THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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DEATH STRUGGLE

JOHN L. LEWIS is trumpeting loudly about his success at persuading a handful of small, independent companies to sign his exorbitant new contract. He obviously hopes to use this achievement as a wedge to split the solid ranks of the large producers.

Mr. Lewis offers tempting bait. This is the peak coal consumption period of the year, and the mines can market every ton produced on a five-day week. As long as Mr. Lewis keeps the three-day week in effect, unit production costs go up and profits go down. And the companies know the extra labor costs involved in the new contract (a pay increase of 86 cents per day and an increase from 20 to 30 cents a ton royalty for the UMW's welfare fund) can be passed along to the consumers.

Why, you may ask, should they hesitate? The answer is that the industry well recognizes that submission to Mr. Lewis now brings one step nearer the day when the U. S. Government will either have to subsidize coal, or nationalize the industry.

The producers are caught in a vicious circle. The nation's mines can already produce more on a five-day week than the U. S. can consume, or rather will consume at present prices. The industry is suffering from competition from other fuels, and serious inroads have been made.

If producers could cut production costs and bring about greater mechanization, they could meet competition on more even terms. But the UMW keeps prices up by spreading what work there is available, and demanding ever higher wages and royalty payments.

The U. S. will always need a coal industry. What we are witnessing now is a death struggle between the producers, who want to keep the industry under private ownership and on a competitive footing with other fuels, and Mr. Lewis, who has already usurped some of the prerogatives of management and seemingly hopes to grab still others.

If Lewis wins this struggle and forces coal prices still higher, the rush to other fuels will be speeded up substantially. Sooner or later the U. S. Government will have to step in, and the burden now borne by coal consumers will be shifted to the backs of the whole tax-paying population.

That is why it is so desperately in the national interest that the arrogant Mr. Lewis and his blind followers lose this battle.

ROAD COMMISSION HARMONY

THE increasingly harmonious progress of the Municipal Roads Commission toward a more equitable division of State highway money between rural and urban areas should afford general satisfaction to the whole state.

When the Commission was established by the 1949 General Assembly, and its members subsequently appointed by a governor who had shown himself mainly concerned with rural development, there were grounds for being pessimistic over any chances for alleviating the plight of the municipalities.

Governor Scott has kept an open mind on the question, has expressed the view that a better formula can be worked out, and members of the Commission who come from municipalities have not tried to dominate the proceedings, and the rural members have shown themselves amenable to reason.

Last week this harmony reached a new high. Harry Caldwell, master of the State Grange, told the Commission that "Farmers of North Carolina are interested in all of the roads, and any street leading to a market is important to them."

The Grange, he said, "feels that when a street meets the definition of highway or road it should be added to the state highway system on the same basis as other roads and added to the system for maintenance and construction purposes."

Mr. Caldwell went on to say that the over-all financial plight of the cities should not be considered by the Commission in working out a solution. The decision should be based on the equities of the road question, he said.

In principle, he is right. The task of defining what is a state road has no relationship to the financial status of any governing body.

In practice, however, the financial distress of the State's municipalities is a very important part of the picture. That distress directly reflects the State and Federal Government monopolies over most sources of revenue. If cities could tap some of these sources, their problem of building and maintaining their streets would not be so acute.

It is because of this financial distress that the Commission's labors have such an urgency about them. And we do not see how the commission can fail to take note of it.

THE POT AND THE KETTLE

ALTHOUGH we are inclined to agree with Democratic National Chairman William M. Boyle Jr. that the American Medical Association's compulsory $25 annual assessment is a questionable way to finance its battle against Federal compulsory health insurance, he is hardly the man to cast the first stone.

Mr. Boyle makes a valid point: that the compulsory assessment, as contrasted to the voluntary plan in effect up to now, can be used as a punitive measure against any AMA member who does not agree with the organization's campaign. A member who refuses to pay the assessment can be dropped from the rolls at considerable damage to his professional reputation.

Believing, as we do, that a man's membership in a professional society should not force him to subvert his own conscience, we regret that the assessment was made compulsory. But Mr. Boyle has little right to object on those same grounds.

In the first place, the compulsory health insurance program he is urging is just as binding upon the American people as is the AMA's assessment upon its members.

In the second place, when Mr. Boyle attempted to whip party members in line to support the nomination of Leland Olds for reappointment to the Federal Power Commission, he employed the same weapon—rigid discipline—that the AMA is using.

We see little difference between the two, and we don't like either.

