THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

Thomas L. Robinson ..... *President and Publisher*
Brodie S. Griffith ..... *General Manager*
Cecil Prince ..... *Associate Editor*
Thomas G. Fesperman ..... *Managing Editor*
W. W. Sirmon ..... *Circulation Manager*

TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 1956

City-County Building Is Clearly Needed

THE five-story city-county office building proposed to County Commissioners yesterday would loosen the laces of a governmental straitjacket.

Such a structure is obviously needed if official functions of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County are to be performed with maximum efficiency and economy.

After three months, it is particularly gratifying to find that the original proposals of the 26th Judicial District Bar Association have been translated into a firm plan of action. That plan, finally disclosed in detail yesterday by a joint committee of commissioners and the bar association, is worthy of the earnest consideration of all concerned.

The only truly regrettable factor involves an apparent lack of communication between the joint committee and the Charlotte and Mecklenburg School Boards. Schoolmen have been making their own plans for a new city-county school administration building. They submitted the idea to commissioners yesterday, requesting $140,000 to purchase a site.

At a time when public education faces an era of some uncertainty, it would be wise for school administrative offices to be housed in the city-county office building rather than in an expensive separate structure with adjoining facilities for school buses. As Bar Association President J. W. Alexander suggested, inexpensive property could be found farther out in the county for the county bus garage.

Meanwhile, the site suggested for the new city-county office building seems, certainly at first glance, to be ideal. It would not only provide a needed facelifting for a decaying neighborhood but would add immeasurably to the long-range concept of a city-county governmental center as well.

The present County Courthouse and City Hall are inadequate. They threaten vital governmental services with slow strangulation. They waste the taxpayers' money by reducing governmental efficiency and encouraging decentralization.

The joint committee underlined these points yesterday in serious language:

> both economy and efficiency in the administration of our county and other related affairs are being seriously handicapped by the present utter lack of needed office space.
>
> Unless appropriate steps are taken promptly to alleviate the present situation and to provide for future needs we will shortly be confronted with a genuine emergency on account of the phenominal growth and expansion of the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.
>
> "Appropriate steps" are available. The condition requires immediate treatment.

Clearly, the joint committee's prescription should be filled as soon as practicable.

The Schools: Years Of Uncertainty—I

THE years of uncertainty in North Carolina education are about to begin.

There is little doubt that before those years are over, the public school system will be changed radically. It may be abandoned, altogether or partially. It may be desegregated, altogether or partially. It may remain segregated, but for official reasons other than color.

What the changes are to be nobody knows. But change there will be. The first installment will come out of the special session of the North Carolina legislature this summer.

The legislature's purpose will be to keep the school system and keep it segregated. Since the Supreme Court has ruled segregation by color is unconstitutional, the legislature will seek to continue racial separation by means the court will find legal. To guard against failure, it probably will provide for changes in the structure of the school system itself.

The North Carolina Advisory Committee on Education has recommended two changes in the state constitution. If these changes are authorized by the legislature and approved by the people, a community could vote to close down its schools, and the state would provide a "tuition grant" to students to obtain their education in unspecified private schools.

The Advisory Committee had an alternative. It could have recommended that the state organize, supervise and support a system of free private schools, abandoning the public schools altogether. It avoided that, for two reasons probably.

One reason is that the committee hopes that somehow the public schools, or most of them, can be saved. It hopes that voluntary segregation and pupil assignment plans can stave off "intolerable situations" that would prompt a community to vote to close its schools.

The second reason the committee decided not to recommend a state-supported system of private schools is the strong likelihood that the Supreme Court would declare that system, as is the public school system, subject to desegregation. Almost certainly the court would do just that if it found that the private school system essentially was the public school system disguised to escape effect of the desegregation ruling.

The theory of the free private school plan, of course is that the 14th amendment, under which segregation was found unconstitutional, says nothing about private individuals and corporations. It says *no state* can deny the "equal protection of the laws." Ostensibly, a free "private" school could exclude or admit anyone it wished, as the Supreme Court has held hotels and restaurants may exclude Negroes if they choose.

