



# THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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## Better Roads: A Very Proper Bow

THERE are times when political necessities force the adoption of sound principles. Such is the case in the administration's reluctant switch from its highway construction bond plan to pay-as-you-go taxation demanded by Democratic leadership in the Congress.

Although it was unnecessarily doubtful in doing so the administration was eminently correct in choosing to go along with Congress rather than to insist on its bond plan and thereby jeopardize the program the necessity of which the administration has properly advocated.

The number of motor vehicles has doubled since World War II. There was little road building during that or the Korean War. Inflation reduced the number of miles that could be built with available money. Consequently, twice as many vehicles are using a road system that meets neither the everyday need nor what could be the totally overwhelming need of national defense in a bomb-heavy world.

As to financing there have been many

arguments against the administration's bond plan. Comptroller General Joseph Campbell said it "is inadvisable because . . . the borrowings would not be included in the public debt obligations" of the country. Sen. Harry Byrd said it "would violate financing principles, defy budgetary controls, and evade the federal debt plan." The correct essence of these views that the bond plan is not a business-like way to proceed.

It is true that bonds offered the surest method to raise quickly the funds needed for the "catch-up" phase of the President's construction plan. But there also was a matter of considerable interest on the bonds. And Congress has an alternative in supplementing highway use taxes with general revenue during the "catch-up" phase.

The administration, we believe, has acted wisely in bowing to Congress on financing. But it should insist that Congress now get the job done. The administration has gone its half of the way.

## Tar Heel Symphony Sets An Example

AT A TIME when imported materials dominate U. S. culture, the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra's decision to feature contemporary American music on its annual spring tour is admirable.

Conductor Benjamin Swalin has announced concert packages which will include works by Davidson College's John Satterfield (Baker Folk Suite) as well as Aaron Copland, Virgil Thompson, Frederick Schreier, Mabel Daniels and other dependable U. S. practitioners. The orchestra will perform its star-spangled program for audiences throughout North Carolina and as far south as Tallahassee, Fla.

Modern music's blue-jean set may pooh-pooh the selections as "too conservative" but they represent at least a start in the

introduction of Americans to American music.

There is, after all, plenty of time for the more advanced offerings of a Riegger, a Sessions or a Hovhannes.

For example, the Copland work chosen is not one of the Brooklyn composer's elaborately cerebral efforts. But instead, his bright and tuneful *Hoe Down* from the ballet suite, *Rodeo*. No one is likely to be frightened by those sounds.

Among the nation's top 30 symphony orchestras, only 8 per cent of all works performed last season were by American-born composers.

It is a shame that more aren't heard of U. S. composers have much to offer U. S. audiences. The North Carolina Symphony is setting a fine example for its bigger, richer brothers.

## A Public House To Be Set In Order

EVER the canny diplomat, Air Pollution Engineer Charles S. Frost is following a wise course by surveying public buildings first in the campaign to eliminate smoke and smog from Charlotte's atmosphere.

It's all too well known that certain government structures—including schools—are among major offenders.

In fact, Charlotte's officialdom has been the subject of sharp criticism and no little amusement in the past when it has viewed smoke with alarm from buildings which are actually contributing to the objectionable conditions.

When smoke problems are solved in public buildings, the city will be in a much better position to speak sharply to private citizens.

Meanwhile, there might be some additional inspirational value in sight of

smokestack-owning City Councilmen lining up next for Mr. Frost's professional advice.

## Second Best

UNCLE SAM'S Post Office Department, which can never seem to get around to a stamp commemorating the signing of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, is suddenly up to here in wildlife designs for new stamps. An antelope has been selected for one new issue. A Pacific salmon and a wild turkey are under consideration for two others. All else having failed, Mecklenburg might as well ride with the trend and lobby for an elephant stamp in honor of Vicki.

## Muzzles Are For Kennel Dogs

THE suggestion of Rep. Burdick (R-ND) that Secretary Benson and other Cabinet members should "wear muzzles" is outrageously unfair to the aficionados of all 114 Americans. If it were not for Dwight D. Eisenhower's garrulous Cabinet, historians would still be puttering around in the FEDERALIST PAPERS for expressions of the credo of unembarrassed conservatism.

It may not be that ideological slips are showing at all when Mr. Benson's name somehow gets signed to a letter applauding an article which called the American farmer "our pampered tyrant" and when Defense Secretary Charles Wilson says, "What's good for General Motors is good for the country." But politicians have been pigeonholed for lesser indiscretions.

One is reminded of the time Henry George asked one of the leading American Spencerians what he proposed to do about poverty. The answer was a characteristically unabashed: "Nothing. You and I can do nothing at all. It's all a

matter of evolution."

