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THOMAS L. ROBINSON.....Publisher
J. E. DOWD.....General Manager
B. S. GRIFFITH.....Executive Editor
C. A. McKNIGHT.....Editor

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URBAN REDEVELOPMENT—ALIVE AND KICKING

FROM time to time, there have been references in local newspapers to the probability that urban redevelopment in Charlotte may be heading into a blind alley, i. e., that because many of Charlotte's substandard houses have been brought up to standard by equipping them with lights, baths, screens, there are no longer any blighted areas to be redeveloped.

That impression was spread initially by some casual remarks made at a meeting of the Urban Redevelopment Committee some weeks ago when one particular section of the state enabling act was under discussion. The question arising at that meeting has not yet been settled, because the issue has not been brought before the courts.

The question stems from a subsection of the act defining a "blighted area". It reads as follows:

"Blighted area"—shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements (or which is predominantly residential in character), and which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density of population and overcrowding unsanitary or unsafe conditions, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs the sound growth of the community, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency and crime, and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morale or welfare;

Provided, no individual tract, building or improvement shall be considered a part of any blighted area nor subject to the power of eminent domain herein granted unless it is of the character herein described and substantially contributes to the conditions rendering such area blighted."

Two things are involved here:

1. The slum shack, which falls completely within the definition, except for the fact that it qualifies as "standard" under Charlotte's local standard housing ordinance. In the opinion of the Urban Redevelopment Commission members, the vast majority of the renovated slum houses still qualify under the "blighted area" definition, and they anticipate no difficulty in buying them, other than a routine court test.

2. The proviso. It was obviously the intent of the General Assembly to limit the use of eminent domain in buying a modern building that happens to be inside a blighted area. Faced with that proviso, the Commission has two alternatives: (A) it can work out a development plan that will include the structure in question, or (B) it can seek, in co-operation with the N. C. Real Estate Board and the League of Municipalities, the original sponsors of the enabling act, to present an amendment to the proviso at the 1953 General Assembly.

The Urban Redevelopment law is new. There are many sections that may pose problems. It is rare that any major new piece of legislation stands through the years without amendment.

But to infer, because there are problems ahead, that urban redevelopment will be completely stymied, is to underestimate the capacity of earnest men to compromise differences, and to treat too lightly the urgent need for clearing out these blighted urban areas.

A 20TH CENTURY POTEMKIN

GRIGORY Aleksandrovich Potemkin loved his sovereign, Catherine II. She responded to his attention and his fidelity, and placed him high in Russia's governing circles.

One day Catherine visited South Russia, to see what Potemkin was doing there. Loyal Potemkinites danced and clapped before her. She thought the people loved Potemkin. She didn't know that Potemkin had kept the dissidents out of her sight and hustled his supporters from one "spontaneous demonstration" for the sovereign to another.

We are reminded of the Potemkin story by a news item out of Chicago which said that the Taft forces, not content with snatching whole delegations, selecting the keynoter and temporary chairman, and packing key convention committees, had another little stunt all lined up. Since they control ticket distribution, they have arranged to hand out all extra gallery seats to Taft rooters. They also plan to marshal other non-delegate Taft supporters in a big anteroom off the convention hall. These will be turned loose in "spontaneous demonstrations" on the floor at a propitious moment.

Catherine II, after witnessing what she thought was a demonstration of popularity, made Potemkin commander-in-chief of the Ukraine. We trust the parallel ends there. Surely the 20th Century Republican Party will not be so naive as was this 18th century Russian sovereign.

BOATING IS FUN—AND DANGEROUS, TOO

BECAUSE they involve only one, two or three persons, fatal accidents involving small boats don't rate the scare headlines that herald an air liner crash, a polio epidemic, or the sinking of a big excursion craft. Even so, small boats are dangerous, especially in the hot Summer months. Just how dangerous is revealed in a current study by one of the big life insurance companies.

About 1,200 persons a year drown as a result of accidents involving small boats. In 1949, motorboats, rowboats, canoes and the like accounted for four out of every five drownings from water transportation mishaps.

The months from June through August take the biggest toll. The 15-to-24-year age group contributes one-quarter of the total mortality. Motor-driven craft, mostly outboard motor types, cause three-fifths of the drownings.

