The Charlotte News

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1937

No Help Here

And, so, Vic Pesperman has resigned. The Mecklenburg Civil Service Board is looking around for a new chief. We don't understand it. The agitation started early last spring. State Highway Patrolmen swooped down upon the roadhouses along Mecklenburg highways, in rural police territory, and gathered an incredible amount of contraband liquor. The Civil Service Board tacitly charged its own police department with laxness in law enforcement and held a hearing to investigate that accusation. The result was a censure of the State Patrolmen for interfering and not cooperating, together with what seemed to be a fine job of whitewashing the rural police.

Next came an aggressive campaign against lawlessness in which the rural police took full part. Roadhouses were padlocked, liquor was seized, immorality was routed. Mecklenburg along the highways hasn't been so moral since there weren't any good roads. And now, unwillingly enough it may be assumed, Vic Pesperman, during this bustle of law enforcement, resigns. We don't understand it.

A Ghost Speech

That speech that Secretary of Commerce did NOT deliver down at Gibson, North Carolina, was one of the most thoughtful he's never made. The speech he did get off was run of mind.

It all came about because somebody wrote a speech for the Secretary questioning current agricultural policies, deprecating subsidies and paramounting trade opportunities in world markets and "the free operation of efficient production and distribution." Plainly, this doctrine was at odd'spoint with dogma handed down from the Department of Agriculture and might have been construed as an indirect attack upon Henry Wallace. And somehow the gist of this speech was handed out to Washington correspondents and was reported by them as having been delivered by Mr. Roper to cheering farmers down Gibson way. Alas, the Secretary had been misquoted *in toto*.

What he did say was that the Government was doing a fine job for the farmers, that Secretary Wallace was a Cerasian Moses, that the speaker of the occasion was impressed with the intelligent faces he saw around him and, we guess, that he hoped everybody would vote the Democratic ticket again next fall. But we still think that the speech he didn't deliver was one of the most thoughtful he's never made.

The Story So Far

In the beginning, it took five months for Britain and France to induce Italy to sign up with the Committee for Non-Intervention in Spain. That period Italy put to good use by sending a steady stream of munitions, warplanes and men to, its ally, Franco, a large contingent of troops having raced under the wire just as this agreement not to send troops took effect. Thereafter, Mussolini's men, according to all accounts, continued to volunteer, sometimes in whole battalions, for service in Spain; and a submarine or submarines freely suspected to be Italian commenced to operate against shipping in the Mediterranean. Not only that, Bruno Mussolini was found to be at the head of a crack Italian air squadron fighting for Franco.

The fiasco of non-intervention as Italy practiced it filled Britain and France with disgust, as the pirate submarine filled them with alarm. They were emboldened to act jointly against Italy in patrolling *Mare Nostrum* and to threaten to open the French border to men and materials for the Loyalists in disregard of the Committee. However, Mussolini felt very strongly that he should have a part in the sea patrol, and to obtain it he intimated that in exchange he would be willing to discuss, apart from the Non-Intervention Committee, withdrawing his legions from Spain.

Italy was given a beat in the policing of the Mediterranean against its own subs, thus saving the Signor's face. But when it came time to agree on withdrawing foreigners, largely Italians, from Spain's private fight, he held out for action through the medium of the Committee for Non-Intervention, which had proved its utter ineffectualness. He got it. This Committee of 27 nations will be called into session, probably this week, and the old familiar cycle of discussions and agreements and gross Italian violations of those agreements will be off on another round.

Honesty in personal relations may be the best policy, but dishonesty in international relations has served Signor Mussolini quite well indeed. He has eaten his cake and had it too; enforced non-intervention while actually intervening to his heart's content.

Hail and Farewell

The itinerary of the Travel Executives Tour from the time of its arrival in Charlotte today schedules a brief stop at Coleman Roberts' Carolina Motor Club, a half-hour at the Mint Museum of Art, dinner at the Hotel Charlotte and two brief radio broadcasts. Tomorrow our guests will arise bright, we trust, and early; breakfast and light out for Concord and points north.

Well, the Queen City's civic pride, and it is strong, is somewhat crushed at this perfunctory inspection of its features and talking points. Furthermore, the whole Piedmont, which the Tour will cover in a couple of days, would like to have the opportunity of going exhaustively into its advantages, of exhibiting its accomplishments, of rattling off figures about its progress and the goods and services it produces and the contributions it makes to the welfare of the State of North Carolina as a whole. But, after all, this is a tour of travel executives and feature writers who will be interested mainly in scenic splendors and playgrounds, in vacationlands, historic shrines and outdoor sports fields. This workaday section of North Carolina has few of such attractions. It is industrious so that it may visit them in its time off.

