



# THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1954

## WHO COULD ASK FOR ANYTHING MORE?

JUDGE J. C. RUDISILL's decision to sit as a committing magistrate and hear public charges against Chief Frank Littlejohn will bring the whole affair out into the open so that the people of Charlotte can find out whether the chief has been fairly or falsely accused.

The judge's action came at the request of Solicitor Basil Whitener, after the court had ruled that the four presentments against Chief Littlejohn and the one presentment against another member of the department did not furnish adequate grounds upon which bills of indictment could be drawn.

Under the committing magistrate procedure, infrequently used in this state, witnesses who appeared secretly before the grand jury will be asked to give their testimony in public. The presiding judge will then determine whether the facts warrant bills of indictment and if so, the solicitor will be instructed to draw them.

In holding that the grand jury presentments were not adequate grounds for

drawing bills of indictment, Judge Rudisill ruled as we had anticipated. North Carolina law requires that bills of indictment be phrased in exact language which sets forth the details of the alleged crime. Those details were missing from the presentments. In fact, they were drawn in such vague and general terms as to invite the dismissal of the whole proceeding.

Judge Rudisill has wisely elected not to dismiss the charges, but to call upon the witnesses to give their information in open court. There the accused will be able to face his accusers, and will have an opportunity to answer their accusations. And the general invitation extended by the solicitor to anyone who has information "that will help arrive at the truth of the purported charges" to "present evidence or otherwise hereafter keep quiet about the matter" opens the way for any person not given a chance to appear before the grand jury to speak his piece.

The people of Charlotte could ask for nothing more.



## A FAIR RULE FOR FIREMEN'S FUND

THE FIVE Charlotte businessmen named by Judge William H. Bobbitt to recommend a "sound actuarial basis" for the firemen's retirement fund have accepted a difficult assignment.

When the system was started, a scale of benefits was adopted that was far more lavish than the relatively meager income would provide. The fact that the fund was headed for bankruptcy was first pointed out by an Institute of Government study in 1949, yet because of the interplay of politics between the Fire Department and the City Council, it took four long years to get the actuarial study authorized. And had it not been for the insistence of Rep. E. M. O'Herron Jr., who led the majority of the Mecklenburg legislative delegation in standing off attempts to compromise with bankruptcy during the 1953 session of the General Assembly, the new study would not have been authorized.

With his knack for getting good men to undertake hard and thankless public assignments, Judge Bobbitt has appointed an able committee. Attorney F. Grainger Pierce is chairman. On the committee are

two certified public accountants, O. N. Hutchinson and Richard M. Hunter, W. H. Gaither, president-treasurer of Pension Planners Inc., and H. H. Chambliss, Charlotte manager for Swift & Co.

The members of the committee will soon find out, if indeed they do not already know, that representatives of the Fire Department will resist any proposal to curtail benefits, and will argue that the public contribution be increased heavily to put the fund on a sound basis.

That has been the attitude of the firemen in the past. But it ignores the precedent that would establish for all other municipal employees, who would rightfully expect the same lush retirement programs.

Somewhat the committee must work out a scale of benefits and contributions that will be fair to the firemen, to all municipal employees, and to the taxpayers—a scale that is balanced with other public and private retirement systems. As the members take up their duties, they may be sure that there will be strong public support for any program that is fair to the firemen without showing favoritism.

## A WAY TO ENCOURAGE RED COOPERATION

DAVID LILIENTHAL, first chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, speaks with great authority about matters atomic, and his suggestion that President Eisenhower go ahead with his atomic energy pool plan without waiting on Russian participation has received widespread comment, most of it favorable.

Having suggested virtually the same thing some weeks ago, we are pleased that Mr. Lilienthal chose to speak up on the subject. But there is this difference in our positions. The former AEC chairman claims the President should proceed now; it is our opinion that having extended the invitation to Russia in his U. N. speech, Mr. Eisenhower should at least give the Soviets a reasonable time to agree to the details.

