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A START TOWARD REDEVELOPMENT

WHEN the City Council approved the Redevelopment Commission's resolution for a preliminary study of four blighted areas in Charlotte yesterday, it marked the first step in what may well be the most important and most productive civic enterprise in the City's history.

The Commission has moved along at a fast pace since its members took office several weeks ago. Under the aggressive leadership of Chairman Paul Younts, it has compiled the basic supporting documents for the initial study, retained legal counsel, and interviewed several firms with outstanding records in city planning and redevelopment. After the turn of the year, it will be in a position to employ a professional director, set up a small staff, and proceed to examine more minutely the four areas it has selected for study.

Although final completion of the first redevelopment projects is many months, and perhaps years, away, it is already possible to glimpse a stirring vision of the dramatic enterprise.

The four areas selected for study are suffering from blight. Property values have depreciated. Housing is substandard. People are packed into congested dwellings in such a way as to create a continuing health and fire hazard for the community. The areas pose a heavy drain on all public services, yet because property values are low they contribute little to the public treasury.

Two of the areas are on the fringe of the business district. They are small and compact, and they are adjacent to good rail and street transportation facilities. Hence, the Commission foresees the prospect of clearing away the substandard structures in those areas, restoring the land, and reselling it to private developers for industry and warehousing.

A place must be provided for the people now living in those congested areas. Thus the Commission looked further out, found two sites that are admirably equipped with the basic requirements for residential use.

American cities have spent a great deal of time and money in city planning in recent years. But at best, city planning can do no more than shape the development of a city in the future. Not until the Congress set up the framework of the redevelopment program in 1949 was there an instrument to cut away blights that developed in the past.

Contrary to the opinion expressed by one member of the Council, redevelopment is not a "Federal hand-out program". It is a local program, administered by local officials, using local funds to a large extent, and designed to correct local problems. The Federal Government is a partner in the enterprise only to the extent that it will help pay any deficiency, if there be any, between the original purchase of an area and its resale after redevelopment. It is not only conceivable but entirely probable that wise management by the Redevelopment Commission will avoid any deficiency in the transaction.

A GREAT JOB, WELL DONE

WE HAVE often criticized the Pentagon for bungling, delay, senseless classification of information which is available in libraries and newsstands, and general interference with news dissemination.

Today we would like to hand a large orchid to the military for a big job handled with dispatch. As soon as the Communist list of U. S. prisoners reportedly held in North Korea reached American hands the vast communications and personnel facilities of the defense establishment went into high gear. Servicemen and women worked far into the night checking the list, digging out the names of next of kin, and speeding to them the wonderful Christmas news that their husband, father or brother was listed, while cautioning the home folks that the list was unverified, and may not be accurate.

The press associations and editors have already named their choices for the biggest news stories of the year. Well, they were a little hasty, for these names, so rapidly reported throughout the country by the Pentagon, the radio and newspapers, constitute one of the greatest stories of the year. We rejoice with the families who receive the hopeful news, and we sorrow with those whose hopes will be dimmed by the silence regarding their loved ones.

A LESSON FOR ALL OF US

SHE was sitting in the next booth, but her voice carried over the low hubbub:

"I'm downright ashamed of myself today. For the past two weeks I've been complaining and bellyaching about a lot of things . . . about being low on money and not having time to buy the few presents I can afford . . . about not getting my Christmas cards addressed . . . about the rent and food bill and coal bill.

"And then, when they released that prisoner list, I felt like kicking myself. Here I've been complaining, when I'm really lucky. My husband is here instead of in Korea. We've got a nice home and a car and we manage to pay our bills even if we don't have much money left over. But just think about those wives and mothers and sweethearts who have been waiting all these months for some word of our missing soldiers. Think what they've been going through.

"I'm not going to do any more complaining for a long time."

She didn't know it, but she was writing an editorial—this editorial—and the moral is there for all of us.

THE SERVICE DISMISSAL

THE dismissal of John Stewart Service from the State Department has been hailed by some as vindication of McCarthyism and proof of softness toward Communism in government.

The fact is that the dismissal of Mr. Service stems from a more drastic standard of judgment declared by the President, and that the diplomat has not been proven guilty of any crime.

Formerly the standard of judgment for dismissal on loyalty charges was the finding of "reasonable grounds" for disloyalty. Under the President's order of last July, a person may be discharged if there is "reasonable doubt" of his loyalty. The reversal in the Service case thus resulted from this change of emphasis. No new evidence has accumulated against the man, and the review board made it clear that it had no evidence that Mr. Service has or ever has had Communist affiliations.

