The Charlotte News

And Evening Chronicle
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SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 1939

Proposition

This Poet Is Wasting His Brass-Bound Talents

Whether his poetry is good or bad we don't know. He didn't send us any samples. But measured by what he proposed to get out of it, it should be pretty good. Anyhow, we are convinced that the young man up in Cleveland County from whom we got a letter yesterday has his talents, though it occurs to us that they may be less for poetry than for selling real estate in Mars.

He would, he said, be glad to give us an exclusive contract for the daily publication of his verse. And in return he would only want two cents for each copy of the paper sold. How much that would add up to we haven't figured out exactly, but it wouldn't be far from a thousand smackers a day. That is why we think the poetry must be pretty good. For, according to our most careful computations, the young man would in a single year earn just four and one-half times as much as all the poets since the early Cro-Magnon bards — all the poets from blooming Homer through the Shakespeares and the Goethes and the Shelleys and the Keatses and the Tennysons and Brownings and Whitmans and Verlaines and Millays and what-have-you ever got paid *en masse*.

We hate to turn that proposition down. It intrigues us. We don't like to see poets have to starve in garrets. Candidly, it makes them write too much. And we'd love to see somebody really get it on a Big Business basis. Nevertheless, turn it down we are afraid we'll have to. However, we'll make him a counter proposition. If he'll furnish guarantees to pay us two cents on every copy we don't sell on the strength of his poetry, it's a deal.

The Parks Question

In The Long View It Deserves A Positive Answer

Judging by the vast indifference which precedes it and the registration of only 4,500 persons out of a population of 100,000, Tuesday's referendum on increasing the park tax limit from 3 cents to 5 is of little consequence to anybody. This is unusual for the county seat of Mecklenburg, which characteristically takes its elections seriously, especially when the community pocketbook is involved.

The tax phase is objectionable, of course. Local taxes are going up again despite the fact that both the Federal and State Governments have assumed, in whole or part, many services which used to be the responsibility of the municipalities, and this has meant higher taxes all along the line. There may be some question, too, of the efficient expenditure by the present parks administration of the small fund it has had at its disposal. Too little of it, we believe, goes for actual maintenance and equipment. But that point is not at issue in the election.

On the other hand, we spend for parks and playgrounds and recreation in Charlotte considerably less than other cities of our size and resources. The average of 66 cities is 74 cents per capita as against our present 20 cents or under. We undoubtedly get out of this activity about what we put in, which is pitiably small. If ever we are to have creditable parks and recreational facilities, the time to begin to acquire them is now, when the city is yet a colt, rather than later when it shall have reached its growth.

And ameliorating the unpleasant fact of a further tax increase is the consolation that for the run of property-owners the added bill will be exceedingly small — $1.50 on a valuation of $5,000, say. So that, all things considered, it will be to the advantage of all the people of the city, and not to the burdening of many of them, for the election to carry. We sincerely hope that it will.

Men Of Property

The Extensive Titles Of Two Dictators Are A Bit Tangled

Mr. A. Hitler and Mr. B. Mussolini seem to be headed for a collision in their little-unearthing. When Mr. Mussolini took over Albania, he explained candidly to the world that he was entitled to it by right, since Rome had conquered the Illyrian provinces in 221 B. C. He was a little free with his dates, but that doesn't matter, seeing that the title had been extinguished all of 1,500 years ago. It is somewhat odd to think of a title holding all that time, but if it really does, then Mr. Mussolini is rightly the owner of most of Europe, including the western bank of the Rhine and Austria.

Yesterday, however, Mr. Hitler came through with the startling news that every inch of the country now included in the Reich had belonged to it by rightful title for many, many centuries. That seems to be a reference to Bohemia and Moravia. And to find any shadow of support for the claim it is necessary to go back a thousand years to the Holy Roman Empire. That empire, "neither an empire nor holy," was founded quaintly enough by a Frenchman, Charlemagne, and sprawled all over the map. Mainly, it was just a loose confederation of independent German states — not much more tight than the Pan-American Conference. And save for an occasional Frederick II or a Charles V who took it by force, its "emperors" had no more power than an American delegate at the League of Nations. As for Bohemia — its connection with it was always extremely vague and consisted only of belonging to it occasionally as a sort of subsidiary member, and of now and then paying a little cash into the common treasury.