It was Herbert Spencer, the Englishman, who maintained that successful businessmen, by virtue of their triumph in competition, had proved superior fitness and that social legislation would disrupt the "survival of the fittest" necessary for the "evolution" of society to a better form.

In recent years—before the advent of Mr. Wilson, the good-natured magnate of the Pentagon—a certain cynicism about such matters was popular. But his GM crack ushered in a refreshing change.

Perhaps the most delicate taint of modern American conservatism of all, however, was handed down by Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey when he was asked to comment on Ernest Hemingway's prize-winning novel, *The Old Man and the Sea*. Said he: "Why would anybody be interested in some old man who was a failure?"

No, Mr. Burdick. Muzzles are for kennel dogs. We're for bird dog loquacity.

## Farm Bloc Desperate

# Benson's Bloopers

By DORIS FLEESON

WASHINGTON

SECRETARY OF Agriculture Benson was in deep trouble with the farm bloc in Congress long before one of his underlings signed his name to an ill-advised fan letter to the author of an article attacking the "pampered" farmers.

THROUGH THE WRINGER Benson has now discovered the letter. His difficulty is that his congressional critics are sure that he agrees with the author and that he is willing to put the farmers through the wringer with all the risks, economic and political, that this involves.

Two things have kept Republicans relatively quiet. One is the fact that if President Eisenhower gets mad at the party he won't run again. The other is some whip-cracking by lobbyists of the Farm Bureau which represents the more prosperous segments of agriculture.

NEW DEALERS Some Republicans have been so frightened, however, they have even consulted New Dealers for alternative to the Eisenhower-Benson program. It is not

big for just the politicians. Not in years has the farm bloc been so divided and so desperate. It wants action but it has no answers. Nor have the Democrats, for all that they are so vocal.

NO PROSPERITY GOAL The real vacuum in the White House program is that it sets no prosperity goals for the farmer and so gives him no real encouragement for the future. Nor does it offer immediate, forthright plans to increase production which has dropped about 30 per cent in the last four years. That politicians add this to political suicide next fall in the farm states should not surprise anyone.

Benson's tolerance for depressed farm incomes until long range programs can right the situation infuriates the politicians. They believe it is utterly unacceptable to the farm-voters so long as the rest of the economy is booming, and about that they think they are better judges than either of the Eisenhower brothers, Dwight or Milton.

ADLAI A DOUBTER That the President can get approval for a long range program, without immediate remedies, too, is improbable. The proposal of some Democrats for a return to high rigid price supports is a good immediate remedy is widely doubted in that party and among the biggest doubters is Adlai Stevenson.

Congressional hearings may develop some leadership in the present excess of recrimination.

STURDIDY CEILING Senators Douglas and Humphrey have called attention to the changing patterns in agriculture which now runs the gamut from the large, prosperous factory-type farm to the small plots of 50 acres or less on which a million farmers, chiefly in the South, still eke out a livelihood. Their suggested solution is a ceiling of subsidies to the larger producers, a move Congress has heretofore been reluctant to make.

Yet Congress is clearly ready to pay some prices of its own in return for the immediate help in its political blood. No such balance of forces has yet been achieved in any program now before it.

## SECRETARY BENSON Irritating Tolerance

surprising that farm state legislators want to put more money faster into farmers' pockets; what is interesting is that they are saying humbly the problem is too

## Feuds Have Faded

## The Loftily Polite Press

By ROBERT C. RUARK

SYDNEY, Australia

ONE of the reasons I admire this country is for a thing we used to have, which we have lost—namely, bare-knuckled journalism. We have, become loftily polite to each other in American press in recent years.

FADING FEUD Fractious jangling remains of the great feud between the Bonfils-Tammen Denver Post and the Rocky Mountain News. The clamorous days of Charlie MacArthur in the dog-chew-dog newspaper business in Chicago are gone, for, fully half a century ago, the young fry would not know that the term "circulation slugging" was derived from the employment of hard boys to prevent rivals from selling papers. To slug—as into submission.

In many papers in America today it is difficult to get the name of the opposition in print unless the publisher dies and you get to run his obit of simple courtesy. The old tooth-and-claw battles are largely gone. The once classic clash between Jackals are frowned on and played down—which is to say that the public is not supposed to care about what one newspaperman thinks about another.

ONE IN THE EYE Whether this is true is not germane. It is important to the newspaperman to use his platform to take a wallop at an opposition character. He has just landed him one in the eye, because newspapermen are people, too, subject to frustration. It is bad form to get very angry in print, any more, as being below the dignity of a newspaper. The minutes is that the juices ran out unless you can better and leave a chair once in a while, without some job

frightened copyreader cutting the guts out of your anger.