The court, however, looks behind labels. If the state organized and contributed to a private school system, the court would be apt to find that system public instead of private.

There was a parallel in the "white primary" cases. South Carolina, for example, repealed all its laws governing primary elections. The Democratic Party, labeled a "private" club, excluded Negroes from voting in its primaries. The Supreme Court, saying the label meant nothing, held that the party was exercising a state power in regulating elections. It ruled that Negroes could not be excluded from voting in them.

(Tomorrow: Problems of The "Tuition Grant" Plan).

Keep Law Enforcement Out Of Politics

THE administration's high regard for the civil rights of abused minorities is commendable. But the manner in which Atty. Gen. Brownell would protect those civil rights is open to some question.

In keeping with a brief passage in President Eisenhower's last State of the Union message, the attorney general yesterday recommended the establishment of a bipartisan commission to investigate individual grievances.

At the moment, we can think of no better way to confuse and distort the civil rights picture in a nation already arguing too fiercely about the matter.

As Mr. Brownell himself observes in the preamble to his message: "Obedience to the law as interpreted by the courts is the way differences are and must be resolved."

The protection of civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution is a responsibility of the federal judiciary. That responsibility is shared by the civil rights section of the Department of Justice.

For the Justice Department to pass the buck—or any part of the buck—to the political inclinations of a "bipartisan" commission is ridiculous. It would be an open invitation to noisy emotionalism of the worst sort.

Since this is a legal matter, requiring judicial remedies, Mr. Brownell's further request for a civil rights division under an additional assistant attorney general is entirely in order.

But legal matters should be confined to the calm of the courtroom rather than released to the rowdy arena of politics.

From The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

FADS AND SPARE TIRES

A MAN who has made a long study of "fads" ought not to be so confusing about them. Dr. Emory S. Bogardus, dean emeritus of the University of Southern California's graduate school, lists among contemporary fads two-tone auto paint jobs, filtered cigarettes, tortoise shell glasses, hi-fi record players and spare tires outside the auto trunk. And then he explains, "Fads are the expressions of persons seeking ways of becoming individualistic."

This is not much of an explanation. The dictionary defines a fad as a "custom which people follow for a time with exaggerated zeal." That is, a fad is something which forms a crowd, or at least requires one, before it is a fad. There is nothing very individualistic about that.

It has always seemed that fads were just another aspect of man's desire for conformity, and therefore a subject to be against. But if a fad is really a sample of rugged individualism, then all good Americans ought to be for it.

Perhaps the answer is that a fad begins when a few individuals want to be individualistic, but only becomes a fad when more people join in and make it a mass effort. In that case everybody can support a fad until it is one.

It's easy to please a congressman. All you have to do is vote for him.—MEMPHIS PRESS-SCIMITAR.

A zoo monkey in New York is being treated for a case of nerves. Obvious reason is he's been seeing too many people. GREENVILLE (S. C.) PIEDMONT.

Mysterious Message

Is Ike Isolated?

By STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON

ARE President Eisenhower's subordinates so eager to protect him from worry and strain that matters of great international importance are concealed from him, or their significance obscured?

This question is prompted by the President's answers to certain questions at his most recent press conference. He was twice asked whether he and Prime Minister Anthony Eden had been in recent communication about the Middle Eastern crisis. He was specifically asked whether Eden had recently sent him an important message stressing the gravity of the crisis, and the urgent need for taking action to head off the danger.

The President seemed honestly puzzled by the questions. Prime Minister Eden and he quite often exchanged messages, he said, and they often contained references to the Middle East. But, he said, "I am certain it is no recent thing they must be talking about." He was sure he said, that there had been no message from Eden since "some time before" he went to White Sulphur Springs on March 24th.