In some 60 per cent of the drownings, the person was fishing. Cruising or rowing about for pleasure took an additional one-fifth of the lives. Sudden storms, high winds and dangerous water conditions were held responsible for many of the drownings. Other causes: overcrowding, speeding, riding waves, sharp turning, changing places in midstream.

The small boat is a vehicle for pleasure. It can also become a grim death-dealer when operated carelessly by an inexperienced person. As the hot days of the Summer roll by, it would be well for pleasure-seekers to remember that fact.

From The Christian Science Monitor

MACHINATION AND MORALITY

IN THIS DAY and age the political "steam roller" carries with it more dangers than may meet the eye. The Texas Republican convention and now the selection by that party's Arrangements Committee of admittedly pro-Taft men to fill the crucial and traditionally impartial posts of keynote speaker and temporary chairman for its national convention have evoked a storm of warnings from commentators and newspaper editorial pages.

They warn that such action could split the Republican Party, smother for years hopes of a two-party system in the South, repel the independent voter, and thus could lose the November election for the GOP—perhaps exile it to the wilderness for another long term of years.

Such a prospect, it must be granted, may not be wholly unpleasing to some partisan Democrats. But any such rejoicing would be narrow and shortsighted. For aside from hints that Democratic stalwarts themselves may not be above a little steam rollering of anyone outside "regular" circles who shows too much strength, there are deeper perils in such methods from which no party can claim immunity.

Like corruption in office, like opposition by "smear" instead of by reason, the steam roller tactic is a form of political immorality. And political immorality strikes at the very root of the party system and of government itself.

It is not necessary to claim that General Eisenhower is the "people's choice" to denounce what happened in Texas and appears planned for Chicago. We do not yet know, nor does anyone, as between Mr. Taft and "the Man from Abilene", which the most voters want. But what is being done seems designed as an attempt to see that the people's will, however it may at that point have been expressed, shall not enter decisively into the selection of a nominee other than the one desired by the men who control the convention machinery.

Extraconstitutional and even extralegal as the American nomination process may be, such contriving is an affront to the very spirit of democracy and a travesty on the meaning of representative government. It is an invasion of the right of the individual to an effective franchise.

At this moment, when public morality, having declined to a depth below that reached in many years, is being met with a new and heartening upsurge of ethical resolve, for a great political party to indulge in cynical machinations bearing on the highest office in the land could be calamitous indeed.

"A fanatic," says Winston Churchill, "is one who can't change his mind and won't change the subject." We thought that was a politician.—*Rock Hill Herald.*

How city-sophisticated are you? Can you cross a one-way street without looking both ways?—*Amarillo (Tex.) Globe-Times.*

Nothing makes a politician doubt the fundamental common sense of the American people like seeing evidence that the American people doubt his fundamental common sense.—*Kingsport (Tenn.) Times.*

The way some folks answer the telephone often reminds us of the way a bull dog greets strangers.—*Lamar (Mo.) Democrat.*

In Russia the people are all excited over germ warfare. Here we just hold elections.—*Fort Myers (Fla.) News-Press.*

'Shall I Hang It About Here, Sir?'

Reds Bitter 'Hate America' Campaign Worries Kennan

By JOSEPH & STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON

ACCORDING to highly credible sources, George F. Kennan is at least seriously disturbed, if not downright alarmed, as a result of his re-exposure to the peculiar atmosphere of Moscow.

For several reasons, this first reaction of our new Ambassador to the Soviet Union is immeasurably more significant than the first, or indeed the last impression of any ordinary diplomat. Kennan, after all, is a partner in the remarkable team of America experts on Russia—the other member is Charles E. Bohlen—whose opinions have gone so far to shape the policies of the Western world.

In his celebrated "Mr. X" article in "Foreign Affairs," Kennan himself provided the public rationale of America's post-war dealings with Russia. Knowing more than almost any other diplomats about their subject, Kennan's and Bohlen's judgments have carried the greatest weight in London and Paris as well as Washington. On many occasions they have proven the acuteness of their perceptions. For instance, they both warned, forcefully but fruitlessly, that the Chinese would intervene in Korea if General MacArthur sent his armies to the Yalu.