But out here they are still hairy in the ears and short in the temper. There was one day when the oldest publisher of one set of properties and the august publisher of another set of properties slugged it out in full view of all the members of Australia's sanctum sanctorum. Handwicked race course—in the members enclosure.

They prey on each other's staffs shamelessly, and they fight open battles in their columns and in their editorials, and they will joyfully punch each other's properties in purchased stuff.

For example, the Sydney Daily Telegraph alone one at the Sun the other day. The Sun had spent a flock of dough to buy somebody's memoirs, and had been halyhoosing him on the day the first installment broke. The other editor had induced his New York man to cable a full story of quotable parts from the memoirs, and neatly sliced the top off the other bloke's journalistic egg. There was electricity crackling on the telephone like you never heard.

As for active intramural warfare, all they consider contempt on what they papers people would like to read, not what they are supposed to read. In my 12 years of in-and-outing here, I never picked up a dull copy of an Australian newspaper. They hit the person they are hard since some ancient Meyer Berger have I read as fine a piece of copy as the Telegraph's account of a wedding between the sons of two enormously wealthy families, in which the bride's family was traced straight back to the immigrant forebears and their pushcarts.

## Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

By ROBERT C. RUARK

WASHINGTON

ONE of the most important watch in the voting on the Fulbright-Harris natural gas bill will be whether certain senators follow Senate Rule 12.

Pocketbook This is the rule which disqualifies any senator with a pecuniary or pocketbook interest in any legislation. This rule does not force a senator to refrain from voting but, according to the Senate parliamentarian, it has been the practice to abide strictly by this rule.

SEN. WARREN Austin, Vermont Republican, disqualified himself from voting on a tale bill because he had investments in it.

When it comes to gas-oil matters, however, there have been flagrant abuses of Rule 12. Simultaneously, senators have openly investigated conflicts of interest in the executive branch of government and demanded the resignation of Harold T. Holt as Air Force secretary because he had a business interest which conflicted with his job role in the government.

Same Thing Yet some of them have done exactly what Talbott did.

One of the most flagrant abusers of Rule 12 is Sen. Bob Kerr, likable, Bible-pounding, solemn from Oklahoma who owns \$100,000,000 in proved gas-oil reserves, yet who maneuvered the

## Gas Bill Rooters Buck Senate Rules

By ROBERT C. RUARK

WASHINGTON

first natural gas bill through Congress only to have it vetoed by Truman.

Kerr's Conflict Senator Kerr's partner in Kerr-McGee oil industries officially reported a 1949 gross income of \$14,800,150, with a net income of \$12,183,623. In 1953 their income was \$12,538,053, on which was paid a tax of only \$25,053—due to the generous oil-gas depletion benefits given the gas-oil companies under the federal tax laws.

Kerr's company has had at least four contracts to sell natural gas in interstate commerce, and will immediately benefit from the law now being voted in Congress. The Kerr-McGee gas and oil business, one with Southern Natural Gas, one with Trunkline Gas Supply, and one with El Paso Natural Gas.

On File These records are all on file with the Federal Power Commission. Yet the senator from Oklahoma brazenly asked the first natural gas act and voted for it. He did not step aside under Rule 12.

Significantly Senator Kerr and his company are one of the largest suppliers of natural gas to Phillips Petroleum. He was also the recipient of quite a windfall from Phillips when that company assigned 100 square miles of proved gas reserves to Kerr's Tascos Gas Co. in December 1949, for drilling.

## 'Shall We Start With This One?'



## A Major Democratic Attack

# Big Debate Coming On Defense

By JOSEPH & STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON

FOR the first time in the history of the Eisenhower administration the Democrats plan to make major issue of the administration's defense policy. The plan now is to initiate a big Senate debate on the whole defense issue within a week or ten days.

Sen. Henry Jackson of Washington will probably lead off with a speech accusing the administration of letting the Soviet Union gain a decisive lead in the vital field of ballistic missiles.

Sen. Stuart Symington is preparing his angriest defense speech so far, describing the administration defense program as a fraud on the American people. Others expected to enter the debate include Senators John Kennedy of Massachusetts, Mike Mansfield of Montana and Clinton Anderson of New Mexico.

Thereafter, no less than four different committees will inquire into various phases of the administration defense program. According to present plans, the Armed Services Committee will call Gen. Matthew Ridgway to testify on his charges that defense appropriations were established on a political basis. Ridgway may also be called before the Appropriations Committee.