NO PRESSING

He speculated that perhaps

ANTHONY EDEN
A Written Warning

"they are talking about a recent message I haven't received yet." Overall, he left the strong impression that there had been no new, urgent, or important views expressed by Prime Minister Eden on the Middle Eastern crisis. Asked whether the British had been pressing the administration to take a firmer line in the Middle East, the President replied: "Well, if they have, they haven't pressed me."

These presidential responses are mysterious. The questions were largely prompted by a report, which first appeared a week ago in this space in a dispatch from London, that Eden had sent a grave message to the President stressing the growing danger in the Middle East, and the urgent need for basic joint policy decisions for dealing with the crisis. This report was confirmed and elaborated in subsequent dispatches in the British press and elsewhere.

The facts, which are indisputable, are as follows. About two weeks ago a high official of the American embassy in London was summoned to hear the views of Prime Minister Eden. Gravely and even grimly, the Prime Minister held forth at length about the danger in the Middle East and the pressing need for joint decisions and action by the Anglo-American allies.

Eden indicated that he had called in the American official to make sure that the President knew his views of the situation. The American was naturally impressed by the responsibility involved in reporting a statement so grave as the Prime Minister's. He therefore asked Eden's permission to quote him on certain points, to assure absolute accuracy. Eden thereupon himself wrote out a message, clearly intended for the President, which included the warning that major decisions might be not just a matter of days, but even a matter of hours.

NO DISSEMBLER

Such are the facts. In view of these facts, there seem to be only three ways of explaining the President's answers to his press conference questions.

One theoretical explanation is that the President, for diplomatic or other reasons, was being disingenuous. But this explanation can almost certainly be dismissed. The President is not a dissembler by nature, and his replies clearly suggested that he was honestly puzzled by the questions.

Another possible explanation is that the Eden message somehow got bogged down in the labyrinthine bureaucracy of the State Department. But it seems hard to believe that even the State Department could lose track of an extremely important message on a major international crisis from the British Prime Minister, in which the Prime Minister himself laid heavy emphasis on the hour-by-hour urgency of the crisis.

MOST DISTURBING

The only other conceivable explanation is that the message from Eden was not transmitted to the President at all, or transmitted in such a way that its significance was wholly obscured. This seems the most likely explanation. It is also the most disturbing.

Even before the President's attack, there was a strong tendency to go to great lengths to spare him unnecessary worry. Since the attack, the tendency has been greatly strengthened. This is natural enough and even laudable within limits. But the limits are surely passed when such a message as Eden's is either concealed from the President, or its meaning muffled. The President himself, who has privately complained on occasion of his subordinates' tendency to over-protect him, is certainly aware that a chief executive of the United States cannot function properly if he is wrapped in yards of cotton batting.

The Written Word

Risks Of Authorship

By
WALTER HART BLUMENTHAL
In 'Bookmen's Bedlam'

THROUGH the centuries, authorship has been beset with risks. There are the sometimes flaming works that had their origin behind prison bars, and the resented tracts and treatises that were consumed by ecclesiastical fires or on parliamentary pyres. And there were those hapless ones, the authors who were consigned to the flames along with their books. The pillory, the gibbet, the faggot, the dungeon have ever been among the bays of authorship. A volume written with all the tenderness these remembered wounds inspire could not tell the tithe of it. Of man's vindictive nature none can bear surer testament than those literary offenders who affronted the authorities of their day. . . .

Like a counterpoint to the tempestuous times that have swept men since the annals of history began, the vicissitudes of authorship attend the strife and the strivings of the generations. Take no more volumes than the fingers on one hand; obliterate all others and intimations of the past could readily be gleaned sufficient to form a mental mosaic: D'Israeli on calamities of writers; Ditchfield on books fatal to their authors; Farrer and Gillett on the burning of condemned works; Vickers in his moving chronicle of the martyrdoms of literature. From their pages might be filled in much of the political and religious rancors of the past, merely through their record of literary devastation.

'You Lazybones!'

Diplomacy By Dipsomania?

Dark Suspicions About Diplomats

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON

IN 73 embassies and nearly 300 consulates throughout the world, the United States has its representatives. It is a sad reflection on the richest and most free-spending nation that these representatives are treated like poor relations who cannot be trusted with the silverware.