THAT THREE-DAY WEEK

THE *Dayton Daily News* has revived an old conversation piece, the one about leisure time. While viewing with alarm the inconveniences imposed upon the nation by John L. Lewis' proclamation that his miners are going to work but three days a week, *The News* has a kind word for Old Bushybrows.

Perhaps, they suggest, "the country may owe a debt of gratitude to John L. Lewis for his experimentation with the three-day week. It may turn out that he is giving the country a trial run of a system that may be standard in a few decades."

And so the question: what are we going to do with our enforced leisure?

For a civilization that must strain itself to fill two leisure days each week, four free days in every seven looms as a monumental problem, albeit a most pleasurable one to ponder.

What would you do if you had the next four days of the week to use as you see fit?

There are a few magazines you want to read thoroughly, perhaps a book. Or, if you're one of our increasing army of lady wage earners, you might want to catch up on some sewing. It might be pleasant, also, to drive down to see the folks.

Each of us can add his own long-put-off plans.

But you can't find enough magazines to keep you interested for four days. You could get awfully tired of sewing—even in two days. And pity the poor "folks" if you tried to spend all your leisure time with them!

The Dayton paper harks back to the days of Pericles and the glory that was Greece, back to the days when any Greek with a modicum of get-up-and-go had his stable of slaves, back to the days when leisure time became art-time and thinking-time and every family produced a sculptor or a philosopher.

Maybe that's the answer. Maybe within a few decades the world's most productive and energetic nation will become, in addition, the most thoughtful, the most artistic.

Or, perhaps, it will become a nation across whose highways endless lines of automobiles race, whose every house gives forth the often unhappy bellow of the wireless, whose every citizen has a poolroom parlor from crouching before a television set in a darkened room . . .

What would you do if you had four days off this week? and next week? and next week?

There will be some adjusting to do if the dream of the three-day week becomes a reality.

When we bear in mind how how easy and simple it is for government to make everybody happy, comfortable and prosperous by treasury handouts it is humiliating to remember what a dull people the Americans were not to find it out 144 years until 1933.—*Charleston (S. C.) News & Courier.*

It remained for Bill Paulson, writing in Labor Union, to say that bureaucrats who spend and spend and tax and tax remind him of the sheepman who decided to skin instead of shear.—*Joplin (Mo.) Globe.*

The silent movies doesn't mean that people didn't chatter in them.—*Elizabethtown (Ky.) News.*

Our advice to small cities is to acquire some land now, for parking purposes in 1975.—*Coffeeville (Miss.) Courier.*

A Penny For Your Thoughts, Ike

People's Platform

Magnolias Will Bloom Again

FLORENCE, S. C.

Editors, THE NEWS:

THE criticisms of James F. Byrnes by Senator Pepper of Florida have no place or approval with Jeffersonian Democrats of our Southern states. Such men as Pinckney, Tillman, Hampton, F. W. Dawson, Vance, Simmons and others I could mention were and are today the standard bearers of Jeffersonian Democracy and cannot and will not sit in the drivers seat with the so called Democratic Administration.

They have gained power through a concrete system of subsidies, national employment, foreign aid, FEPC and national housing sponsored by Truman, Barkley and Pepper. The so-called Democrats have failed to execute our national laws under the pretext that an emergency exists.

Senator Pepper speaks the language of President Truman and Vice-President Barkley. The seeds of Socialism and Communism are going to result if such a policy for political greed continues. My advice is to apply the emergency brakes and place our American capital and labor on a sound and sane business system, sponsored by a Jeffersonian Democracy, based upon justice to all and special privileges to none. Then the magnolia will bloom again and its fragrance will be restored and present Democratic Administration can inhale with delight the fragrance of a Jefferson Democracy.

—R. H. McCLANAGHAN.

Newspapers Praised

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

AT THE recent annual meeting of the Carolina Motor Club board of directors an important resolution was passed commending the press of the Carolinas for its constant promotion of traffic safety activities.

This resolution in a small manner helps to express our appreciation for the wonderful work being done by newspapers in the two states for the advancement of safety.

We feel that with the aid of crusading newspapers great progress in pedestrian protection activities, driver training programs, and school safety patrol work has been accomplished during the past year.

—COLEMAN W. ROBERTS,
President.

Landlord's Lament

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

THIS little poem expresses my views of the plight of the landlord:

The landlord struggles on his way
A burdened person, night and day.
Nobody knows or seem to care
The persecution he must bear.