But Gen. Ridgway will not be the only authority on the national defense to be called to testify. The preparedness subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee is headed by Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson, and Johnson has been shaping plans for a serious inquiry into the status of American air power.

STAFF SURVEY Johnson has been canvassing the field for a staff director for the subcommittee. Men of the caliber of former Under Secretary of the Air Force Ross Gilpatrick and former chief of the policy planning staff, Paul Nitze, have been considered.

A parade of expert witnesses on air power, both from within the administration and outside it, will be called to testify on the effects of the cutbacks in the Air Force program.

Johnson's decision to make a major investigation of the status of American air power is of re-

cent origin. He has long felt, and reportedly still feels, that it would be a mistake to make defense a party issue, especially with President Eisenhower in the White House. Last year he left the issue more or less alone.

But last fall he was visited at his Texas ranch by the television entertainer, Arthur Godfrey. Godfrey, a sincere and eloquent believer in the life-and-death importance of air power.

And he converted Johnson to his view that a great national effort was required to retain American level of American and Soviet armaments, and with the sharp-tongued and aggressive Humphrey in the chair, frequent explosions are likely to occur.

What is in prospect, in short, is an offensive all along the line by the Democrats on the issue of national defense lasting throughout the current session and up to election day. The motives for this offensive are, of course, mixed.

In part they are political. In the past, the administration has been doubly shielded from any prolonged and concerted criticism of its defense program. One shield has been the President's military reputation. The other has been the old cry that serious discussion of issues affecting national survival endangered security.

But this is an election year, and the administration naturally will claim credit with the voters for a balanced budget and reduced taxes. The Democrats are eager to impress the voters with the fact that both have been achieved wholly at the expense of heavy cutbacks in the defense and security area.

But in all fairness it must be said that the motives are not wholly political. Men like Johnson and Jackson and Symington are genuinely concerned by the mounting evidence that the balance of power is shifting heavily in favor of the Soviets.

## EISENHOWER AND RIDGWAY Some Shields Removed

By ROBERT C. RUARK

Johnson's conversion has encouraged others to have a critical look at the Eisenhower defense program. Sen. Jackson, who heads a subcommittee on military armaments of nuclear weapons, also planning an inquiry. He will emphasize particularly the comparative progress of this country and the Soviet Union in the missile field, and he plans to call Secretary of the Air Force Donald Quarles, Air Force Chief of Staff Nathan Twining, and many others to testify on this subject.

EXPERTS UNLINED Still another committee, the special subcommittee on disarmament headed by Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, has already planned an inquiry involving the defense issue. Humphrey plans to call witnesses on the compar-

ison of American and Soviet armaments, and with the sharp-tongued and aggressive Humphrey in the chair, frequent explosions are likely to occur.

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Another senator who owns oil property is Ellender of Louisiana, while both Senators Daniel and Johnson of Texas have received heavy contributions from oil interests. So much money was volunteered for Senator Daniel by the gas-oil interests in advance that Sen. Tom Connally, a conscientious public servant who frequently backed the oil-gas boys, bowed out of the race.

Lyndon Johnson's biggest money backer during his political career has been George Brown and members of the Brown family. It was at the home of George Brown, himself the head of a big gas pipeline company, that Lyndon was stricken with his heart attack. Lyndon has done favors for this company which would amaze the nation.

From The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

## WHY IT'S POP

CODE POP is called pop instead of soda something else because when the first crude stopper was withdrawn the gas in the neck of the bottle was released and went "pop." So we are informed by engineers of the Crown Cork and Seal Co. That was before the first truly practical bottle crown was invented 63 years ago.

Why champagne, which makes an even louder pop and continues to do so to this day, was not also named pop, or perhaps, in view of its louder noise, POP, the engineers do not say. Nor do they tell us why lemon pop is referred to in England as lemon squash. We do not very much imagine that when the earliest corks were pushed in England they went "squash." It is possibly only a trivial bit of trivia, but the word was thought up without any provocation whatever.

Occasionally we have heard bottles from which the cork has been removed go "whuff" or "whuff." We are glad these were not the sounds heard by early American bottle openers. Drinking any

thing that had gone "whuff!" would make us feel that we had perhaps become semi-explosive ourselves, while "whuff!" would make one feel uncomfortably full.

And we do not even care to think about whuff, whuff or even squash going the wrong way.

Some congressmen who voted for a 50 per cent congressional pay increase to "attract better men" are becoming alarmed that it might—MAXWELL PRESS-SCIMITAR.

An old-timer is one who remembers when the teachers drove cars to school and the students walked—OMEGA (GA.) NEWS.

A car makes less noise when well lubricated. This is not true, however, of the driver—FORT MYERS (FLA.) NEWS-RESS.