The Department of State has come to Congress with a request for $1,000,000 for that is called, in the language of bureaucracy, the "representation allowance."

This is the money granted our diplomats to pay for entertaining they must do in their job of winning friends and influencing people. It is the personal exchange across a dinner table or at a garden party that is the most effective form of enlisting friends.

Yet when it comes to funds for this purpose, Congress reflects what seems to be a curious split in the American character. Even Congressmen who would know better talk about "diplomacy by dipsomania" and the "whisky allowance" while columnists and commentators come up with sour jokes about the "Martini circuit."

This seems to reflect a dark suspicion of diplomats, in general, and of American diplomats, in particular.

The niggardliness that results puts a severe handicap on our representative abroad and often imposes serious personal hardships on them. It is one reason for the decline in morale and standards in the American foreign service.

In the course of travel in Europe and Asia in the past two years, this reporter encountered many instances of what the hardship means.

TYPICAL CASE

Take, as an example, Consul John Jones in a Far Eastern city where American trade in vital materials is important. This is a typical case, only slightly disguised.

It is part of Jones' job to entertain local officials and businessmen as well as many Americans on business trips. He gets an annual "representation allowance" of $330, which becomes available at the beginning of the government year on July 1.

On July 4 he gives the required Fourth of July party, costing about $100. The new year, therefore, is only four days old when he has spent $100 out of his own pocket. And all his entertainment thereafter must be at his own expense.

This is a Moslem country where virtually no alcohol is consumed but where proper soft drinks, sandwiches and so forth cost about as much as Martinis.

EXTRA COST

And Consul Jones' wife is suffering from her second attack of amoebic dysentery and there is no English-language school for their children. Consul Jones' salary is $8,500 before income taxes, and living in this remote part of the world involves extra expenses. Manifestly, it is unfair to add to his other hardships the necessity for paying out of his own pocket to do his job.

One reason political ambassadors occupy the important diplomatic posts—London, Paris, Rome—is that no career foreign service officer, unless he happens to have a private income or a rich wife, can afford these posts. The representation allowance for Great Britain for the ambassador down through the consuls, this year is $21,900.

INFORMAL TALK

That may sound large for "entertainment." But suppose a big inter-national conference is being held in London at which the United States is contesting with the Soviet Union to put across the American view. An embassy reception, with American officials having a chance to talk informally to the delegates, would be extremely helpful.

Such a party for 750 to 1,000 guests could cost from $4,000 to $5,000 or, at one whack, a third of the $15,000 personally allowed the ambassador out of the $21,900.

What galls Americans paying out of their own pocket to do an essential job is that countries maintained by American dollar aid have diplomatic missions around the world that spend lavishly.

POINTED CONTRAST

In one capital visited by this reporter last year, the American ambassador was using an official limousine of 1951 vintage and somewhat uncertain habits, while the ambassador of a power supported entirely by U. S. dollar aid rolled up a block-long 1955 Cadillac. The American ambassador was not complaining, mind you, but he did think the contrast was a little pointed.

If we are really to play a part in the power struggle and if, as we like to tell ourselves we are, the richest and the most powerful nation in the world, then we must put aside these mean reservations.

We must recognize that we are grown up and we must act like grown-ups. The time has long since been overdue for us to put trust and confidence in the men and women who represent us overseas.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Congress Deserves Poor Report Card

WASHINGTON

HARRY Truman, asked by newsmen in New York whether the 84th Congress would be a do-nothing Congress, said: "You can't tell until the Congress is over."

Disagrees

Congressman Ken Keating (R-NY) doesn't agree. He claims the 84th Congress is getting nowhere fast.

Sen. Lyndon Johnson, the Democratic leader, disputes this. He pridefully points to the fact that Congress has already passed 412 bills, including such earth-shaking legislation as the loan of two submarines to Brazil, granting federal compensation benefits to Civil Air Patrol members, and penalties for violation of the Federal Seed Act.