He braves the battle day by day
For his old age to make a way.
And for his food a crust of bread,
The curse of poverty his dread.

Many times the laughing stock
Of people who incline to mock
His frugal ways and shabby clothes,
Stark mockery from all his foes.

But for all this he has a goal,
A lofty standard; ebless his soul,
While many loaf he struggles on,
And now for shame! He's pounced upon.

The Good Book says:—that to the ant
The sluggard he should go; not rant!
He should consider all his ways
And wise become, himself: It pays.

And now the landlord, bent and gray,
But has a place in which to stay.
Because he labored day and night,
And put up such a valiant fight.

The sluggard comes and he demands:
"Give us a living from your hands!
It matters not to us at all
How large your fortune or how small

"We care not what you did without
While we lived well and roamed about
Your method gained a home for you
But off of you, we'll have one, too."

The poor old landlord has no choice
For rent control lifts up its voice;
And to the penitentiary
He soon must go he well doth see.

Although a godly man he be
Prepared for age but now you see
He must divide it then and there
Although the set up is unfair

So that in shame he would not spend
In prison land a better end.
Now he's down but is not out
"Freedom!" still he tries to shout.

—IVA WILLIAMS.

Tenants Pay The Taxes

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

THE statement made by Mr. Paul Guthery at the recent rent control meeting that "real estate men are a minority group but who pay more in municipal taxes than others" is utterly ridiculous.

The science of economics teaches us that no matter how a corporation or an article is taxed, that tax is finally passed on to the consumer; and in this case the consumer is the tenant. In reality, the money paid by the tenant is then paid by the owner for taxes. If it were not for the tenants, those owners would not have property to pay taxes on except the dwellings in which they live.

Mr. Guthery also stated that real estate men and owners are saddled with 1939-1941 rental schedules. Does he forget the 15 per cent increase allowed a year ago and which almost all tenants agreed to pay?

I personally know of Negro sub-standard housing in this town that was ordered cleaned up and the cleaning consisted of installing water and some bathing facilities. Then the rents were jumped 100-125 per cent. If this is what a tenant may expect if controls go off, then I hope they never are released, as much as I hate any form of Government control of business.

If the real estate men and owners want to be fair with tenants, why not let the tenants know what per cent of increase they seek and if it is fair no doubt most tenants would agree to it.

—EDGAR R. B. PARKIN.

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.—Editors, The News.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Justice Dept. Should Check Pay Roll

WASHINGTON

NOW that the case of Congressman Parnell Thomas has been disposed of, the Justice Dept. might take a look at another Congressman, this one a Democrat. He is Victor Wickersham of Mangum, Okla., a likable gentleman, with considerable skill at manipulating the Congressional pay roll.

Congressman Wickersham states in his self-penned biography in the Congressional Record that he was "reared on cotton, wheat and dairy farm near Mangum, Okla., and on wheat and poultry farm near Greensburg, Kans." For a farm boy, the Congressman has come a long way. He now operates his own real estate business, not merely in Oklahoma, but right in the nation's capital, and has one real estate agent drawing money from the Congressional pay roll.

It is important to remember that Congressional pay rolls are not paid for by a member of Congress. They are paid by the taxpayers, and allowed to each member of Congress in order to help him run his office and perform services for the people of his district. Thus, when money voted for this purpose is diverted to run a real estate firm, it actually robs the people who send a Congressman to Washington.

Two Interesting Names

THE Congressman from Oklahoma has two interesting names on his pay roll:

1. James W. Taylor—who does not work in the Congressman's office at all, but is a salesman for the Herd Equipment Co. of Oklahoma City. He draws a $7,720 salary a year from the Congressman, and $4,000 for selling machinery, plus another $17.50 from the taxpayers each month in the form of an Army pension.

2. Lloyd Matthews—who hasn't been around the Congressman's office since last Summer, but has been employed in the Congressman's real estate firm at a salary of $2,295—from the taxpayers.

Unique fact is that Wickersham's office, when queried, didn't even recognize Taylor's name. The secretary in charge, Aubrey Witt, scratched his head, finally recalled that the Congressman knew a Jim Taylor in Hobart, Okla. Yet Taylor is highest on the office pay roster, presumably should be in Washington working hard for the folks back home.

Witt remembered Matthews without any trouble, but reported he was working in the Congressman's real estate office. He hadn't been around the Congressional office for months. Witt said.

