

# THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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## SAFETY VS. SPEED

ALTHOUGH fatal accidents involving public transportation vehicles—buses, trains, and airplanes—generally get bigger headlines because of their more sensational nature, public transportation is considerably more safer than the private automobile.

A recent Associated Press chart of the latest figures on deaths per 100,000 passengers is shown:

Automobile—11  
Scheduled Air Transport—1.5  
Buses—0.15

Anyone who does very much driving on the public highways will understand why automobiles are taking a far greater toll per 100,000,000 passenger miles than any of the public transportation vehicles. There

are many reasons, but the main one is that public transportation companies make a fetish of safety while automobile drivers all too frequently consider speed of paramount importance.

Each holiday season, for instance, brings its huge toll of deaths and injuries from motor vehicle accidents. It has gotten to the point where the science that can be predicted in advance for each holiday on the basis of the preceding year's figures.

There will always be an uncomfortable number of automobile accidents caused by unskilled drivers and human errors of judgment. But that number could be materially reduced if each driver would remember that the most important thing is to arrive at his destination, not how fast he can get there.

## A PRUDENT COURSE

SEVERAL instances in which American ships were fired on in Chinese waters have given State Department officials an opportunity to sound off on the traditional "freedom of the seas" theme and to charge that Secretary Acheson and President Truman are letting American prestige in the Far East deteriorate.

Recently the State Department got tough with U. S. shippers and warned them to keep their vessels out of Shanghai. This warning was seized upon by some critics as further evidence of a lack of courage and determination. Actually, it was a sensible thing to do.

"Freedom of the seas" is a fine-sounding theory. In this case, it does not recognize the "blockade" of Chinese waters that our ships have the right to roam at will in the area—it does not follow that we should send gunboats along with them to protect them. In the first place, that would amount to our using armed force to open up a sea lane for the Chinese Communists. The American people would hardly condone such a move. In the second place, it would mean a further enfeeblement of the Nationalist regime with which we still maintain relations and which has many staunch supporters in this country.

## WELL-DESERVED HONOR

NEWSPAPER editors of the nation showed good judgment when they nominated Federal Judge Harold Medina as the No. 1 U. S. citizen of 1949.

Not in a long time, and perhaps never before in our history, has a single jurist performed so superbly under such trying circumstances.

The quiet, patient, scholarly Medina was on his feet long before the point at issue: whether the Communist Party leaders did in fact conspire to teach and advocate the overthrow of the U. S. Government by force and violence, as set forth in the Smith Act of 1940.

It was faced with a battery of the slickest and most unscrupulous lawyers in the United States, who used every device known to man to provoke him into committing some error which might get the case sent back for re-trial.

We do not know yet whether they were successful, for the Supreme Court has not yet ruled on the correctness of the trial procedure. But there is every indication that Judge Medina outmaneuvered the lawyers and saw each maneuver in a clear light.

## OUR GREATEST ENEMIES

ALMOST half of the 1,444,337 persons who died last year were victims of heart disease and cancer. Although this figure indicates the lowest death rate in the nation's history, there are among those who died many who could have been saved if research into heart disorders were more intensive. If cancer did not still retain much of the dark legend of disgrace which has for so long surrounded it.

It is true, of course, that such spectacular diseases as poliomyelitis and diphtheria are posing a flashing epidemic of such an imminent danger that attention from the even more dangerous diseases.

Consider the 1949 figures: 970,942 persons died from cancer and other malignant tumors; 471,469 persons died from heart disease; pneumonia and influenza took 344,839; 43,833 persons died from tuberculosis. Polio victims killed 1,895.

It is not hard to see, of course, that there should be any abatement of the fight against infantile paralysis; we mean only to point out that more effort should be exerted against the most powerful of our enemies.

In light of 1949's fatality figures, those enemies appear to be heart disease and cancer.

## EARNED PENSIONS—NOT DOLES

AN AMERICAN born in 1890 had a life expectancy of only 40 years. In 1900 the figure had risen to only 48, but one born today can expect to live almost 67 years—women, even longer—and medical progress suggests that the average life expectancy soon will exceed the Biblical three score and ten.

The result even today is that there are some 11 million Americans, or 13 per cent of our voting population, over 65. Thirty-four per cent are over 60, and we include those over 40 in Commissioner of Labor Statistics Edwin Clague's deplorable classification of "near-old," the oldesters and the near-olderers already constitute half of the nation's entire voting population.

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## Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

TO MAKE it tougher for Senators to conceal kickbacks, the House has introduced a bill which would published the names and salaries of everyone on Senators pay roll.

This information had always been available to the public until the Republicans took charge of Congress in 1946. Then GOP leaders were accused of suppressing information about Senators' pay roll. This was about the same time that the House investigated the "Merry-Go-Round" for accepting kickbacks from his employees.

Loeffler admitted to this columnist he had acted upon the orders of a mysterious person whom he refused to identify. Later, when this column exposed what Loeffler was up to, the House Republican Party introduced a bill to force Loeffler to publish the names and salaries of all Senate employees.

Now, conscientious Les Jeffries has countermanded Loeffler's order and directed that all names and salaries must be published.

**Atomic Secrets**

THE security-conscious Atomic Energy Commission is quailing by working with one of the most difficult secret problems in the world—how to keep the names of those who actually pass out, for all the world to read, our most jealously guarded atomic secrets.

Two recent examples of irresponsible talking on the part of "senior officials" have brought the whole problem to the front. Sen. Edwin Johnson, Dem. Colo., a member of the Congressional Atomic Energy Committee, blurted out details on the order of our present A-bomb and the news that we are working on some 100 times more powerful. He added that our scientists hope to devise means of prematurely exploding bombs headed out to sea.