Johnson also boughs over the fact that out of the 412 bills passed by Congress, 220 are private bills which help congressmen get re-elected but which do not help the general public.

Not Much

As Congress returned from the Easter recess—a relatively new vacation idea, incidentally—it appears to outside observers that Congressman Keating and the Republicans are right. This Congress is on the way to doing not much of anything.

There are several reasons, as follows:

1. Lyndon Johnson, who did a great job last year, is now handicapped by a heart condition which requires him to go back to Texas to rest every two or three weeks. He has taken four vacations since Jan. 1. Eisenhower has taken three. You can't lead the Senate—or the country—with a part-time leader.

2. When Johnson works for the nation as a whole he is superb. But when he works for the Texas tycoons and his own campaign contributors he is a tragic failure. This year he has put the latter ahead of the nation.

Rayburn Worried

3. Speaker Sam Rayburn, one of the truly great legislators of our time, is getting old, has been worried about the long illness of his beloved sister, and has been absent from Washington. Sam has also been trying to keep peace in a Democratic family which has Adam Clayton Powell, the Negro congressman from Harlem on one side, and race-conscious Georgians and Mississippians on the other side.

So when it comes to passing important legislation, here is the result:

School Aid

School construction—Stymied in the Rules Committee, thanks to Congressman Howard Smith of Virginia. Rayburn, however, can round up enough votes to get it out of committee and to a vote in the House. So far Sam has stalled, not wanting to inflame tempers and tear the Democratic Party apart with a debate over segregation. Now, however, such friends of the Negro as Jimmie Roosevelt of California and Dick Bolling of Missouri have persuaded many congressmen that segregation should not be mixed up with school construction and that the Powell Amendment refusing federal funds to any schools which ignored the Supreme Court, should be defeated. Under these conditions, the bill will probably pass.

Negro Vote

Civil Rights—A bill to protect the voting rights of Negroes has made some progress in the House Judiciary Committee and will probably reach the House floor for a vote. A similar but broader bill is being pushed by Hennings of Missouri in the Senate. However, there is little chance that either will be passed. A Senate filibuster could easily block any civil rights legislation.

Social Security—Sen. Byrd of Virginia and the Eisenhower administration are allied in trying to block reforms to give pensions to disabled workers of 50 years, reduce the pension age for women from 65 to 62, and extend pension benefits to more white collar and professional workers. Despite Byrd opposition, however, this bill will pass. It has already passed the House.

Big Blarney

Highway construction—The Democrats fell for the blarney of the big trucking lobby at first and put the cost of highway building as much or proportionately on the small motorist as on the big trucker. Republicans took advantage of Democratic stupidity—or obeisance to the lobby—and changed this. Legislators are now wrangling over another lobby-sponsored provision—to reimburse telephone companies and the utilities for moving their poles when highways are broadened.

Minimum wage revision—The new $1 minimum wage went into effect March 1. An attempt to raise this to $1.25 so soon won't get to first base this session. The roadblock in the House is labor chairman Graham Barden, who can't be budged. Senate labor chairman Lister Hill of Alabama, always nervous in an election year, will permit minimum wage hearings, but won't let the bill get beyond the talking stage.

Ambitious

Public housing—Sen. Lehman (D-NY) is pushing a bill to provide 600,000 low-rent; public housing units in three years, plus an ambitious program of low-cost loans for the middle-income brackets. Sen. Capehart of Indiana has introduced the administration's housing bill, which provides only 35,000 public housing units next year. A compromise (closer to Capehart's than Lehman's version) probably will be reported to the Senate. It stands a good chance of passing if it doesn't get tangled in the segregation issue.

Income tax cuts—No hearings have been held, except on measures to extend corporation and excise taxes that otherwise would drop automatically. There has been a lot of talk in Democratic policy huddles about a drive for tax cuts for the low-income brackets. This talk hasn't yet been translated into action. Chief difficulty: Tax measures must pass through the conservative House Ways and Means and Senate Finance committees.