And, after all again, we shouldn't want the Tour to spend too much of its time in the Piedmont when such a natural paradise awaits it Down East. A characteristic of North Carolinians, perhaps—their most distinguishing characteristic, is their pride in the State as a whole. The mountains, the coastal country, the sandhills and all the scenic beauties of North Carolina are the choice possessions of North Carolinians, even of those who have never seen them. The people of this State have an unequaled proprietary interest in it. One of these days this quality is going to make the State rich in fact as it is in natural blessings.

So let the Tour stop in Charlotte and way points and be made comfortable, but after that let it hasten on down to the Sea. And if our visitors don't fall in love with the sound and ocean country, as they must have with the Land of The Sky, why, they are lacking something that is instinct with North Carolinians.

Only Made It Harder

Evidently the City means business this time when it threatens to shoot the works on delinquent taxes. It has threatened before, under this and previous administrations. Our file of City & County Delinquent Taxes is full of such warnings from both sides of Alexander Street. But this time it looks as though foreclosure actions are really going to be carried through.

Judgments have been taken against a number of property owners, some of them behind by as much as nine or ten years, and a commissioner has been appointed to sell their property at public auction after advertising it for 30 days. When it is sold, title passes immediately, without a further period of grace, and the new owners may dispossess the old owners or compel them to begin paying rent. In fine, some of our home owners are going to lose their homes.

That is sad, yet it shows all too clearly the mistaken idea of accommodation our local governments have put into practice. One year's taxes or two years' taxes go hard to pay. Almost everybody can round up that much money. But when there are ten years' taxes to pay, and probably street assessments on top of that, the bill is so steep that sometimes it simply can't be met.

The City has done these delinquents no favor by letting taxes accumulate until they represent a capital charge. The County, across the way, is only storing up greater grief for its delinquents by not following the City's belated lead.

A COLUMN ON COLUMNS

By HUGH S. JOHNSON

WASHINGTON. — Westbrook Pegler did a fine job in his column raxing the rigging off of all columnists, including himself, and—by an implication as delicate and diaphanous as a kick in the pants—the present writer. His point is that an undertaking to produce incessantly, from day to day, a cluster of critical comments on as many subjects as are covered in an encyclopedia by an authority whose knowledge of most of them must necessarily be a thin film, takes either the cheek of a brass monkey or the ego of a bug-house Bonaparte.

It is plainly true. Peg speculates on the question: "Why is a columnist?" That has frequently perplexed this one. He concludes that they are just stuck in the paper as vaudevillian variety to the comic strips, although not one-tenth as effective or as popular.

I think they are a device to offset editorial comment so that people who don't like the policy of the paper can find a giant they do like among the columnists and still remain customers. If they don't like one columnist, there are usually others with a different view. All may differ from editorial policy. It is a scatter-gun shot at public favor.

* * *

SAFETY VALVE

I don't see much difference between the ponderous, pontifical pronouncements of an unnamed editorial writer and the equally opinionated offerings of a guy with his name and mug under the title, except, as Peg himself once said, that the enraged consumer can satisfy his murderous libido on the latter by writing him letters beginning, "Dear Sir, you cur." Maybe that alone is sufficient to justify the whole tribe as a species of sacrificial goat or intellectual kicking-boy. My correspondence indicates that it is a form of mental escape that is widely indulged and often with a gusto and fervor that must produce great relief for the suffering customer.

In Peg's dainty and zephyrous satire, some of the economic trained seals can't even read a time-table, but Peg is always belittling. I know some financial columnar experts who were so good that they have dropped their whole wad on the stock exchange—not once but several times.

I get a lot of our letters about a cockeyed columnist who has heated the writers all up by stark assertions with which they do not agree. I at least get one satisfaction out of them—Boy, I certainly relieved you of carking doubts, anyway."

* * *

GADFLIES

Peg is right. It takes a lot of gall to be going around commenting all over everything every day. But if the columnists and editors didn't pontificate, it would leave the politicians in undisturbed monopoly—and they have a selfishness to serve that might swerve them from the eternal verities far more than the mere rocky complacency of any columnist. If the ukase went out tomorrow to liquidate all columnists, a lot more people would miss Westbrook Pegler than ever missed, say, Huey Long.

(General Johnson is too modest. Barney Baruch once called him the best statistician he had ever seen.—Ed.).

Ave, Caesar!