It is true that Moscow, in tentatively accepting the idea, sought to tie the

atomic pool proposal to a worldwide ban on atomic weapons. That set against the suspicion that Russia will back and fill out the Eisenhower proposal and will try to confuse it with other issues.

What the President can do, and what he should do at this stage, is to make it known that he will ask other interested nations to join with the U. S. under U. N. auspices if an agreement with Russia cannot be worked out, and that he does not propose to let the discussions be drawn out over a long period of time.

That would serve notice on Moscow that this country means business, and should deter the Russians from some of its customary delay-and-confuse tactics. It would also keep the initiative and the advantage with the United States, an important consideration in the worldwide battle for the allegiance of man to the cause of freedom.

## WHY TAR HEELS ARE DIFFERENT

WHITING IN THE STATE magazine, Reporter Chester Davis of Winston-Salem, a transplanted Montanan, casts about for an answer to this question: "What's Different About Tar Heels?"

Davis starts out from the premise that there is something different about Tar Heels, a premise that we accept as valid. For evidence he points to the popularity of *The State* itself as a sign that Tar Heels are hungry for the morsels of information about their state found in that publication. He cites the rash of historical dramas as proof that Tar Heels, like Texans, like to brag about their state and its history.

In trying to justify his premise, Davis digs into history to show that North Carolina never developed the plantation system as fully as did other Southern states; that the waves of migration went elsewhere, leaving ours a closely-knit, homogeneous people; that the lack of good harbor facilities in the east and the rugged mountains in the west brought about a relative physical isolation, and forced Tar Heels to rely largely on their own resources; that the rural atmosphere, with its small towns and villages, has prevailed against the trend to big cities elsewhere.

All of these historical and geographical forces may well have had a hand in making North Carolina different. It seems to us, however, that Davis has overlooked what is probably the greatest single influence upon the personality of Tar Heels.

Something more is needed to explain why, with one or two notable exceptions, North Carolina has managed to avoid the pitfalls of cheap demagoguery so frequently a characteristic of southern public affairs and why good, clean and steadily progressive government has been the rule

for more than a half century. That something more, we believe, is the University of North Carolina.

For many decades, the enlightened, liberal, progressive atmosphere at Chapel Hill has made an impact on young Tar Heels who have left the place for business, the professions, agriculture, the arts and sciences, and public service with a higher appreciation of the really important values of life and with a tolerance for new and bold ideas and programs. And in recent years, one branch of the University, the Institute of Government, has had an immeasurable effect upon the quality and standards of local and state government.

No listing of the factors that have shaped Tar Heels would be complete without the University.

## OMISSION

HERBERT A. LEGGETT, vice president of the Valley National Bank in Phoenix and editor of its monthly bulletin, complains that executives' offices designed by modern decorators are "designed along the lines of a botanical garden or the boudoir of Madame du Barry. Basic equipment includes a chaise longue, a built-in bar, a putting green and a lily pond."

What, no Persian dancing girls?

We see by the papers that Revenue Commissioner T. Coleman Andrews has a plan for teaching high school students how to fill out income tax forms. That's fine, but who is going to teach the teachers?

One duck to another: "Oh stop walking like a woman wearing slacks." —LAMAR (Mo.) DEMOCRAT.

Letters should be brief. The writer's name and address must be given, but may be withheld from publication in the discretion of the Editors. The News reserves the right to condense.

## Atand Junction A Menace

CHARLOTTE

Editors, The News:

I AM writing to the People's Platform to arouse the public interest to one of the worst menaces to public safety known in Charlotte. I am speaking of the Southern Railroad track that crosses Hutchinson Avenue known as Atand Junction. This track may be little known to anyone except the thousands of persons who cross it every day as they go back and forth to work. This track does not have a signal light, no cross-arm, nor do they put out flares as a warning of an approaching train. In recent weeks there was a man killed at this crossing and still the railroad has not been made to do something about this awful menace.