We have long held in this country that a man is innocent until proven guilty. Certainly we want this principle upheld, for once it is established that a man is guilty of a charge until he proves himself innocent, we will be far along the road toward a police-state. Because of the danger of the times, because we cannot always be sure of the loyalty of all men, because of the overriding need for formulation and execution, without sabotage, of a strong foreign policy—for these reasons the Government has temporarily amended the principle that a man is innocent until proven guilty.

Certainly the case for such amendment at this time, in the interests of this nation, is strong. One of the most heartening aspects of this development is the fact that the Government itself has been most reluctant to assume this dangerous power, despite the clamor of those persons who demand that forceful action be taken against those who disagree with them, and at the same time paradoxically decry the increasing encroachment of government.

The removal from public office of men whose loyalty is not assured is not the long-term answer. Loyalty is too vast a thing to be accomplished by decree or legislation. We can best preserve the rights of the individual by not condemning any person removed from high office until or unless his guilt is proven.

Doubtless some innocent Americans will be deprived of office during this emergency. We will be able to return to the right and just policy toward them more readily if we withhold unwarranted condemnation of them.

From The Asheville Citizen

WIND ON THE MOUNTAINS

NOVEMBER, too, is the time of the Wind King. On whistling wings which trail their icy feathers in the face of the passerby he skids and zooms and careens through mountain pass, whirling on a toe and dashing back again at the dead-end of mountain cove.

The mountain wind is a wanderer. Hours ago he has churned icy waves along the shore of Michigan. Or perhaps he has dipped a foot in the Gulf. Up and over the mountain barrier he comes. Clouds scoot from his path or give him right-of-way. The tall trees bend in the forest, and where people huddle over a pot-bellied stove in a mountain cabin the wind drops a whistling calling card down a creaking stack.

You know the mountain wind by his presents. He is an accredited representative of Winter. He may be the herald of snow or rain. He is a qualified musician, making gusty "anthems roll" around gabled roof or playing a symphony of shrieks on a lonely mountain meadow.

But the mountain wind is not always a cruel taskmaster. Often he is kind. Scudding high, he unveils new scenes of mountain majesty as he brushes aside clouds and mist from a hidden peak. When he commands the upper air the vista is wide and clear. On a dark day he alone is capable of boring into the cloud mass to let a beam of sunlight spot a majestic scene of mountain forest or icy crag. If the gale "makes the sea look old," the mountain wind rubs the stain and tarnish from great layers of time-encrusted earth, now lifted up to the sky in youth and purity.

The mountain wind, brutal and benign by starts, is with us in the season of change, busily stripping the last leaf from the last tree, tapping the window pane like an unbidden guest, puffing and blowing his way on a billion errands. The mountains know no older inhabitant.

Government Blighted By Mediocrity

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON

HOW much President Truman can retrieve of the reputation of his administration by naming a commission of inquiry to look into the current crop of scandals it is too early to say. Once again it is an instance of too late if not also too little.

There is much more involved, of course, than merely political strategy. To one just returned from Europe and the Middle East, where the preoccupation of American officials is almost exclusively with the issue of survival itself, the angry clamor over who got what has almost a frivolous sound.

DEEP RESENTMENT

But that is only a surface impression, since one quickly realizes that the current of resentment flows deeply and that its source is not so much the immediate headline provocation as what may be back of the irritant of tax fixing and mean corruption. Back of it, one surmises, is the blight of mediocrity that is like a gray miasmal mist befogging much that happens here. People feel that the times call for dedicated men, men devoted to the public service, and instead they see all too often cheap opportunists, climbers, hangers-on ruled by petty personal desires and ambitions.

How to separate public service from private ambition is something that we Americans have never faced up to beyond the rudimentary step of installing at the national level at least a Civil Service system. This may well be the root of the matter today, since it is the careless intermingling of private ambition with public service that has caused much of the trouble. And it is also one of the reasons for the fantastically high cost of government at every level — county, city, state and Federal.

In his interrogation by the King subcommittee Attorney - General Howard McGrath did not come off too badly if one leaves out of consideration the fact that he defended the kind of mediocrity so beautifully epitomized by T. Lamar Caudle. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of McGrath is instructive. He has spent virtually his entire career in public office at modest salaries, yet he is said to be a man of substantial means.