Nevertheless, if Mr. Hitler's title holds here — why, the Holy Roman Empire also at one time or another had title to Lombardy (nearly the whole of Northern Italy then), Sicily, and other parts of Italy. That is, Mr. Mussolini sems to hold title to a very large part of Germany, and Mr. Hitler seems to hold title to most of Italy. It will be fun to watch 'em settle that one.

Just Like That

The President Passed The Word, And 'Twas Done

Lo, the President told Henry the Morgue and Henry the Morgue told Congress that perhaps it wouldn't be a bad idea to defer for awhile the increase in old age insurance tax rates that was scheduled to take effect Jan. 1, 1940. Congress welcomed the suggestion, since business had been crying for tax relief, and promptly acted upon it. That is, the Ways & Means Committee of the House acted upon it without a single dissent. The whole committee, which is a large and influential one, approved the postponement, and that probably will be that.

The funny thing about it is that the increase in the tax on pay rolls was only ½ of 1% — in fine, a bagatelle. Whereas the tax already in effect is 4%, which is to say a considerable overhead charge on doing business, a deflationary factor and a deterrent to employment. And if the Ways & Means Committee was so willing to grant this tax relief, slight as it was, who knows but that they would be agreeable to reducing this and other taxes which appear to be holding business back?

Indeed, if the President would only give the word to Henry the Morgue and Henry the Morgue to Congress, the thing would probably be done in a jiffy. And good would probably come of it. But don't hold your breath until it happens.

Introducing Rad

Savants' Chance To Strike A Blow For Sanity

The Oxford editors of the New English Dictionary overlooked a magnificent opportunity, it seems to us. Indeed, their failure to grasp it makes us think they were at bottom a lot of old traditionists. But there is hope, if the Messrs. G. & C. Merriam, Funk and Wagnalls, *et al.*, have a drop of sporting blood in their veins. And if that is so — well, let them look to it that the past tense of *read* be changed to something else than *read*. Maybe *redd*, though there is already a word like that, meaning "to clear up, to put in order," etc. etc. But the danged thing is obsolete and Scottish, and few people use it any more. And if that won't do, what's wrong with resurrecting the obsolete past of *read* which was *rad*? It was also, we know, the past of ride, but that one was long ago solved by *rode*.

These gentlemen may expect, of course, to encounter furious opposition to *rad*, which looks like an abbreviation of radical and sounds foreign. But let them hold their ground, fortifying themselves with the knowledge that in promulgating a distinction between the present and past tenses of *read* they are performing a highly humane act, a blessing to all the little readers who have identified it as *reed* and had to back up to say *red*, or vice versa, and to all newcomers to the marvelous English language who have had to be taught, logic to the contrary notwithstanding, that r-e-a-d spells *reed* and likewise *red*.

Let it be, then, *read* and *rad* rather than *read* and *read*. And if this alone does not send the sale of revised dictionaries shooting up by 5,000 per cent, we personally will build a monument to the Messrs. Merriam, G. and C., Funk, Wagnalls, *et al.*, and call their name blessed.

Watch The Sophs! We Are All Of Us Goldfish Now

MEYER BERGER IN SCRIBNER'S

Since the first Neanderthal sourpuss gained crude shelter by disputing title to the Paleolithic caves with the prehistoric beasts who originally owned them, man has thumped his breastbones and made grand speeches about his inherent right to privacy. He has fought bitter and wasteful wars on the issue. Ever paradoxical, however, he eventually devised a community social system and opened the way to destruction of his precious right. In the present era of universal assault on privacy he is one with the goldfish, an unhappy creature driven each day to fresh surrender.