My small son and I nearly met death on this same crossing. Only the mercy of God prevented it. The engineer did not sound his horn or whistle 'til my son and I were almost on the track. Going



ATAND JUNCTION

north on Hutchinson Avenue you cannot see an approaching train until you are nearly on the track because of a section of woods and underbrush which practically hides a small sign which says "R.R." I can also tell you of others who have been hurt and some who have escaped death at this same crossing. We cry "Safety-safety, the life you save may be your own," and still the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County will let the railroad company get by with this crossing and others like it. I want the citizens of this city and county to back me up with letters of protest to the city government and the Southern Railroad and also to the People's Platform against this awful danger. I do hope others will not have to be killed or injured before something will be done to protect the public against this awful menace. There ought to be a law against any railroad track crossing any road without being properly signalled.

Yours in the public's interest.

—MRS. MARVIN B. OVERCASH.

## A Bouquet For Ted James

CHARLOTTE

Editors, The News:

I WOULD like to express my thanks and appreciation for the splendid job Mr. Theodore James rendered our city, as foreman of the recent grand jury.

In following his activities in the newspapers, I

thought he showed a very fair and impartial attitude toward everyone, and did his duty as he saw it, even in the face of criticism.

I am sorry this grand jury was not allowed to continue the enormous job, until every complaint had been cleared up to everyone's satisfaction. I sincerely hope and pray the job will be carried on, where this grand jury left off, and by men as honest and just. I hope there will be ample time given to hear the people who would like to appear before the new grand jury, no matter how long it takes. Nothing is as important as a clean civic government, if the Queen City is to be a clean city.

—MRS. D. W. SIMPSON.

## Grand Jury, Marley Congratulated

CHARLOTTE

Editors, The News:

I WOULD like to express my appreciation to the recent grand jury and its foreman, Mr. James, for rendering an honest service to the people of Mecklenburg County and Charlotte instead of piling more on top of cover to hide the evil that has made Charlotte a national disgrace and brought untold heartache, suffering to many of the good people of Charlotte, that created mistrust and disrespect for the police dept., which can only be corrected by a thorough and general housecleaning that will prosecute and dismiss from service any and all who have contributed to unlawful activities within the department.

Also I want to congratulate Dan Marley, who has enough public interest and courage to stand before the City Council and recommend a federal grand jury investigation. I do not mistrust our grand jury, but its recommendations are handled through Mr. Whitener's office here in Charlotte I fear the honest effort will be gone with the wind. I agree with Mr. Drew Pearson when he said that Mr. Whitener should excuse himself, and if he does not and no one sees to it that he does then a federal grand jury should most certainly be in order.

First Dr. Snyder should have excused himself from the chair of the police study committee, to his close relatives with the chief. Mr. Boyd seemed interested only in maintaining a good name for his police department regardless of what goes on behind the badge, and for that purpose he called for a grand jury investigation, and now that the grand jury backed up on Mr. Boyd's demand we hear resentments from others in high places.

—P. C. BURKHOLDER

## Churchmen Voted For ABC

CHARLOTTE

Editors, The News:

RE the Dec. 21 editorial, "The Public Be Damned," (reprinted from The N. Y. World Telegram & Sun); sure, alcohol should not be sold for beverage purposes to teen-agers nor to old-agers, but you will not agree that had cottage prayer meetings been glorified as cocktail parties, thousands of teen-agers would never have learned the taste before they were used to it; and that the teen-agers did not vote liquor into the stores of Charlotte, but church members. Bootleggers are the ABC's of the law. The tavern keeper sells liquor to whoever applies for the money. So do all merchants sell their wares. Who is responsible for the condition?

—HENRY WARREN.

## Pressuring Congress

CHARLOTTE

DR. JOSEPH D. MCCARTHY of Omaha, a member of the AMA's committee of medical doctors, gave a peek at AMA lobbying tactics. He explained that his legislative committee has a member from each geographical division of the United States to alert key men in those states on "pressing legislative problems."