This column then put through a call to Mr. Taylor in Hobart, Okla. Here is the transcript of the conversation:

Question: You used to be in the sheriff's office, didn't you, Mr. Taylor?

Taylor: That's right.

Q.: Whom do you work for now?

A.: The Herd Equipment Co.

Q.: Do you also work for Congressman Wickersham?

A.: Yes.

Q.: What do you do for the Congressman?

A.: Oh, I work as a clerk.

Q.: What kind of clerical work do you do?

A.: Oh, I answer letters for him.

Q.: Does the Congressman get many letters these days?

A.: No, not many.

Q.: You mean to say you get $7,700 a year just to answer a few letters?

A.: You ought to talk to the Congressman about that.

Q.: Well, do you work full time for Mr. Wickersham?

A.: Yes.

Q.: I thought you said you worked for the Herd Equipment Co.

A.: Well, I'm on contract with them. I work on contract.

Q.: Do you kick back any part of your salary to Congressman Wickersham?

A.: No, sir.

Q.: Then how do you explain getting $7,700 a year just for answering a few letters?

A.: Well, I better call you back. I'll call you tomorrow. Mr. Taylor did not call back.

Real Estate Employee

THIS column also put through a call to the other secretary, Lloyd Matthews. Here is the transcript of the conversation:

Question: Do you work for Congressman Wickersham? Matthews: Yes.

Q.: In his Congressional office?

A.: No, I work for his real estate company.

Q.: If you don't work in his Congressional office, how do you account for the fact that you are on his Congressional pay roll?

A.: (Pause) How do you know I'm on his Congressional pay roll?

Q.: There's no mistake about that. I saw it.

A.: Well, when I say I don't work in his Congressional office, that doesn't preclude the possibility that I work for him on the outside.

Q.: I am aware that you work for the Congressman in his real estate office. That's the point. Why should the taxpayers pay you for that?

A.: I mean secretarial work.

Q.: Do you do secretarial work on the outside for the Congressman?

A.: You will have to talk to Mr. Wickersham about that.

Father Runs Elevator

CONGRESSMAN WICKERSHAM, despite this diversion of Congressional salaries, is too thrifty to support his 72-year-old father, Frank Wickersham, but got him a job instead running an elevator for the construction workers in the Capitol building. Previously, the elder Mr. Wickersham had been on the Government pay roll for seven years as a watchman at the Library of Congress.

Joseph & Stewart Alsop

New Atom Policy

WASHINGTON

BEHIND the bland, business-as-usual facade of the Truman Administration, some relatively serious soul-searching is going on about American atomic policy. To be specific, a number of the leading men of the general advisory committee of the Atomic Energy Commission have earnestly urged the desirability of a new look at the whole problem of international control.

The warnings of these scientists have in turn led to a re-examination of the problem by the highest government policy - makers. The chances are, as usual, that nothing will be done in the end. Yet the mere fact that this debate has been going on behind the closed doors of the Administration, is a sombre commentary on the almost idiotic complacency which has, thus far, been the official public response to the explosion of the Soviet atomic bomb.

The general advisory committee, which started the whole business, is not a body to be disregarded. It includes such men as Conant, Oppenheimer, Dubridge, Fermi, Buckley and Rabi. It reports direct to the President, rather than to the Atomic Energy Commission. And since the announcement of last September, it has shown no complacency whatever.

STRATEGIC VALUE

These scientific leaders would almost certainly be less disturbed if any serious effort were on foot to organize the defenses of the Western World. For reasons which must be examined later, the experts are now sharply writing down the strategic value of atomic weapons, when employed against a nation that is adequately defended. The trouble is that the defenses of the Western World, and particularly Western Europe, are anything but adequate.

While this condition persists—and nothing solid is being done to change it—an atomic stockpile in Soviet hands retains the dreadful potentialities of the world's nightmare at the time of Hiroshima. Furthermore, as has been disclosed already in this space, the Soviets are thought to have the capability of accumulating an atomic stockpile at a comparatively early date. The official best guess is that the Kremlin will possess more than 50 atomic bombs by September, 1952.

Such is the background of the pressure for a "new look" at the question of international control of atomic energy. What is being urged is essentially simple.

This country would try to negotiate a new agreement with the Soviet Union. Under this agreement, atomic weapons would be outlawed.