The devices brought to the attack are his own boasted handiwork. The telephone and its bastard offspring, the long-eared wire-tapping apparatus; the radio with its ubiquitous microphone; the current flood of questionnaires; the spread and mushroom growth of keyhole journalism; the prying eyes of the candid camera; the newsreel; the traffic in mailing lists—all these and countless other agencies are directed against their creators. Man flees from Fast and Polly Fry as Frankenstein before his monster, but their breath is hot on his hackles.

Great nations invade the privacy of small ones with short-wave broadcasts. They distribute receivers free, or at cost, to accomplish this. Democratic states, in self-defense against the totalitarian countries where the idea originated, have also set up powerful stations.

At home, the Federal Government last year sent out 135,000,000 questionnaires seeking exhaustive data on trusts, industry and business in general, and on the personal habits, condition, and conduct of citizens. Uncle Sam, in the zeal of New Deal reform, laid his questionnaire stethoscope on the hearts of 12,500,000 unemployed. He got intimate glimpses into the private lives of the other half by scanning the annual income-tax reports and, for a time, let the whole world in on these secrets by permitting publication of income-tax figures. Each state, city, and county relief board, in addition, has snooped into tenement squalor to document the misery of millions of the nation's poor who are on relief.

Somewhat less earnest, perhaps, are the questionnaires unleashed by magazines and newspapers to sniff out men's and women's innermost secrets on rather intimate subjects. Redbook Magazine, announcing in 1937 that "We must know the facts," conducted an extensive survey on chastity. The guinea pigs for this test were college girls and boys. When the papers came back and the interviews ended, the virginal were separated, with great relish, from the non-virginal. Other categories included "the burnt," "the inhibited," "the experimenters," "the careless," and "the inverts." This made such good reading that the same publication plumbed sex life on the campuses of fifteen men's colleges and came up with exact percentages on the "hotbloods" and the "moderates." The statistics were spiced with personal anecdote.

This wholesale surrender of privacy seems—to one who recalls, if somewhat dimly, when indiscreet betrayal of approaching maternity sent ladies in blushing retreat from the parlor—just a little startling. It shows, if nothing else, how swiftly this surrender has come. Nor is this surrender of privacy confined to the so-called younger generation. Within the past two or three years magazines have conducted successful surveys on premarital relations, marriage, drinking, morals generally—"Will your children avoid your mistakes?" "What worries you most?"

Among other things the Woman's Home Companion wanted to know were: "Do you like your foundation garment to be boned?" "If yes, where do you like the bones?" "Where do you buy your corsets?" "Do you like slide fasteners?" "Do you like a long foundation garment that comes down well below the thighs?"

Son-Of-A-Gun

P. W. Ward, Baltimore Evening Sun

"Son-of-a-Gun" is not the euphemism most people think it is, according to William McDowell, who recently broadcast a talk on sea lore for landsmen under auspices of the British Broadcasting Corporation. According to Mr. McDowell, "son-of-a-gun" was a sailors' gift to the vocabulary of the English-speaking world.

"Please think twice before you call anybody a son-of-a-gun," he warned his hearers, "because in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, when seamen's wives were allowed on board and sometimes even to sea, a child was occasionally born in the ship's sickbay. And if the birth was accelerated—at the orders of the surgeon—by the sudden discharge of a twelve-pounder, the child was known as the 'son of a gun.'"

Why Should We Aid Britain?

By Hugh S. Johnson

NEW YORK CITY.—A principal argument of those who want us to take sides in European war, if any, is that there is a 50-50 chance that the Axis powers will win and that, if the British Navy is destroyed, we will be immediately face to face with a hostile sea power so great that we will have to double our navy and keep a standing army of a million men.

Passing the point of the amateur nature of these strategic judgments, what do these authorities think the British Navy is going to be doing while it is being destroyed? Sitting on its hands? There is almost no chance at all of the Axis Powers overcoming British and French sea power — and if they did, the struggle would be so destructive that it would take a generation for what would be left of Axis navies to challenge us on the ocean — if we strengthened our arms and kept out.