(Baltimore Evening Sun)

Italian bonds took another licking in the New York market yesterday. Italy is at one moment in the day sold at 77 and then plunged headlong for 11 points to close at 66. And what of the imperial city of Rome? Its 6 1-2s dropped from 66 to 62 1-2.

Italy's legions encompass Ethiopia, her volunteers are felt in Spain. When Mussolini speaks, other nations shudder. Italy's navy threatens to make an Italian lake of the Mediterranean. The power and might of Rome recall as never before the age of her classic greatness. It is all very inspiring and impressive.

Many miles away in the West Indies lies Haiti, a modest little Negro republic. It has no Mussolini, no imperial ambitions, no manifest destiny to be pursued to the terror of its neighbors. And yet yesterday in the New York market Haiti's six per cent bonds were selling at par!

The contrast between the hard-headed business man's estimate of the solvency of humble little Haiti and of Mussolini's dominions makes the "grandeur that is Rome" look a bit tarnished.

Times Change

(High Point Enterprise)

If "Aunt Jane" Dutton had lived in seventeenth century Salem, she wouldn't have had a chance. Called a "witch" by a neighbor, the withered little 82-year-old woman would probably have been dragged to Gallows Hill in double-quick time, another innocent victim of religious fanaticism directed by personal animosity.

But "Aunt Jane" lives in Clintwood, Va., a small village in the Cumberland Mountains. And when bearded "Rocky Joe" Stanley, 52, accused her of practicing witchcraft, she took steps to protect herself. She obtained a warrant charging her aged neighbor with using "abusive language," and "Rocky Joe," not "Aunt Jane," faces trial.

Widow's $25 Cut In Half By "Welfare"

Great Promises of Old Age Pension Have Been Fulfilled in Niggardly Charity.

Dear Sir:

Some time ago the Federal Government advertised that it would give a pension to the old people in North Carolina and would match whatever amount the State would give. This sounded very good, but it has now been put in the hands of the local Welfare Association, and instead of a pension, it has narrowed down to just plain charity, which is a long way from a pension. A lady of my acquaintance who is a widow with two children was receiving $25.00 a month, and with what little work she could get to do, she managed to get by, but since the local association has taken over all this distribution of help to those who need it, they have cut her down to $12.00 a month. This seems very unfair, but from observation, I have learned that when anything gets into local politics it narrows down considerably.

In the words of the immortal Abe Lincoln, I will say, "You can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all of the people all the time." If the local association would cut down so much useless expense as they have, they might be able to dispense charity in a charitable manner where it is deserved. It would be much better for people needing charity to get into the County Home if they could do so, and not be subject to so much questioning to get a little handout. Other states, New York and a number of others, are giving the old people a pension, and not under the name of charity. I hope you dispensers will take notice of what is going on now in your association, and not have so much red tape. From what I can learn, the Negroes seem to fare better than anybody else.

J. B. O'MEARA.

Charlotte.

[Old age benefits are dispensed through the County Welfare Department, not by any private agency.—Ed.]

CHURCH YARD SUGGESTED AS A BETTER PARK SITE THAN THE CEMETERY

Dear Sir:

Mayor Ben Douglas made a mistake, I think, when he thought of establishing the public rest room on the old cemetery lot on Church street. I can point him to a better place, one where there are no graves to block the plan. Move the front iron fence of the First Presbyterian church back about 30 or 40 feet and use the narrow block-long strip for a little uptown park. Give it grass and low shrubbery, a pond and benches and an underground rest room such as is in the Asheville square. It would not be in the least detract from the appearance of the beautiful old First Presbyterian Church and would prove a source of great convenience and pleasure both to visitors and citizens of the city. I think the First Presbyterians probably would be agreeable to this, a strong Christian principle being hospitality to the stranger. Try this suggestion, Mayor Douglas.

GRAY S. McDONALD.

Charlotte.

Japan's Case

(Raleigh Times)

The more Japan explains her operations in China, the more one is reminded of what the late Jud Carroll said to Grover Cleveland when he was a candidate for appointment as a Federal court officer:—"I want that, Buddy!"

Visiting Around

That Fellow Still Hangin' 'Round?

(Garysburg Item, Jackson County News)

U. S. Grant spent the week end here with his family.

Flatterer!

(Sanford Herald)

Mr. and Mrs. Jess Davis and Frank Hamilton stood around as a carnival estimator of averdupois suggested that Mrs. Hamilton weighed the sum total of 118 pounds.

"There's no need for me to sit on the scales," she said as she gazed at a box of candy as it flitted out of her grasp. "You've guessed it."