This can have come about only through precisely that careless intermingling of public office and private gain, which in the long run costs the taxpayer so much even though in the short run it may benefit certain special interests.

AMERICANS TOO TOLERANT

The American tolerance for private exploitation of public trust is in itself pretty shocking. One of the most conspicuous examples is Frank (I am the law) Hague of Jersey City. Hague's wealth has been obvious despite the fact that he has been constantly on a public payroll at a salary of $8,000. Recently in a lawsuit Hague admitted to a net worth of $2,000,000.

The taxpayers of New Jersey either directly or indirectly supplied that neat little kitty.

In the course of a recent crosscountry tour this reporter talked with one of the abler state governors. One of his friends supplied the information that each of the governor's two campaigns for a two-year term of office had cost $500,000, most of it provided by liquor dealers and road contractors who would get it back in contracts they would obtain from the state.

This country cannot much longer afford that kind of toll. Added to the already-heavy burden of legitimate government, it is intolerable. A wave of indignation, such as that stirred by the revelation of scandals in the Federal Government, will not cure it.

Something deeper — a change in the attitude of the citizen toward public service — is essential. So long as public office is regarded tolerantly as a kind of hunting license so long will we pay the cost of private enrichment, indulging ourselves now and then in the luxury of righteous indignation. "Turn the rascals out" is an ancient political slogan. But that is of little avail if the process means merely exchanging one set for another set.

'I'm An Old Arab Tentmaker. Slip This On For Size'

Churchill Swings To Bevan View

By STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON

FOR AMERICANS, what has happened since Winston S. Churchill again became Prime Minister of Great Britain is truly a portent. For on the face of it, Churchill seems to have adopted as good many of the views of the most dangerous political antagonist — Aneurin Bevan, leader of the Left-wing, anti-American Socialist minority.

On a whole series of issues, the Churchill Government has come out flat-footed against the American position. The Schuman Plan for pooling European iron and steel, and the European army scheme, are now, since they were adopted whole-heartedly by General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, the twin pillars of American policy in Europe.

Churchill himself first proposed the European army idea, and he has often spoken out for European economic and political unity. Yet among the first acts of the Churchill Government was to make it perfectly clear that Great Britain will take no active part in either scheme.

OTHER ISSUES

This is by no means all. Since he became Prime Minister, Churchill has pointed in apparent alarm to the "great, and ever growing" American air bases on British soil. The continued existence of these bases, as Churchill well knows, is at the very heart of the whole American strategic concept. In the few weeks since Churchill took power, moreover, the British government has clashed frontally with the United States on many lesser issues.

Foreign Minister Anthony Eden for example, has supported White Russia for the United Nations Security Council, against Greece, the American candidate. The British have flatly refused to adopt the American small arms standard for the N. A. T. O. countries, and have refused equally flatly to accept an American as N. A. T. O. naval commander in the Atlantic. And so on.

But by far the most important issue concerns the level of armaments. Early this year, Aneurin Bevan resigned from the Labor Government, charging, among other things, that the planned level of British rearmament was dictated by American strategy, and would wreck the British economy. A few days ago, Winston Churchill rose in the House of Commons to announce that the British rearmament effort was to be drastically reduced. In the course of the debate which followed he remarked, "I am giving Mr. Bevan an honorable mention in dispatches for having . . . happened to be right."

Churchill, unlike Harry S. Truman or Clement Attlee, is accustomed to dealing with generals, even such great generals as Dwight D. Eisenhower, without any sense of awe or submissiveness whatever. Churchill is undoubtedly aware, moreover, that the Bevanite attack on the whole Anglo-American strategy to dominate his government had had a damaging effect in the elections, and he is anxious to disprove this charge.

Churchill is also not unnaturally eager to improve his bargaining strength before the crucial Washington visit. A few not-too-gentle reminders, like his remarks about the Canadian bomber bases, might serve to remind Washington that the Anglo-American alliance is a two-way street.

Yet the essential, basic reason for what has happened is the desperate economic situation of the country over whose affairs Churchill has now again assumed direction. The hard, bleak facts of this situation have forced Churchill to move a little way down the Bevanite road. A nation faced with bankruptcy cannot afford to indulge in risky experiments like the Schuman Plan or the European army. The clear threat of economic ruin would force any government to reduce its rearmament effort below the level of security.

