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# Buck-Passing Congress Still Living in Never-Never Land

By MARQUIS CHILDS

CONTINUING WASHINGTON session has led to the decision to impose the wage and price freeze now. Everyone concerned with the decision means taking a big chance. For the truth is that every carry out and police wage and price stabilization is woefully inadequate to start with. It has been made at putting together a start large enough to do the rudimentary...



## The News' Platform For 1950-60

1. Organization of an Urban Redevelopment Commission.
2. A \$10,000,000 school building program for Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.
3. A scientific county-wide revaluation of property.
4. Maximum feasible consolidation of the City and County Governments as recommended by Institute of Government studies conducted in 1950 census.
5. An adequate public housing program based on facts gathered in 1950 census.
6. Formation of a civic promotion group similar to Winston-Salem's Committee of One Hundred.
7. A new city auditorium.
8. Full-time bus parking for unobstructing traffic congestion.
9. Improved air transportation facilities.
10. Positive action to clear Charlotte's creeks of contamination and pollution.

## PROGRESS REPORT

PUBLICATION today of THE NEWS' big Business Review & Progress Edition affords an excellent opportunity to take inventory on this decade's platform for the 1950-60 decade, first offered on this page in January of last year.

At the top of this column is the Platform, just as it appeared a year ago. At that time, it seemed a mere pipe dream. Actually, it underestimated Charlotte's willingness and ability to forge ahead. A brief resume shows that a great deal of the ten-year program has already been accomplished in one year.

1. An Urban Redevelopment Commission has been established, headed by Willis H. Henderson, and a start has been made in planning future projects. The City Council asked for, and got, a reservation of \$747,810 in Federal urban redevelopment funds. At the moment, the local commission is marking time, pending passage by the N. C. General Assembly of an enabling act which will permit N. C. cities to undertake redevelopment projects. Prospects for passage are good since the act is jointly sponsored by the N. C. League of Municipalities and the N. C. Association of Real Estate Boards.

2. Last year Mecklenburg County voters approved a bond issue of \$5,325,000 for schools, with the City getting \$3,550,000 and the County \$1,775,000, the division made on the basis of school population in the two systems. In addition, the City's \$866,000 share of State school building funds has been made available. Sites are being purchased, and construction work is moving along rapidly. Higher construction costs and scarcity of materials are taking their toll, but much has already been accomplished toward meeting the \$10,000,000 school building program goal. One thing is already clear: the goal will have to be revised upward before the decade is over.

3. City and County officials reached an agreement early last Spring on a scientific property revaluation for the whole County. The contract was awarded to the Cole-Layer-Trimbler firm, and the big project is well under way. It is due to be completed during the 1951 fiscal year, and the new tax valuations are scheduled to go into effect in January of 1952.

4. Tax News is unable to report much progress on consolidation of City and County governmental services. But as the State Government completed its study, and made full reports to the two governing bodies. Nothing more was done until, two weeks ago, the Mecklenburg legislative delegation, on its own initiative, asked the Institute officials to come to Charlotte and convene in Raleigh to discuss consolidation. This week County Chairman Sid McAden and Mayor Victor Shaw extended an invitation to local civic groups to study consolidation.

5. There are no plans at present for additional public housing units in Charlotte, and it is unlikely that any more public housing will be built during the emergency unless Charlotte is selected as a critical defense housing area. If and when urban redevelopment becomes a reality, more low income housing may be necessary for displaced slum dwellers. The full report on the 1950 census will give City and County officials a better picture of the housing needs of low income groups.

6. The recommendation that Charlotte

form a civic promotion group similar to Winston-Salem's Committee of One Hundred, is creating a ripple of interest. We still think it's a good idea, and we confess that it was born in the past when Charlotte had a wealth of leaders and a dearth of leadership. A different brand of leadership has been displayed in the past calendar year, and we shall not be surprised to see a ripple of interest. We still think it's a good idea, and we confess that it was born in the past when Charlotte had a wealth of leaders and a dearth of leadership.

7. A \$3,000,000 bond issue for a municipal auditorium and coliseum was approved by the voters last Fall, and a site on Independence Boulevard has been purchased. Construction cannot be started until Federal building restrictions are lifted.

8. Progress has been made on many fronts in the continuing effort to unblock congestion. Traffic Engineer Herman Hoese has proceeded rapidly with his program of modernizing traffic control systems. He has had street intersections. The voters approved bonds up to \$1,500,000 for the city's share in eliminating railroad bottlenecks. A full report on a comprehensive plan for eliminating rail traffic bottlenecks was submitted during the year by Engineer Frank Miller of Greensboro, and a tentative agreement with the Southern Railway was worked out by City Manager Henry Yancey whereby the railroad will share in the cost of the various projects. Detailed plans for the bridge project—the Stonehill St. underpass—are due this month. Stonehill will be widened from Independence to Graham Sts., opening up a badly-needed new traffic artery.