Secondly, Richard M. Bissell, consumer deputy director of information at the Pentagon, recently revealed that the U. S. stockpiles of atom bombs are located in caves in the Southwest.

## Senate Pay Rolls Public Once Again

The latter was a secret, known to this columnist and others, but never revealed until Mitchell burst into print. Much as we desire the advertisement of the Senate pay secrets, the experts have reluctantly conceded that nothing can be done to button the lips of high officials.

The basis for this disclosure is the case of Senator Johnson, in twofold: 1. legal action against a high-ranking Senator on the Congressional Atomic Committee might result in every Senate retaliation in the form of reduced pay and blocking of confirmations and time-consuming investigations. 2. Johnson's case was a warning, in effect, tell the world that Johnson's story was true.

The ABC fully realizes that failure to take action, such as now reported to be building 1,000 submarines—most of them the latest Nautilus design—would be a case of staying under the water for several days without coming to breathe. This is the type which began to wreck American shipping again during the last few months of World War II.

The ABC's present problem is to outguess the Russians, since a sub's characteristics must be known before a sub killer can be designed to combat it. However, the present details of our most secret program. Caught in this unhappy predicament, the ABC has decided to keep its fingers crossed and hoping.

**Russian Submarines**

IT HASN'T been in the headlines of the unification row, but the Navy has been quietly speeding up preparations for submarine warfare.

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Joseph & Stewart Alsop

## The Deification of Stalin

WASHINGTON

CHRISTMAS reporting in American newspapers is getting to be sadly stereotyped. Shopping crowds, a hot cracker, midnight masses and department store sales—these are the routine drabs and drabs that our editors warm up when Christmas comes each year. But surely it is a story of some significance that while the Western world was marking this great anniversary of the Christian faith, a good part of the rest of mankind was busy celebrating a newer epiphany and a more recent good deed.

In the last week, the ceremonies in Moscow on the occasion of Stalin's birthday have of course been reported in the press, but no one has been right and stated the central fact about these extraordinary ceremonies—that the Russian dictator is now being openly treated as a deity.

The official newspaper, "Pravda," announced the theme with its simple headline—Inspirer of Creation, Gladness of Life. In one variation on this theme, Stalin was described as having sought to super-human heights, from which he can survey all humanity and all that is happening in the world. He was stated to be the "beloved leader of progressive humanity, defender of peace, legendary warrior," the "conqueror of ignorance and illiteracy," the "Mayday" of science, culture and art.

IN OTHER words, Stalin is now officially given three of the four usual attributes of godhead—omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. No one has as yet impudently claimed the fourth attribute, immortality, for the Soviet dictator. Instead, he has simply been hailed as the reincarnation of divine prophets, Marx and Lenin. And this of course is the chief and most important thing that has been promulgated, from the dawn of history, by cult worshipping living gods.

The transformation of world Communism into the state religion of the Soviet Union has often been remarked upon before this. What is being done now is to carry this process into a new phase, that can only be understood in the terms of the ancient Egyptians, who called Pharaoh "the good god"; the Persians, whose

## Meet Don The Beachcomber, Babbitt Wearing A Sarong

By ROBERT C. RUARK  
HONOLULU

MY OLD FRIEND Don Beachcomber, a wiry Louisiana native who followed the adventures of Beaumont-Gant before he changed his name to the unimpressive-sounding initials of a business man, is now a pillar of Hawaii's crisp upper-middle class—a Babbitt of the Southern Sea.

This is apt to be amusing to the people who know Don, because Don is a fellow who built a successful career out of being a tropical tramp of the more picturesque persuasion, Beachcomber is the word for who ran about six bucks worth of rum, a bamboo chair and a couple of coconuts into a million-dollar restaurant business before the yen to return to the tropics hit him.

Beachcomber also was possibly one of the more vivid warriors in the late unpleasantness in Europe. He was a lieutenant-colonel on his talent for scouting. He was put in charge of rigging rescue ramps for aviators in the Mediterranean area, and when Don went aboard a ship or over a plane on a scouting expedition, nothing unopposed by armed guard was as a rule.

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After the war, Beachcomber returned to Hawaii, where he had interests in Los Angeles and Chicago. He had a good deal of money and he kept trying for the Pacific. He finally sold out and packed up for another try at the local papers. Don the Beachcomber, as he is known, had a good deal of money and he kept trying for the Pacific. He finally sold out and packed up for another try at the local papers. Don the Beachcomber, as he is known, had a good deal of money and he kept trying for the Pacific.

## Most School Children Need Help In Finding Right Job

By HENRY C. MACFADYEN  
ALBEMARLE

THE MAGIC word in school circles these days is guidance. Everybody talks about it, everybody believes in it, but not many actually do much about it.

The theory behind guidance is that the school will find out as early as possible what abilities, interests and aptitudes each child has. As soon as these have been discovered, the child will be directed to a course of study which will prepare him to do the job he is fitted to do.

It appears to most people because it seems sensible. For the most part the school has sprayed each child with a cloud of information and hoped that some of it would be what he needed. And of course it is not true that the system wastes a good deal of education, but it does not do that particular kind.

## READ AND REMEMBER

By W. L. GORDON

One leading lung specialist claims that talking is one of the most beautiful pastimes. He affirms that many men suffer from weakness or deterioration of the lungs, and that talking strengthens these delicate organs.

The oldest fruit known to man is the olive. It has been cultivated from the earliest times, chiefly for the sake of the oil which is obtained from its fruit.

The only four Presidents of the United States who were bearded were George Washington, John Adams, Andrew Jackson and Benjamin Harrison.