In the long run, there is only one other direction in which Britain can move. This is toward a recasting of the whole basis of the Anglo-American alliance.

Collected By Bill Sharpe

TURPENTINE DRIPPINGS

Turning Louis Over

(Chapel Hill Weekly)

Joe Jones turned me over one day this week. Not physically but in a sort of figurative way. As I left the office for home I asked him to read my copy for the preceding paragraph before it went to the linotype. A few minutes later he telephoned me and asked. "Didn't you mean 'supine' instead of 'prone'?" He was referring to my statement that I had attended football games while prone upon a couch. He said prone meant lying on your stomach and supine meant lying on your back. Joe assumed, correctly, that I would not be lying on my stomach while listening to a radio report of a game. If I had ever known the difference between prone and supine, which I don't believe I ever had, I had forgotten it. "Change it to supine," I said, "and thank you for catching the error." And so it is supine in the paper. The OED defines prone as "situated or lying face downwards, or on the belly," and supine as "lying on one's back, with the face or front upward."

The Gimme Problem

(Scotland Neck Commonwealth)

There should be an end to this method of handling the needs of organizations dedicated to doing good. Organized groups which seek funds should be required to submit their budgets to a local Community Chest, or some similar organization. Except for the American Red Cross, which operates under laws laid down by Congress and which does not join in with other campaigns, this probably could be arranged.

Certainly citizens who contribute their funds should have the opportunity through their selected representatives to pass on the worthwhileness of the groups to which they are asked to subscribe.

Idle Threat

(Billy Arthur, News & Views)

Out at the base we were threatened by a fellow saying he wasn't going to buy another nickel's worth in Jacksonville until we rectified the parking difficulties.

Frankly, I know of only one or two items hereabouts that sell for a nickel.

The Lost Fifth

(Mack McKay, Salisbury Post)

Then I got to talking with a tall, slender Spencer feller, and he told me about the time a soldier boy got too high and got locked up in the Spencer jail.

"Early the next morning some of his pals got to thinking about him having a headache in the hoosegow, so they walked over to the back of the jail, and three of them made a human pyramid or something, standing on each others' shoulders, and the top man handed the prisoner a pack of cigarets through the barred window," said our Spencer friend.

"As an afterthought he handed a fifth of liquor, almost full, through the window and told the prisoner to take a little snort to sober up on . . . The soldier carried the fifth to his jail bunk, laid down and nursed the fifth in his arms like a baby, and all the boys outside could hear was 'Gug! gug! gug!' as their liquor trickled down their pal's goozle.

"Hey! Bring that fifth back hyar," said the top man outside the window. "We just aimed to give you a snort!"

"Huh!," said the man inside on the jail bunk. "Hic! If you want this fifth, come in and get it!"

One Billion Dollars

(Pinehurst Outlook)

Sen. John C. Stennis, Mississippi Democrat, is wondering if his Congressional colleagues who are "dishing it out" know how much $1 billion is. He put it this way the other day:

If a man with $1 billion had opened a grocery store at the time of the birth of Christ, and if he had lost $1,000 every day from that day until this, he would need 788 years more before the entire sum of $1 billion could be expended.

That, Stennis points out, is only $1 billion, whereas our Federal Government spending is approaching $100 billion a year.

How To Test Your Back

(Buck Bryant, Monroe Journal)

My father always said that if he could get a look in a mule's mouth, and then lift his tail, he would know enough about him to leave him alone or buy or trade for him. Of course, the idea about the mouth was his age, and, if the tail was stiff and hard to lift, the mule had a good back.

The Great Discovery

(The Robesonian)

A Senate committee has called attention to something that has been right under the noses of Congress all the time. It has been pointed out that colonels and other high-ranking officers are acting as messenger boys, carrying around brief cases for generals and admirals. This sort of thing could be observed by almost any shoe shine boy in the Washington business district.

The Proper Place

(Frances Frazier, Waynesville Mountaineer)

Heard in passing: "The prettiest place for snow is on a Christmas card."

The Forgotten Coin

(News & Views)

We were asking Red Canaday down at the bank about the supply of pennies, and were advised that they were very, very short. So are dimes.

How about nickels, we asked.

"Got plenty of them," we replied. "Nobody uses nickels. Everything that went up in price went up a dime."

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Woman Attorney Blocks Tax-Fixing Plan

WASHINGTON

NO story of how to use influence and escape paying taxes would be complete without telling about the honest public officials who stuck out their necks to block the corruption deals.

