuit Court, Judge Parker has attained the reputation of having one of the finest

legal minds of this generation. But his prestige extends beyond state and national boundaries. In 1948, he was selected to deliver the main address at a dinner honoring judges and lawyers from the United Nations attending the San Francisco conference. Later, he was appointed alternate member of the International Military Tribunal at the Nuremberg trials. He is also the author of a book, "Democracy in Government," which has been acclaimed as a thoughtful, scholarly work.

But he has also had time to take a great interest in inter-faith activities in the Carolinas and the nation, in an effort to bring about better understanding between Christians and Jews. It is primarily for this evidence of his concern for the brotherhood of man that he is being honored.

## COAL FIELD REVOLUTION

HAVING been so thoroughly conditioned to the slow but inexorable rise in the cost of coal in the past few years, we're not going to get our hopes up too high over the report of a new mechanical monster which may revolutionize coal mining and bring the price to the consumer down to a reasonable level. Nevertheless, if the initial successes of the Continuous Miner can be sustained, there will be real cause for rejoicing.

A feature story in The Christian Science Monitor tells about the 25-foot machine which looks more like an enemy tank than anything else, and which may reduce the army of miners from a half-million to some 25,000 and at the same time increase the national coal output some twenty times.

Twenty-five of the machines have already been produced or are on the production line, and some 150 of them will be produced by next September. It replaces with one continuous operation the conventional steps of cutting, drilling, blasting, and loading, and seems to work as well in anthracite as in bituminous coal

veins. Giant "teeth" rip the coal out, gobble it up and spew it out into a trailer train, all at a high rate of speed, increasing the average per-man output from 30 to 100 tons of coal a day.

The industrial possibilities are tremendous — a steady electric power, faster production of coal synthetics, cheaper fuel costs for heating homes. And, unexpectedly, it is apparently finding favor with John L. Lewis, union leader, even though it means fewer jobs.

"The United Mine Workers recognized three or four decades ago that the only way to increase the standard of living in the mining industry was to pack the new values by greater productivity—more tons per man per day," Mr. Lewis was quoted as saying.

The UMW chief can also foresee better arguments for high wages, better working conditions, and shorter hours, all of which may limit the ultimate relief to the consumer. But there is still hope that the work of the Continuous Miner will be a household name. The coal bill is big enough to be noticed.

## Marquis Childs

### In The American Tradition

NO decision of the Supreme Court for many years has stirred so much discussion and controversy as that upholding laws adopted in Arizona, Nebraska and North Carolina outlawing the closed shop. Coming from the Court, the decision is a criticism of the Roosevelt Administration, the decision causes tremendous surprise.

In a sober, careful opinion, Justice Hugo L. Black found that state legislatures were entirely within their powers in passing laws specifying that an individual need not belong to a trade union in order to take a job. The only dissent came from Justice Frank and that in the instance of the Arizona law.

Every union executive and organizer should read Justice Black's opinion and, equally important, the concurring opinion of Justice Felix Frankfurter. Justice Frankfurter, who has been shunned more than anyone on the court by the smear band, has come a penetrating analysis of the right of the individual in relation to the power of mass organization. It throws a revealing light on the struggle of a society that seems to be moving toward greater and greater centralization of authority.

SOVEREIGNTY. Above all for the leaders of the mass unions with their 18,000,000 members, the Frankfurter opinion should be read. For the opinion poses the question whether with the great power that they now wield in American life the unions should resist the plea to be moved toward greater and greater centralization of authority.

The plain truth is that unions in this country, or most of them, have put far too much reliance on the force of law to build and hold their membership. Historically, you can see why this happened—against the background of the immediate resistance of the biggest employers to any unions at all.

But it is nevertheless the big weakness of American trade unionism. The prime example is John L. Lewis' United Mine Workers, which operates on the basis of the check-off and total domination from the top.

Trade union managers now have political power that twenty years ago no one in this country could dream of. President Truman has asked the Democratic Congress to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and to establish a new labor law.

Precisely here at this peak of power the union managers must take a long look at the road by which they have come. Power held by law can be revoked by law.