Atomic energy would be demilitarized. Existing atomic stockpiles (principally our own thus far) would be somehow sterilized. Modified provisions for international inspection would be adopted, which would insure prompt discovery of any breach of the agreement, if backed up by an efficient intelligence service. Finally—and this is understood to be the heart of the plan—a measure of disarmament would also be agreed upon, sufficient to guarantee Western Europe against any sudden aggression.

The whole project would sound like the most wishful dream, if it were not for its context. In the first place, there are reasons to believe that the Soviet Union may be receptive to an overture along the lines very crudely sketched above. Signs have already been given, in the usual indirect manner. All that is being discussed at present, is whether this country should try to find out whether these signs mean anything.

In the second place, no one thinks there is more than an even chance, at best, that the Soviets seriously desire even a modified agreement for international control of atomic energy. Those who urge the desirability of a "new look" at this time simply argue that it is our duty to find out what can be done.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST IT

It is idiotic to under-rate the arguments against the kind of radical new departure that is now under discussion. Two-party talks between this country and Russia have long been an objective of Kremlin policy, and their avoidance has long been one of our objectives. Yet two party talks would now be embarked upon. Equally, we are already strongly committed to the stringent provisions of the Baruch plan for atomic energy control. We have also committed our friends in the United Nations, who would certainly be upset by any change in our stand.

Above all, the kind of Soviet-American agreement that is envisioned would contain great elements of risk, no matter how carefully drawn. It would particularly promote the complacency which is already most malignant proportions in this country.

Yet in the bleak situation in which we find ourselves, the new look at atomic energy control still seems to be the best way out. If the new look fails, we shall at least know where we are. And we can then take a new look at the disarmament program which has been so oddly launched, as a unilateral policy, by the Truman Administration.

Robert C. Ruark

Corner On The Market

SAN FRANCISCO

I HAVE been studying modern music lately—modern music being approximately one-half "Mule Train" and the other half bop — and I may have found an antidote for the whole business.

I am just about caught up on this bebop kick. Paul Weston, a rare band leader who plays soft and pretty, was telling me the other day that bop has become so esoteric that when a player gets up now to take a solo break, all he has to do is stand there for most of his 32 bars and the applause is just as heavy as if he were playing.

This is known as performing to a "cool" audience a cool audience being one which is so hep that it does not need to hear the music at all, but can imagine what the music would sound like if it were actually being blown out of a horn or thumped out of a drum. It is somewhat like paying a singer not to sing or a football player not to run, and may have some advantages, at that. I mean that is the proper place for bop, anyhow — in the heads of its fanciers and not in the public eardrum.

My man Jordan comes from a musical family and hence has some respect for sharps and flats. His chief sound is the beat and he is so old-fashioned he even sings in tune. This is a modern miracle in jazz singing, since most of the ones I hear lately wander around the melody like a drunk in the subway.

Ordinarily I do not make a habit of going about discovering people, since this sometimes earns you a rap on the snout or additional financial obligations, but I break the rule in favor of Connie Jordan. If this young gent isn't the hottest thing in the vocal business before he's much older I will take up bop myself and try to make it popular with people who speak English.

Jordan has just corked the market on all the rhythm in the world.

On top of that he looks nice. There is a touch of the Ghost boy about him, and a clean good humor. This is a refreshing change from the nasty-looking men with the berets and the little goatees who holler "OOOO" and "EEEE" and "Hey Heu" and slanted at the marijuana, or happy-stick, set.

Jordan is a young colored gentleman, originally of Los Angeles, whose name is Connie Jordan.

Mr. Jordan is a reformed drummer, and he sings in a little joint called the "Say When." The "Say When" finds itself stacked to the eaves each evening when Mr. Jordan begins to roll, and remains stacked until Mr. Jordan goes away.

This is because Mr. Jordan has a voice that combines something of the old fashioned Georgia camp meeting with a sly sophistication and even a wistful tenderness — hey, Ruark, lay them adjectives down, boy — which makes him about the best parlay in entertainment I have clocked since Crosby had hair.

When Connie is singing hot he opens up his mouth like a sinner come to repent, and he whacks his hands between phrasings, and when he rocks on his heels and whacks his hands and opens up his mouth you can see the whole jampacked crowd whack hands and rock on heels and follow him with silent, open mouths.

NO FAKE HERE

Connie can stroke a ballad as soft and sexy as Sinatra in his better days and he doesn't have to face a falsetto. He can turn loose on a ditty with as much or as little notes as the ditty needs and knock the crowd dead without one reaction — namely, that a pleasant-looking youngster named Jordan has just corked the market on all the rhythm in the world.

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