Then too, this first reaction of Kennan's is important because of a peculiar phenomenon that is familiar to all diplomats, and, indeed, to all newspapermen who travel much abroad.

EXPERTS SURPRISED

You can visit a foreign country You can know all its leading men and be closely acquainted with its history. When absent, you can follow its trends and tendencies through labyrinths of documents. But when you return to this country, you rarely fail to be taken by surprise by some unexpected change of focus, emphasis or atmosphere.

In judging a foreign country, there are no complete substitutes for breathing its air, smelling its smells and hearing its sounds — for the rude personal contact with the foreign reality. George Kennan, who was last assigned to the Moscow embassy in a subordinate post in the war years, has now undergone that renewed contact with the real thing. The result has been a change of emphasis.

The change of emphasis hardly amounts to more, according to report, than an increase of worry, of concern, and indeed of uncertainty about what the next Soviet move may be. Yet this change in Kennan is as meaningful, in its way, as a sudden change in racing odds by the most expert bookmaker in the business.

Since he expressed them frankly and publicly, the views held by Kennan when he left for Moscow are easy to summarize. While no dreamer of empty dreams about grandiose deals with the Politburo, Kennan then was sanguine about the possibility of negotiating specific Soviet-American differences.

GEORGE F. KENNAN

While perfectly clear, too, that the Soviets would never cease their customary sapping, mining and infiltrating, Kennan was also very confident that the Kremlin wished to avoid any risk of general war.

CALCULATED RISK

Here one must note an absolutely vital fact. Kennan's belief, that the Kremlin has been taught a lesson by Korea, and will hereafter avoid moves involving risk of general war, has been the central assumption of American world policy for a great many months. It heads the planning papers. It has determined the tempo of the defense effort. It is America's great calculated risk. Thus Kennan's doubts go to the very heart and source of our world-action.

The particular phenomenon that has most disturbed Kennan is understood to be the Soviet campaign of "Hate-America" propaganda, which apparently has to be seen at first hand to be believed. Only a few weeks ago all the propaganda stops were pulled out, so that the intensity of venom against American people and the American (instead of the conventional "imperialist Wall-Streeters") have suddenly become the main propaganda targets. And these streams of venom are now, for the first time, being beamed squarely at the Russian people.

Harriman, Happy In New Role, Takes His Politics Seriously

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON

VOTELESS Washington has just held a Presidential popularity contest and like other such contests around the country, its significance is being interpreted in various ways. One thing is certain. For the first time in which his name was ever on a ballot in any election, candidate W. Averell Harriman won by a four to one margin over Sen. Estes Kefauver of Tennessee.

Starting out to tour a dozen states, Harriman has a convenient springboard for a delegate drive that he and his backers are taking with increasing seriousness. A defeat would have been a handicap almost impossible to overcome.

Senator Kefauver's managers are saying that the victory shows merely that the Truman Administration is strong enough in Washington—if nowhere else—to turn out the vote for a handpicked candidate. Under the Hatch Act government workers may not participate in politics. But their wives can and they are given much of the credit for rolling up the Harriman majority.

Reporters here have found it difficult to take Harriman's candidacy seriously. He has seemed an admirable citizen, willing to take on tough assignments at home and abroad, when he might have been enjoying his great wealth or have been engaged in making more money. His earnest dedication to public service has made him seem at times humorless and somewhat solemn.

As for his taking to the stump in search of political office, up until a few weeks ago that had not occurred to anyone. Not even, it would seem, to Harriman himself. Today he is not only taking his candidacy with the utmost seriousness but he seems to be enjoying the business of politics as much as he has ever enjoyed anything in his life.

There is one important aspect of Harriman's campaign that may be related to his victory in the District of Columbia. He is the most uncompromising of all the candidates for the Democratic Presidential nomination. He is uncompromising on civil rights, advocating a compulsory fair employment law to enforce equality of opportunity. Some observers attribute his victory in Washington to this since the Negro vote was an important element in the Harriman total.

Harriman believes passionately that the only way a Democrat can win is by taking an uncompromising stand on all the major issues. The Democratic candidate must lead a crusade. He cannot balance on the one hand and on the other hand and expect to win.