One of the best illustrations not only of an honest public official but of how every conceivable wire was pulled to save two tax crooks is that of Jacob Friedus and Sam Aaron, second-hand machinery dealers in New York.

Though the $5,000 commission to Lamar Caudle for the purchase of an airplane made headlines, what the public doesn't know about is how one woman, Mrs. Florence Shientag, assistant U. S. Attorney in New York, almost single-handed blocked the wire-pullers. In the end, she won out, tried the case herself and sent the two tax defrauders to jail.

The story begins back in 1945 when Mrs. Shientag was prosecuting an alcohol tax fraud in Brooklyn and ran across the trail of Larry Knohl, the gentleman who later paid Caudle the $5,000 airplane commission. At that time, Knohl didn't have much more than the shirt on his back, plus a criminal record dating back to 1939.

War Profits Concealed

IT was not until about four years later that Mrs. Shientag ran across Larry Knohl's trail again, this time as a tax fixer for two men, Friedus and Aaron, who had concealed $300,000 worth of income in their second-hand machinery business. Immediately she smelled trouble.

Friedus and his father-in-law, Aaron, had three secret bank accounts; and during the war years when other men of Friedus' age were fighting for their country, they had piled up a fortune selling machinery on the black market. In all, they owed Uncle Sam $219,000 in taxes for 1943-44, the two peak war years.

The two gentlemen, who didn't think they owed their country either military service or tax money, had prospered so exceedingly that they bought the Starrett-Lehigh Building, organized the Starrett Television Co., and after hiring a Kansas City friend of Democratic Chairman Bill Boyle's, they were on the verge of putting across a $700,000 deal with the RFC.

Since they had reached all the way from New York to Kansas City to influence the RFC, they obviously knew how to pull wires. So they proceeded to pull wires to keep themselves out of jail.

First they used Larry Knohl, the fixer. Then Larry Knohl looked around for a way to influence Lamar Caudle, the man in charge of prosecuting tax-fraud cases in the Justice Department. Caudle was from North Carolina, a graduate of Wake Forest College. So Knohl approached John Caffey, also a graduate of Wake Forest, N. C. Though Caffey was originally from South Carolina, he was practicing law at Greensboro, N. C., and a friend of Caudle's.

Two Native Carolinians

CAFFEY was asked by Knohl how much he wanted to handle the Friedus-Aaron tax cases, and he replied that he wanted a retainer of $2,500.

The fixers from New York almost fell out of their chairs. Caffey seemed so naive that they weren't sure they had the man they wanted. However, they explained that this was a big case and they were prepared to pay more money—up to $25,000.

So John Caffey, of North and South Carolina, friend of Lamar Caudle, from North Carolina, went to work on the tax-fraud case involving two black-market machinery operators a long way from the Carolinas. And you will still find Knohl and Caffey sharing joint offices at 1520 L Street, Washington, right across from the Hotel Statler.

During the period that intervened, Caudle, the not too bright country boy from North Carolina, rode the private airplanes with city slickers, pulled checks with his Carolina friend John Caffey, got paid the $5,000 commission for an airplane that Knohl did not really want, while wires were being pulled in New York to block the prosecution of Friedus and Aaron.

Knohl did everything he could to pull wires and ingratiate himself with those on high in the Democratic Party. He even bought ten tables at the big Democratic dinner in New York in 1949—cost, $10,000. And he was careful to buy them through Lamar Caudle, who labored under the impression that all this attention was because people just naturally liked him.

Wrong Lady Judge

THIS was where Mrs. Shientag got her back up. The harder the wires were pulled to take the case out of her hands, the more insistent she became that the case go to trial. In this she got support from U. S. Attorney Tom Murphy, now Judge Murphy. Finally she had her way.

The trial opened Oct. 9, 1950, lasted six weeks before U. S. Judge Sam Kauffman, and ended with four- and two-year jail sentences for the tax chiselers. Mrs. Shientag tried the case all by herself. Six high-powered attorneys represented the defendants.

Irony was that although Mrs. Shientag has deserved a U. S. judgeship for her long record in the U. S. Attorney's office, Miss Frieda Hennock, of the FCC, was appointed instead—only to be blocked by the Senate. It will be interesting to see whether the White House now belatedly recognizes Mrs. Shientag's great job of overcoming the wire-pullers in Washington.