THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

And Evening Chronicle

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● W. C. Dowd, 1863-1927 ●

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1941

Vengeance

How Many Will Nazis Kill To Avenge General Holtz

All feeling of vindication at news of Nazi General Holtz's assassination in Occupied France are cut short at the thought of what the Germans will do in reprisal.

Day before yesterday, a Frenchman was mowed down by a firing squad simply because he possessed a pistol. Dozens of his coutrymen are going to their graves daily for minor assaults on their conquerors. Several German officers have been killed and, in each instance, scores of innocent hostages have been executed.

But now—a Nazi General! Only God, in His infinite wisdom, knows what ghastly vengeance the Nazis will take before their "honor" is satisfied.

Popskull

Maybe There's a Place for It in the Defense Effort

All the good drys no doubt found comfort in the announcement that Uncle Sam may curtail or cease altogether the production of rum in the Virgin Islands.

It's just another instance of how national defense is transforming our economy. There is a shortage of raw ethyl alcohol. It seems that alcohol is necessary in the production of smokeless powder, 60 gallons of the stuff being required to make the 1,500 pounds of explosives required to fire a 16-inch gun. So Uncle Sam has to convert his rum pots.

Right here, it occurs to us that the Government is overlooking a vast potential supply of alcohol. Scattered from Charlotte westward into the Blue Ridge are thousands of distilleries engaged in the production of a beverage variously known as popskull, white lightning or just plain old mule. The operatives of these units are continually harassed by the T-men. Yet, if an appeal were made to their patriotism, we'll wager that they'd come through with tremendous quantities of fluid from which alcohol (and who knows what else) might be extracted.

And if it takes 60 gallons of ordinary alcohol to make 1,500 pounds of powder, we should estimate that the product of our mountain coves ought to work out at about ten gallons to the ton. And heaven help the enemy.

Formula

It's Still Lying Around Washington Somewhere, Unused

Two or three years ago Senator Byrd gave the Administration a simple formula for cutting down expenditures. "Stop writing checks," he said. The New Dealers considered this advice so old-fashioned as to be almost quaint.

Even so, something on the order of Senator Byrd's formula is going to have to be tried if any progress at all is made in curtailing ordinary expenditures while the people of the country are laboring under the load of super-Defense expenditures. Somebody has got to hand down the word, "Don't write that check."

Such a check, for instance, as the Rural Electrification Authority wrote last week and sent to North Carolina. It was for $318,000, not much by New Deal standards but still enough to buy a few jeeps. It was for a good purpose (rural electrification), but one that can be put off awhile. It was a loan, not a gift, and so will be repaid over a period of 25 years. But the Government's need of money is great and immediate.

If all its agencies and departments continue to write checks on the same lavish scale as before the Defense emergency, the bill at the end of the next two or three years may be beyond the resources of a country even so rich as the United States.

CIO Policy

Can John L. Hold Out Against the Communists?

Pearson and Allen's Merry-Go-Round report that John L. Lewis might abandon his isolationist stand and hop on the Aid-to-Britain and Russia bandwagon is not at all surprising. Come to think about it, the remarkable aspect of the situation is that John L. has been able to hold fast to his isolationism during the first three months of the German drive against Russia.

Despite Phil Murray's elevation to the nominal presidency of the CIO, the real power has remained invested in Mr. Lewis. And since it is well known that Communist leadership is strong in the CIO, it is a testimonial to John L.'s stubborn hatred of President Roosevelt that he clung to isolationism even after the Communist Party Line reversed itself last June.

Now, with the CIO convention less than a month away, with Commie red-hots organizing their campaign in support of the Roosevelt foreign policy, John L. does well to think twice before he appears on the convention floor.

It is, perhaps, too much to hope that a strong CIO aid-to-the-Allies stand will do much in the way of preventing defense strikes. The AFL indorsed a brave resolution to that effect at its convention last week but its unions aren't allowing a little thing like a pledge to keep them from striking whenever they feel like it.

At any rate, if the CIO comes out strong for the Arsenal of Democracy program, both great labor organizations will be agreed on at least one basic issue. But that they would use this common goal as an opportunity to patch up their quarrel and put an end to "jurisdictional disputes" is hardly likely.

As the French airplane workers sang when Daladier asked them to give up their 40-hour week, "You Can't Stop Us From Dreaming."