On civil rights, for example, it is not just the Negro vote at stake in such key states as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Illinois. Other minorities, too, must be persuaded to get out and vote. Their indifference can mean defeat in a close election.

A Different Snake

High Grade And The Diamond Back

By WILLIAM BELL

IN THE ARIZONA HILLS

TO me snakes of all descriptions are enemies of man, to be avoided at all times although there are species, such as the bullsnake, that seem to be like humans. Many people consider them as pets. Ranchers I have known like to have them around because they catch rats and keep other snakes away from the premises. But, to me they are snakes just the same and I give them a wide berth.

But, there's one kind of snake that is most dangerous, the diamondback rattler, who seems to me more of a gentleman than all other species. This snake is deadly when he bites a person or animal and the venom injected through his fangs gets into the bloodstream. Many prospectors and others in the Southwest have lost their lives from the bite of a diamondback. Others have suffered severely before the poison ran its course. It is this species of reptile that I fear most of all and always give a wide berth if I am not armed and when armed, I have always killed every rattler that I could. Yes, except one.

It is a large diamondback, with several buttons and many rattles, whose rattle has the weirdest, loudest sound I ever heard. I have seen this snake many times and heard him sound off, then followed him for many yards until he would completely disappear into the rocks.

At first I followed him with my six shooter in hand trying to get a bead on him so that I could exterminate him on the spot. But, it always seemed that I just could not get the right bead and now I know if I should get the proper bead on him, I would be unable to pull the trigger. Because, this snake, while he rattles and looks most vicious, never coils or offers to strike. He always makes distance between himself and me.

This Rattler Is Friendly

As afraid as I am of snakes, I have come to believe this rattler is my friend. And indeed he is a friend, because he has elected himself to guard some of the highest grade gold, silver and lead ore I have ever seen in Arizona.

Several years ago, I made a trip to this location and saw and heard a rattler. I tried to shoot him with a Colts Woodsman I carried at that time, but he evaded me in the rocks. I had previously discovered this vein of ore and samples I had taken out assayed very high in the three aforementioned precious metals. I was determined to go back and get out a quantity of this ore. But, one thing after another came up and it was several years before I was able to get back there When I did get back I had some difficulty in locating the claim. And it was this, or another, rattler that guided me to the spot. I again tried to get a shot at him, but he got away from me. I noticed that he did not coil or attempt to strike, but rattled and traveled on.

After getting out a bag of this valuable ore, I started to make my way down the mountain and to my car more than a mile away. As I left the spot, I heard his rattle back in the rocks but did not see him.

A few days later, after selling this ore, I went back for some more and sure enough, near the same spot, Mr. Rattler started playing his tune. I never touched my six shooter and decided to watch him closely to see what he would do. As I crept up on him slowly, he managed to keep at a certain distance from me and kept going in the same direction as before and finally disappeared completely in the rocks. As I came back out with a sackful of ore, I heard him again. It seemed he was bidding me goodbye.

He Seems Pleased

Every time I go after this high-grade, and it is as often as my 62 years will permit, I see and hear him and he follows the same trail into the rocks. I have observed him closely and instead of appearing vicious as he seemed the first time, and as all other rattlers I have known seemed, he actually appears to be pleased and glad to see me. The sound of his rattles no longer sends chills up and down my spine as on the first occasion, and I am no longer afraid of this particular snake.

On account of the severe heat during June, July and August, I have abandoned this project, and will leave Mr. Rattlesnake there to guard the diggings until next September when I shall go again and again and again. And I hope to see my friend there and hear the only kind of tune that a rattlesnake can play. If he is not there, I shall miss him, and if another is there to take his place, I'm sure I will be able to distinguish the difference. If I knew what sort of food rattlers like best, except human, I would procure a large quantity of this food and take it to him, because I want him to remain happy as he now appears to be. Should misfortune befall me and I should tumble into the canyon below, or die of thirst or hunger, I feel pretty sure that my Mr. Rattlesnake would guard my carcass until the buzzards came for their feast.

People's Platform

All The Way With Ike?

HILDEBRAN

Editors, THE NEWS:

AS A REGULAR reader of The Charlotte News I would like to ask you a question which I think is fair and straight forward.