These key men, in turn, are responsible for getting in touch with their senators and representatives and "informing them of the medical profession's attitude toward proposed legislation." "This method," Dr. McCarthy added, "has worked admirably in the past."

Dr. William B. Walsh of Washington, president of the AMA's "front" organization, the National Medical Veterans Society, cautioned doctors against declaring open warfare in the Legion. "Education" he maintained, "is the cornerstone of the campaign."

And as part of that education, he said, "we must encourage physicians to join the American Legion, but to avoid the creation of doctors' parties by remaining informal (one of the boys). The doctors will be more effective in an ordinary party."

Sentiment at the closed-door meeting was far from unanimous, however, and several doctors spoke up in disagreement. Dr. William A. O'Brien of Nevada asked if the group thought it would be wise for

## French May Quit In Indochina If More Aid Isn't Forthcoming

By JOSEPH ALSPLO

PARIS (Mr. Alsop recently arrived in Paris after a trip around the world. He has included a stopover for several weeks in Indochina. Editors, The News.)

THE chances are at least even that the American government will soon be faced with one of the ugliest choices of the postwar years. The question will be whether to take the most drastic measures, even including sending American troops, to reinforce the French effort in Indochina.

The danger, at any rate for the present, is not in Indochina but here in France. From the viewpoint of Gen. Navarre in Saigon the recent Vietnamese offensive that has cut Indochina in half is a serious setback but not a disaster. But from the viewpoint of the ablest French leaders in Paris, this temporary setback has already had the most disastrous effects on the turbulent currents of French political opinion.

The result is a strong impulse to escape from the long and seemingly hopeless Indochinese war at almost any price. The impulse has been growing steadily ever since America set France the example, with the truce in Korea, of its strength today can best be gauged by the views of the two men most seriously concerned with the problem, Georges Bidault, minister of foreign affairs, and Marc Jacquet, minister of the associated states who has direct charge of Indochinese policy.

Until recently both men, and particularly Bidault, were stoutly opposed to "internationalizing" the Indochinese war. They wanted American financial aid, certainly, but they wanted no intervention by American or other foreign troops. Partly they feared to provoke an answering intervention by the Chinese Communists. Partly, too, they were moved by national pride—for Indochina is a part of the French Union—and by the desire to safeguard what is left of the French position there.

This was a strong impulse to escape from the long and seemingly hopeless Indochinese war at almost any price. The impulse has been growing steadily ever since America set France the example, with the truce in Korea, of its strength today can best be gauged by the views of the two men most seriously concerned with the problem, Georges Bidault, minister of foreign affairs, and Marc Jacquet, minister of the associated states who has direct charge of Indochinese policy.

Now, however, the attitude of these two men has been forcibly changed. Something has got to be done to halt the surge of opinion in favor of seeking a negotiated settlement with the Communists, or abandoning Indochina under some other pretext. America has got to do it. Hence Jacquet has stated in the last few days that the French Chamber would end by insisting on the recall of the French expeditionary forces in Indochina unless allied reinforcements were provided "within the next three to six months."

Jacquet did not insist that the reinforcements in Indochina must take the form of American divisions. He had in mind the possibility of a massive increase of American aid, which, would in turn finance French-led groups of military volunteers, on the old Flying Tiger pattern. Significantly, the minister for the associated states remarked that this device should be more acceptable to men like Bidault, who had half-approved, arguing that the formation of such groups would take much time, would be an unsatisfactory half measure, and would set the example for Chinese "volunteers."

Neither Bidault nor Jacquet has been personally converted to the desirability of a French retreat from Indochina. Both men were simply offering their best analyses of the practical political situation in the specific form of American troops for Indochina. He firmly ruled out the project of volunteer groups that who has direct charge of Indochinese policy.

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Neither Bidault nor Jacquet has been personally converted to the desirability of a French retreat from Indochina. Both men were simply offering their best analyses of the practical political situation in the specific form of American troops for Indochina. He firmly ruled out the project of volunteer groups that who has direct charge of Indochinese policy.

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