9. Material progress has been made toward improving the City's air transportation facilities. Runways at the Municipal Airport have recently been resurfaced, at a cost of \$154,000, shared jointly by the City and the Federal Government. A site for a new administration building has been selected, and the first phase of the work—grading the land and building additional taxi strips—will be started soon. The whole project will cost some \$800,000, to be borne in equal parts by the City Government and the CAB.

10. Positive action to clear Charlotte's creeks of pollution has been taken. Following a report by a Chicago engineer, a new ordinance was worked out banning the dumping of industrial wastes and providing for the reception of those wastes in the City's sewage system. Plans are now being drawn for necessary changes at the disposal plant, the costs for which will be borne by industry, the schedule of fees being based on the volume and strength of each firm's industrial waste.

11. There is a striking record of progress in one twelve-month period. It has resulted from dramatic public and private leadership, and from a growing understanding among Charlotteans that there is a big city and that it must do things in a big way. The national emergency will get first priority in the foreseeable future but Charlotte, now awake to some of its needs and some of its opportunities, will be ready to meet them just as soon as the barriers are lifted.

We do not anticipate any considerable opposition from citizen-voters. Most of them are in favor of anything that will cut out duplication and waste in government. The only opposition we have noted in the past has come from people in government who don't want their little empires disturbed.

Hence, we would suggest to Mr. McAden and Mr. Shaw that the next step is to appoint members of their respective boards to study the various consolidation reports. If there is merit in consolidation—and we believe there is—the people rightfully will elect leadership, not inertia, from their legislative bodies.

## OPPORTUNITY FOR TAXPAYERS

The invitation to civic clubs and other groups to study consolidation of City and County government services... Americans are the people who elect a politician President, and then complain like all get out because he continues to be one.—Memphis Commercial-Appal.

## Wage Raises Likely Under Special Problem Clauses

By JAMES MARLOW

YOU WONDERING whether there's a loophole for you in the wage freeze? Well, there will be one if the Wage Stabilization Board (WSB) is allowed to use the "special problem" clauses. These clauses are designed to handle cases where workers are engaged in essential services or where their work is of such a nature that a wage increase is necessary for the health of the community.

Under the law, when the Government makes price controls on an industry, it had to control wages in that industry at the same time. The Government decided suddenly it had to put price controls on practically everything. This led to the wage freeze everywhere.

What about negotiations going on between employers and employees? Since the negotiations started before the freeze, should WSB permit them to continue? What about workers who are engaged in essential services? Should they be allowed to raise their wages?

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It remains a fact that the weaknesses pointed out in the Chinese document are the same ones which our own intelligence reports have shown. So the Chinese assessment, humiliating as it may be, is fairly accurate.

## Mirror Of The Press

'Oh Wad Some Power'

(Christian Science Monitor) All the world over—for where won't you find a Burns?—the muse of Robert Burns has been moving his feet for some time. The poet's birth falls on Jan. 25, and wherever his countrymen may be it is celebrated with songs and speeches or whatever that is appropriate to the expatriate numbers and feelings.

As the Burns anniversary rolled round this year the Western nations, and particularly the English-speaking people to whom his poetry is a common heritage, found themselves dangerously divided over critical world views, yet felt that more understanding of one another's points of view would bridge the gap. Many of them must have felt the Burns reminder specially apt at the moment.

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## Still January

(The New York Times) If you get out on the road and head south from New York, at this time of the year, and you can change scenes readily enough. In one day you can be in South Carolina. In three you can be in Florida. In four you can be down where the waters of the Gulf just off the shore. But you can't get away from the fact that you're still in the same old world.

## Orgy Or Obsèques?

(The Asheville Citizen) Paul Leonard of Stateville is handling North Carolina newspapers to remind them that the "Economic Bloc in Raleigh" is in the hands of the "corrupt and unscrupulous" and the accomplishment of "corrupt newspapers and organized groups who dedicated themselves to stop the public-spending orgy."

## Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON UNITED STATES forces have captured a Chinese combat bulletin giving their secret estimate of American fighting strength in the Burma and China fronts. The estimate ever made about the white man in Asia. A translation, as called back to Washington, follows.

## Reeds Rate U.S. Troops Low In Bravery

CHINESE document are the same ones which our own intelligence reports have shown. So the Chinese assessment, humiliating as it may be, is fairly accurate.

## Studying Our Mistakes

HOWEVER, one healthy development is that Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson's investigating subcommittee and members of the joint chief of staff have been studying the mistakes of the Korean war. And they can be summed up in two words: "We never seem to learn from the mistakes of the past war." The Army command conveniently forgets them.

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