Question: If Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower becomes the Republican nominee for President of the United States at the Chicago Convention, will your paper continue to support him through the campaign and election in November?

HARVEY M. YODER

(Note: It is highly likely, but we can't state the problem, much less solve it, until the various factors are known. Editors, The News.)

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Truman Wants Mac And Ike To Tangle

WASHINGTON

THE Republicans may be split wide open over whom they want nominated, but there is not the slightest doubt as to who is President Truman's GOP candidate—Sen. Robert Alphonso Taft.

Word to this effect had been passed out among close Presidential advisers even before the recent Defense Department tip-off that General MacArthur did not have to retire from active service to be keynote speaker at the GOP convention.

When you know the background of what went on inside the Army before this decision was announced, there is no question but that it was an adroit move to play the two top military men of the nation off against each other—to the advantage of Taft.

Secretary of the Army Pace actually had ordered the Judge Advocate General to make a legal study of MacArthur's military status; and the latter came up with a clear-cut ruling that MacArthur, whether a five-star general or not, was in violation of Army Order 600-10 which bans not only political activity, but specifically bars "activities at political conventions."

Loss Of $19,600

THE JAG also ruled that MacArthur was violating the Hatch Act; also dug up an interesting rider tucked into the appropriations bill by Congressman James E. Van Zandt of Pennsylvania, which explains why MacArthur is sticking to active duty. Under the rider, MacArthur cannot retire and continue to draw his $19,000-a-year pay.

So, naturally, he wants to remain on active duty.

At present, MacArthur is assigned to unspecified active duty at Governors Island, New York, though he never goes there and continues his headquarters at the Waldorf Tower. It would be simple, of course, for MacArthur to request retirement, thereby permitting him to make all the speeches he wants. But in this case he would lose his $19,600, plus a government aide, stenographer, and chauffeur.

Thus the President had the man who has severely criticized him in a tight spot. All Truman had to do was sign an order, and MacArthur would either have had to give up his $19,600 yearly or else quit making speeches.

These facts were put in a letter to the President some time ago by Army Secretary Pace, who privately has been itching to crack down on the man irreverently known around the Pentagon as "Dugout Doug." Furthermore, friends of Eisenhower are vastly more numerous in the Pentagon than friends of MacArthur. They were anxious to see him put in his place.

But the President chose just the opposite course. He completely reversed the Judge Advocate's findings, let MacArthur remain on active duty at the age of 72, and let him keep his $19,600 even though like had given up his.

Reasons: 1, Mr. T. hasn't been too happy about the cracks Ike has hurled in his direction after all the bouquets Truman had previously tossed at him; 2, a resounding keynote speech by MacArthur slanted against Ike will not hurt too many feelings around the White House; 3, if Taft is the nominee, it's believed Gov. Adlai Stevenson—Truman's pet candidate—can be persuaded to run (Stevenson doesn't want to run against his old friend Eisenhower); 4, Mr. T. thinks Taft would be easier to beat.

Kefauver On Ike

UNLIKE President Truman, Estes Kefauver has expressed the private opinion that Eisenhower, rather than Taft, would be the easiest man to beat and the Democrats to beat. Here are his reasons why:

1. If Ike were the nominee, foreign policy would not be an issue. Eisenhower and the Democrats think almost exactly alike.

2. With the campaign centered on domestic issues, Kefauver would be at an advantage, has 20 years of experience coping with the complicated questions of labor legislation, farm ceilings, social security. And while he, Kefauver, cleaned up Democratic corruption, the Republicans tolerated influence-peddling Guy Gabrielson as their national chairman, plus the highly publicized activities of McCarthy, Bridges, and Brewster.

Eisenhower, on the other hand, has had no experience in the domestic field, would have to rely on advisers already at swords' points in trying to tell him what to say and do.

3. With Ike as candidate, the campaign would be more honorable and gentlemanly. Taft's supporters already have condoned the worst type of McCarthyism, resorting to such innuendos against Ike as anti-Semitism, sex, and poor health—innuendos which Sen. James Duff of Pennsylvania denounced as "the dirtiest tactics I have ever seen in any American political campaign."

Finally Kefauver figures that, with Eisenhower as their candidate, the Republicans would get too overconfident, make the same mistake they made in 1948.