It would be a good idea to consider again what present military maneuvering in Europe is all about. Germany and Italy are pushing eastward, seeking to extend their boundaries in that direction. Germany would like economic if not military domination of the Ukraine and Rumania. Italy would like to become the dominant power in the Mediterranean by taking Tunisia and standing guard at the narrows between Italy and Africa.

BRITAIN AND FRANCE ARE WHOLLY SELFISH HERE

Great Britain doesn't like this because she wants to continue to govern and exploit India and her other colonies and this is the road between them. France doesn't like it for a similar reason respecting Africa. Much of India would rather be free and unexploited. I doubt if even the free choice of African peoples would be for any kind of exploitation and domination by any European power.

Because England and France fear this expansion of the Axis Powers, they say they will fight to prevent it and protect their "property" in the black and brown races. The dictatorial despotism of Russia doesn't want to lose power over the Ukraine. The dictatorship of Rumania doesn't want to surrender to the dictatorship of Hitler.

THEY'LL BE RESPONSIBLE IF WAR COMES

What is our vital interest here? If war comes, it will come because England and France feel strong enough to attack Germany and Italy to prevent this expansion. Neither France nor the British Isles are threatened. If war comes now they will be the "aggressors."

I sit in constant wonder at the growing editorial opinion that seems to favor our taking sides in a conflict which concerns us so little. Some of it is plainly sincere, earnest and patriotic judgment based, as I believe, on insufficient military knowledge and an incomplete analysis of the circumstances. Some of it is impractical idealism. Some of it is understandable racial resentment of brutal and unbelievably cruel racial persecution in Germany. Some of it is pure propaganda, mostly growing out of these racial resentments. All of it is a deadly danger to the United States.

AND WE NEED TO RECALL THE LAST WAR

We cannot fail to recall the bitter disillusionment of the men who went forth in 1917 and 1918 to make the world safe for democracy. An ex-artillery officer who served through it all, on the front line, said to me today: "Our chief trouble in France, after the Armistice, was to restrain the effect of two bottles of vin-rouge to convince a soldier that it was up to him to go out and 'get himself a Frog.'"

We may thus be high-powered through another expeditionary force into the blood and mud and dreariness and welter of another set of rented trenches in Europe. But if we are then, when the "boys come home," I wouldn't like to be in any one of the pressure groups who are now urging us on that course—either of resentful racial groups, or politicians courting racial groups, or war sirens of any other persuasion. There might not be enough lamp-posts to sustain them.

Fisherman's Nose

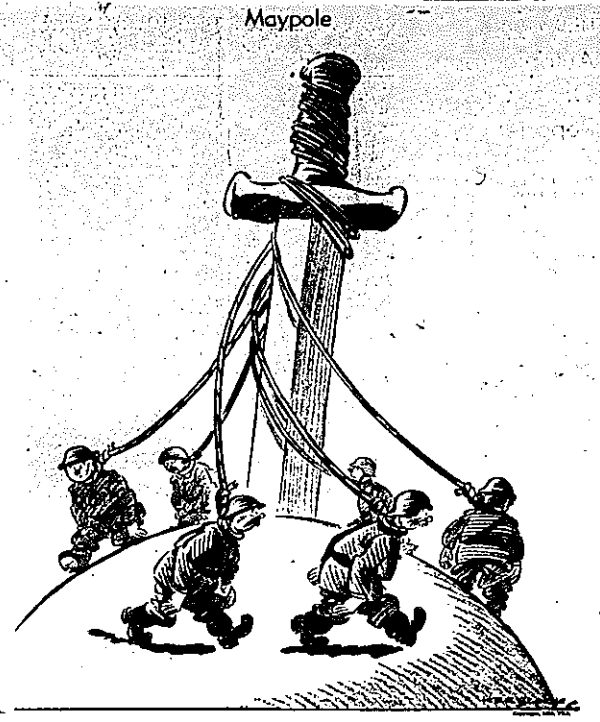
State Port Pilot

Usually the presence of a school of blue fish is revealed by seeing them swimming close to the surface or when they are leaping and plunging. At other times these fish run deep and might be all around a commercial boat without their presence being known, were it not for a trained sense of smell. This past week Captain Hulan Watts made his first netting of blues for the season, aided by his sense of smell. The fish were all large ones, they were running deep and no eye could detect their presence. There was simply something in the air that smelled of fish and the net was run out for the haul.