Others of the party were not so certain, for they wanted that candy, since it was getting paid for anyway, and if the scales showed the man in error, it was theirs.

She climbed into the seat and the arrow spun around—past 100, past 118. It stopped at 139.

Nothin' Doing in the Life, Liberty or Pursuit of Happiness Line

(Fayetteville Observer)

The records show no transfers of property, marriage licenses or automobile wrecks in the county yesterday.

Three Raws for Cap'n Joe!

(Pamlico Item, New Bern Tribune)

Capt. Joe Lupton opened his oyster house Wednesday.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

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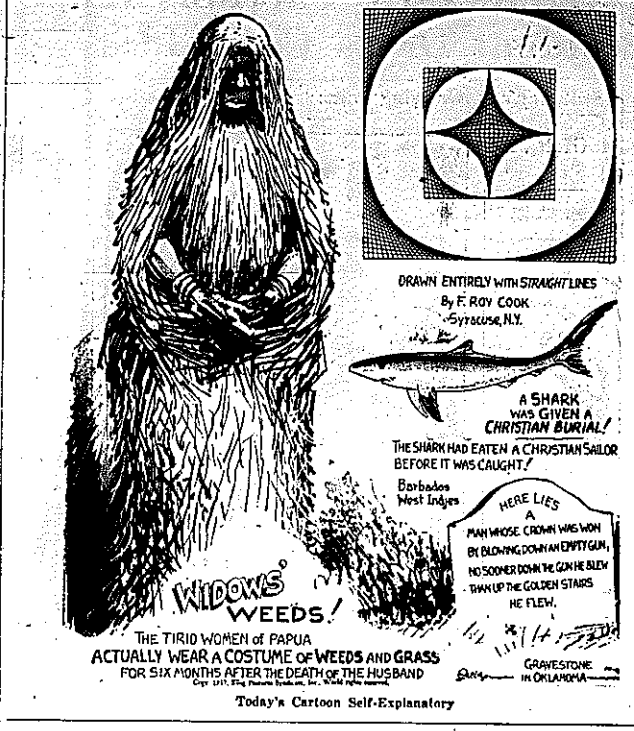
By Ripley

On request, sent with stamped, addressed envelope, Mr. Ripley will furnish proof of anything depicted by him.



Today's Cartoon Self-Explanatory

IT SEEMS TO ME

By HEYWOOD BROUN

THERE should be a terminal facility for every public problem. Even the most complicated controversy eventually is talked out to the point where there ought to be a recess or a show of hands.

Specifically, I am thinking of the case of Justice Hugo Black. The complaint has been made that he was confirmed with too brief a discussion period. I agree. But there has been ample debate since. Those who think that the appointment was tragic have a right to their opinion and no amount of argument is likely to change it. In the same way, the partisans who hold that this particular choice was middling good or perfect are by now rutted in their convictions.

And so I say, "Leave it lay." Obviously, Republicans and other opponents of the Administration have a perfect right to use the Black issue in these fugitive spots where national issues are pertinent in 1937. If it seems expedient, there is no reason why the case should not be raised again in 1938 or in the Presidential election of 1940.

* * *

A JUSTICE ON TRIAL

But I doubt very much whether any great proportion of the population of the United States is as much exercised about Mr. Justice Black as a perusal of the newspapers would seem to indicate. I have seen no little knot of citizens assembled on any street corner.

Quite frankly I will admit that, in addition to rather more important persons, your columnist felt that he had been put upon the spot. When the name of the gentleman from Alabama was sent to the Senate I was among the first couple of hundred to say, "This is a swell appointment." Now I would like to take that back. A blunder was made. In the main it was, from my point of view, a political blunder rather than an actual one.

My guess is that Mr. Black will be an extremely useful member of the High Bench. The blemish on his record may even prove to be helpful in the long run, because it is likely that he will be under a special kind of pressure in dealing with issues affecting tolerance and civil rights. Upon such points the barrister from Birmingham will have to go the whole hog in espousing the liberal position.

I realize that there are sincere people who will not like the appointment even if it turns out well in the long run. They will say that high principles must always outweigh any question of expediency.

* * *

CHANGING THE SUBJECT

I will concede their assertions in order to expedite business. He has been seated. His position is official. At reasonable times the whole issue may be brought up again for sound political purposes. But I do not think that those of us who live with our noses hurled in newspapers should be compelled to have Black for breakfast, Black for lunch and Black for dinner time.