FOURTY YEARS AGO. The opinion quotes at some length from the late Justice Louis D. Brandeis, who feared and abhorred the power of coercion in mass wealth and mass organization. Justice Frankfurter quotes him as summing up his views on unionism as follows:

"It is not true that the 'success of a labor union necessarily means a perfect monopoly.' The union, in order to attain and preserve for its members industrial liberty, must be strong and stable. It need not include every member of the trade. Indeed, it is desirable for both the employer and the union that it should not. Absolute power leads to excesses and to weakness; neither our character nor our intelligence can bear the burden of such power. The union attains success when it reaches the ideal condition, and the ideal condition for a union is to be

## Hazards



## Stewart Alsop

### Truman and Acheson

IN THE AMERICAN WASHINGTON  
New appointment as important as that of Secretary of State is the introduction of a new political era. The appointment of Acheson is a political statement. All sorts of subsidiary reactions are bound to take place. The most interesting and important is the reaction to the appointment of Dean Acheson as Secretary of State. The White House and the Congress.

Acheson is distinctly the personal choice of President Harry S. Truman. The Secretary of State, in part, of course, the appointment was the consequence of a process of elimination. The choice of Charles McNamara, Fred M. Vinson, or of Justice William O. Douglas would have disrupted the Supreme Court and W. Averell Harriman's Wall Street background was thought to be a political disadvantage. In fact, too, the objective conclusion was reached that Acheson, by experience and ability, was pre-eminently fitted for the post.

But an even more compelling reason, according to those who should know, was simply that the President likes Acheson very much personally. It is not necessary to say and is certain that he can work with Acheson successfully. This in itself suggests one change which is likely to take place in the State Department.

Truman and the State Dept. have been in the making of foreign policy with few exceptions confined to an almost automatic approval of what his Secretary of State was doing. In the past, the State Dept. has had no intention of being its own Secretary of State. But he does intend to be. The final authority should be definitely and clearly his. It is largely for this reason that he has appointed as Secretary a man with whom he was certain a successful working relationship could be established.

This does not mean, of course, that the basic direction of Acheson's policy will be altered. Aside from Truman's own personal approval of the appointment of Acheson, him the policy of firmness toward the Soviet Union, the most striking evidence of this policy is Truman's attitude toward Secretary of Defense.

Forrestal has been one of the chief targets of those who have been calling on the President to "stop the cold war" by turning over most of the work of the State Dept. to the State Dept. Reports have been made from these sources that Forrestal has been called on to resign. Marshall leaves. In fact, it can be said on unimpeachable authority that the President has decided that he is deeply grateful for the

## Stewart Alsop

### Truman and Acheson

service Forrestal has rendered, and that he will be prevailed upon to stay as long as he can be prevailed upon to do so.

Yet though the President is in no mood for appearing either the Soviet Union or the Western world, the President occasionally seems tempted to be flexible. He can move the needle of the dial by pulling a switch out of his hat. Acheson knows that he cannot, and the President is very certain to rely on Acheson's judgment in which he has great confidence.

Yet there is no assurance that the successful relationship which seems to be in prospect between the State Dept. and the White House will also exist between the State Dept. and the Congress. Two great areas of the country are in conflict. One is the North Atlantic, the other is the Western Hemisphere. The other is the relationship between the State Dept. and the Congress. The other is the relationship between the State Dept. and the Congress.

GOP SUPPORT NEEDED  
The Republican Party will require Republican support. Yet the party is not in a position to support the President's policy. The party is not in a position to support the President's policy.

Re-partisanship has also been weakened by the small-minded section of the Senate Democrats. The Senate Democrats are not in a position to support the President's policy. The Senate Democrats are not in a position to support the President's policy.

James Marlow  
That Budget!

FEEL sorry for the Washington newspaper editors, printers, and newspaper readers like yourself. This is the time when everyone is talking about the budget. The budget is the most important thing in the world. The budget is the most important thing in the world.

People's Platform  
Articles Appreciated

Quote, Unquote  
Gosh, the life newspaper folk lead. If we write something unimportant, we're criticized. If we write something important, we're criticized. If we write something important, we're criticized.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round  
French Mercier Train To Show Gratitude  
Labor Friend Gets Iked

Real Estate Lobby  
The real estate lobby will fire its first salvo of the new year on Wednesday when it plays host to some 200 Congressmen.

Taft Eyed Foreign Affairs  
Significantly, the Republican who protested loudest at the Democratic increase in majority on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was Senator Taft.

When he got the news that the Democrats had decided to absorb the vacancy by increasing their own majority eight to five, Taft stormed over to Democratic National Chairman Howard McGrath.

The boys don't like this," exploded the forthright Senator from Ohio.

The Senator from Rhode Island simply shrugged.