Easy Enough

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot

The 48th D. A. R. Congress has opened with "a barrage of advice on how to keep out of war." One answer, of course, would be for the Daughters not to meet.



Concerning Two Morales

BY DOROTHY THOMPSON

IT IS impossible to grasp, on first thought, the full significance of what has happened in Great Britain. It amounts to hardly less than a social revolution.

The British Government is adopting conscription and establishing a Ministry of Supply, which together mean nothing less than the total mobilization of the nation's resources—its man power, its industries, its capital and its labor.

The proposed budget is staggering. It amounts to 1,323,000,000 pounds, or about $6,500,000,000. Considering that the British population is about one-third of ours this is the equivalent of a $19,000,000,000 American budget. It represents a full third of the total British national income.

Furthermore, it is to be raised chiefly by taxation—by increased rates on motor car, tobacco, sugar; and by higher death duties and surtaxes. The Athens of Europe is subjecting itself to Spartan measures.

The tax on automobiles jumps by 66 2-3 per cent. It means that the owner of a Ford will pay $165 yearly. It may discourage the manufacture of automobiles in favor of armaments. Income tax goes up 5 per cent from its present high level on incomes between $10,000 and $40,000 and 10 per cent for those above.

IT'S TOTALITARIANISM WITH A DIFFERENCE

There are several reasons for this. One is necessity. International capitalism is in no such blooming condition as it was in 1914. There are no such sources of savings and international credit; no expectation of great international loans.

But perhaps the more important reason is the enormously increased democratization of Great Britain in the last generation and the increased sense of social justice.

The method of credit inflation and war profits will not be tolerated side by side with the conscription of men's lives, in the face of more hazardous risks for the whole population, including women and children, than ever before.

The modern war is total war, from which no class, no group, even no age is wholly exempted. Great Britain and France face states that have been totally mobilized for years. There is no other alternative, if they are to be faced, than the one Great Britain has taken, of facing totality with totality.

On first thought, one will say—this is the totalitarian state. Granted that the emergency forced it; granted that there was no alternative—this is National Socialism.

But it is National Socialism with prodigious differences. The unity which has been enformed upon the Germans by a new mystic of the state, accompanied there by the terrorism of a vast secret police, the substitution of courts of justice by star chamber party proceedings, the ruthless combing out of political and racial minorities, and a personal-party dictatorship, has formed itself in Great Britain out of the greatest emergency in British history since the Norman Conquest, out of the clear realization that Britain, whose navy and geography have assured her isolation for centuries, is today, in the era of the airplane, one of the most vulnerable of all nations—forty-odd million people on an island, within a bombing distance from the continent that can be reckoned in minutes.

THE GERMANS GROW MORE AND MORE UNEASY

Unlike Germany, England has the oldest existing tradition of political liberty. It is deeply Christian. The class struggle has never reached on British soil the proportions which it reached in Germany. The measures now adopted are taken wholly for the defense of the British Isles, the French Republic and the small nations of the Continent.

And the popular spirit which supports them has come reluctantly, the more imposing because of its reluctance, out of hostility to the basic spirit of Nazism—its terror, its persecutions, its suppression of all free thought, its cynical contempt for the word and the signed treaty, and its open justification of aggression.

The morale in Britain and France at this moment is very impressive, inestimably better than the morale in Germany.

Their moral position is inestimably stronger.

The conquest of Czecho-Slovakia is not popular in Germany. The Germans are not Huns and savages. They are people with deeply troubled souls. The strength of Hitler has been the moral strength of the German sense of injustices done them. By every injustice that Hitler himself has done to others—by the betrayal of the Austrians—even of the Austrian Nazis—by the compounded betrayal of Munich, by the treacherous theft of a whole nation which every German knows is in no sense German—he has enormously augmented his war reserves, but he has demoralized his own people.