In particular, I am getting weary of the letter to the editor. It is always the same letter. Will anybody join me in a swear-off? This column is going to be dedicated to a no-mention-of-Black program until such time as new evidence comes in or the Justice renders a decision which is properly a subject of news comment. Even if I am bereft of subjects to the point where there is nothing to write about except the autumn landscape in Connecticut, I am not going back to Black.

Naturally, I am in no position to establish cloture but after reading many editorials I think I have a right to say, "This is where I came in, and I don't want to see all eight reels over again." And lest I break the heart of some pro or anti-Black fan, I will make a concession. The merits of the new Justice, in my opinion, should still be subject to debate upon agreement with Mr. Justice Butler's name and fame and antecedents should also be thrown into the agenda.

Gone Up In Smoke

(Goldsboro News-Argus)

Here's what it cost:

Enough to build a $2,500 house, furnish it with $1,000 worth of furniture, put it on five acres of land worth $300, and give such a home to each and every family in the United States, Canada, Ireland, England, Wales, Scotland, France, Belgium, Germany, Russia and Australia.

In addition, in each of the countries named each city of 20,000 population and over could have been given a five million dollar library and a ten million dollar college.

Out of what was left, a sum could have been put aside that at 5 per cent interest would have provided each year a $1,000 salary for each of 125,000 school teachers and the same yearly salary for 125,000 nurses.

That is what President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University figures could have been done with what the World War cost—apart from thirty million lives.

Even if he were a few dollars out, the idea is there.

If what wars cost could be spent in improving conditions throughout the world, maybe there would be fewer wars.

Classic New York

(New York Times)

An educated ancient, Roman who knew his Greek geography would feel at home on a fast express in Central and Western New York just reading the names on the railroad depots—Troy, Utica, Rome, Syracuse, Ithaca. In a slower train or an automobile he would see many other familiar names among the villages — Attica, Aurora, Camillus, Fabius, Ilion, Manlius, Marcellus, Ovid, Tivoli and Tully, among others. He would be surprised, as a good many modern Americans will be surprised, to find such place names in the Empire State as Aurelius, Cato, Cincinnatus, Aristotle and Euclid, Mobe and Medusa, Diana and Minerva.

Earlier Days

News of 75 and 100 Years Ago From Files in the State Library at Raleigh

OCTOBER 15, 1862
75 YEARS AGO

THE KENTUCKY BATTLES

We are deeply mortified and grieved to find that we have to recall some of the congratulations in which we indulged as to the completeness of Bragg's victory in Kentucky. Later accounts give a somewhat different aspect to the matter. The Richmond Enquirer has the following statement:

"The only dispatches which have transpired at the War Department state nothing more than the fact that General Bragg has fallen back from his late position a distance of 40 miles for the purpose of securing subsistence. The combinations of the enemy, who had been strongly reinforced, no doubt renders such a step necessary. It is surmised also that Rosecrans had commenced a strategic movement to form a junction with Buell and cut off our army entirely. There is but little doubt that General Bragg substantially defeated Buell in the late engagement; the only question remaining to be resolved being whether or not that victory was to be a barren one."

Whilst annoyed at the contradiction of statements coming from so many sources as to command belief, and wishing that there could be some mode of punishing the originators of false accounts, we count with The Enquirer in the belief that Buell was defeated, though Bragg does not appear to have profited materially thereby, for he has had to fall back. The absence of boasting in the Yankee papers clearly indicates disaster to Buell.

P. S. The morning's mail brings Bragg's official report which justifies the conviction that he had been victorious, but not to the extent heretofore reported.—Fayetteville Observer.

CONFEDERATE WOMEN

The Cumberland Hospital Association gratefully acknowledges the receipt of $25.00 from Mrs. B. J. Hinadale, $10.00 from Miss Lizzie Holmes, $10.00 from Wm. J. Bell, Esq., and three pairs of socks from Miss Ann Colvin.

Several hundred garments have been received and forwarded to Richmond together with large quantities of hospital shoes, brandy, wine, etc.

Weekly meetings are held at the Seminary on Thursday afternoons.—Fayetteville Observer.

Shooting "Sight Unseen"

(Raleigh Times)

The two were hunting squirrels and pater had bagged one of the rodents and stuffed the game into a hip pocket. Ahead of his son in the woods, he stopped to tie a shoe string or something and the boy glimpsing the protruding tail of the game, took a quick sight and fired with disastrous results. It is assumed that the father squirrel hunter is now taking his meals off the mantel and hoped that, as a deterrent to similar snap shooting in the future, he did not neglect to cause his heir to smart in a similar area.