And therewith he has weakened his greatest reserve.

FOR NOW THEY HAVE TURNED THE AGGRESSORS

The terror inside Germany has steadily increased since Czecho-Slovakia, and the reason is plain. The November pogroms, the conquest of Prague in March, the sudden revealing of his hand in the ultimatums to Poland and Rumania, have revolted thousands of Germans.

It is a great mistake to underrate the power of ideas in this world. They raise regiments when reason and self-interest fail; they demobilize peoples as well as mobilize them.

The moral force behind Hitler inside and outside of Germany was opposition to the Versailles treaty. It is spent the moment the victim becomes the victimizer.

Thoughtful Germans know this. In German universities, selected groups of students are being told by their teachers that the taking of Czecho-Slovakia was contrary to National Socialist policy, and was a crime that history will have to make good to clear the name of the German people. And men are going to concentration camps for saying this kind of thing.

Question

Statesville Daily

Senator Reynolds says: "Why in the hell should we worry ourselves to death about other people in the world?" Then why in the hack should we bother to organize as Vindicators to continue to worry about 'em?

A Lady Saves Her Conscience

Chapel Hill Weekly

On a recent Sunday morning Mr. Athol Burnham, walking along Ea Franklin Street, saw in the yard of th Howell place a bed of white irises wa ing their graceful heads gently in th brilliant sunlight.

The house, Mrs. Burnham reflecte had been without a tenant for mar months. The owners of it were Rocky Mount or New York or some oth far off city and were certainly not in terested in these flowers. Why, the shouldn't she have a few of them There seemed to be no good reason wh not. Of course she would be modera in her raid—she wouldn't take mo than enough for a fair-sized bouquet.

So she stepped over the low stone wa and proceeded to pluck the white irise When she had gathered about four o five she heard a stirring in the house.

That meant somebody had moved in Seized by panic, Mrs. Burnham took t flight. Her second crossing of the ste wall was far more rapid than her firs and she moved on up the street at hig speed.

By the time she had gone a couple o hundred yards or so she had calme down a bit, and she observed with sati faction that she had not been panick enough to drop the blossoms in her flight

But her conscience got to working o her. Maybe this was because she ha now come to where the Presbyteria Church was in sight. Naturally this re minded her of the stern standards th prevailed in Charlotte in the days o her childhood. True, she had subse quently been exposed to the ungodlines of New York, but the pure-white Pres byterian spire, like an accusing pointe finger, wiped away the effect of all thos years passed in the stronghold of Satan

She turned; walked resolutely bac to the Howell house; knocked at th front door; was greeted by the new oc cupants, Mrs. Carter and Miss Mc Lauchlin; confessed; and received com plete absolution. And, Mrs. Carter an Miss McLauchlin invited her to go bac into their garden and take more flower

Thus the outcome of the affair wa perfect for Mrs. Burnham; she satisfie her conscience and she kept her irises.

Visitin' Around

Tableau

(Big Laurel News, Marshall News-Record)

Mr. Clyde Rice was out horseback rid ing Sunday.

The Practical Thing To Do

(St. Pauls Item, Lumberton Robesonian)

Walter Rozier lost by fire Saturday th residence he was occupying on the lat Judd Dean farm, near town. The house and hold furnishings practically were saved

Service De Luxe

(Hannah Pickett Item, Richmond Coun ty Journal)

James Spleghis, Clyde Carter an Leo Edwards attended a chicken suppe Friday evening April 7, on highway No 74 at Roy Benoist Service Station.

But Is He?

(Ferguson Item, Lenoir News Topic)

Mr. R. F. Brown, local blacksmith, wh has had influenza for some time is no recovered and able to be about his work

Variety Is the Spice—

(Whartonsville Item, New Bern Tribune)

Ines Lupton spent the week end hom with her parents.