Warped News

Roosevelt Shows Same Old Trickiness in Kearny Affair

Rather than make a full and detailed report on the Kearny torpedoing, the Navy Department has chosen to add only two tiny but inflammatory bits of information to the previous report that the destroyer had been struck. Now we are told that the vessel has limped into port (name not given) with eleven crew members missing and ten others injured. We are also assured that "a submarine, undoubtedly German" was responsible for the attack.

If the Navy knows this much, it is perfectly obvious that it also knows the rest of the story, that it could, if Secretary Knox and President Roosevelt willed it, give complete details of the clash. Nor does it appear, from the little we have been allowed to know, that there is any strategic reason for keeping the matter partly a military secret. If the safety of our military or naval establishments were at stake, it would have been most unwise to have mentioned the attack at all.

Secretary Knox is a belligerent man. His speeches have left no doubt that if the decision were his, he'd have declared war on Germany and Japan long ago. He's entitled to his convictions. But neither he nor President Roosevelt has the moral right to propagandize the United States by the suppression of information. Every newspaper man knows that it is easy to distort a story by releasing it in driblets. Secretary Knox and President Roosevelt employed this technique in giving out news about the attack on the Greer. They deliberately concealed the fact that the Greer was on the trail of a suspected Axis submarine when the torpedoes were fired.

In the case of the Kearny, the same thing is happening. Instead of telling the whole story at once, so that the people may consider all circumstances of the incident, we are told barely that a German submarine has torpedoed the Kearny and that there are 21 casualties. No more.

Apparently Secretary Knox and President Roosevelt are attempting to inflame American passions in order that Congress will more speedily amend the Neutrality Act. We agree that the Act should be amended—but not by such methods. It is a hard thing to say, but President Roosevelt's record will not support a reputation for consistently frank and open dealings. Rather he has been revealed as a well-meaning leader, one who has elected in many instances to pursue his end through devious means. He remains, for all the good that he has done, a tricky man.

In seven years of living together, we imagine the five Dionnes have pretty well worked out a system of priorities.

It's hard, putting over the idea of sacrifice, self-denial and belt-tightening in a country that still advertises the foot-long hot dog.

Blackout 'Nonsense'

By Hugh S. Johnson

WHAT about the "black-out" business? A friend of mine living in the country on the Eastern seaboard gave a party for the golden wedding of his parents. It was a great occasion for that family. Children and grandchildren came from half a dozen states of the Union — as far west as the Mississippi. Just at the height of the festivities, a caretaker on a neighboring place pounded on the door and told them roughly and rudely to put out all their lights. The host was bewildered. He hadn't heard about the blackout. He was told that it was on. "Why?" An air raid. "When? by whom?" I don't know but if you don't put out those lights, I'll call the State cops. "O. K. call them."

ENTER THE STATE CONSTABULARY

So the cops came. They didn't know what it was all about either but those lights had to go out. By this time the outraged householder had his Americanism up. "Who says so?" We say so. "Well you can just go to hell."

In another similar case one burly cop started to push past the door with a remark: "If you don't put 'em out, I'll put 'em out." The householder asked him to consider and said: "If you break into this house without a warrant, it will be my right and duty to kill you."

"Ah-ha, so you've got a gun, have you?" Here seemed to be something final on the "Village Hampden" and the copper triumphantly queried: "Got a permit?" the answer was simple and sufficient: "Yes."

There was an official retreat but with a parting threat: "O.K. buddie but you will probably be reported to the FBI as un-American, probably a Nazi sympathizer and possibly a Fifth Columnist." Considering the man's standing this was perfectly ludicrous. In the meantime, the blinkers of the highway lights were going like mad and ladies in "attractive uniforms" were dashing up and down the roads in fire-trucks and other vehicles fully lighted, caring for the synthetic casualties.

SUCH TRIFLING IS "UTTER NONSENSE"

Maybe I don't understand it all but this sort of illegal unauthorized and unnecessary trifling with privacy seems to be utter nonsense. There isn't any more likelihood of a German air-raid in any such proportions as would justify this than there is of the collapse of the solar system. If there were, there would be nobody who would fail to co-operate.

Since there isn't, what appraisal can be made of this sort of monkey business other than that it is a deliberate attempt to scare up a war-hysteria on the basis of fiction rather than fact.

Mayor La Guardia seems to have been drafted in this questionable enterprise. It would be a lot better if they got Orson Welles. He demonstrated to this country what really could be done in sending scared people into an emotional and panic-stricken pit.

Mrs. Roosevelt is reported to have said that, while she doesn't expect or desire it, just a little air-raid practice might shake up people out of their "apathy." We might even get that next.

Mussolini--Another Sulla

By Alfred Pearson

(Pearson is the nom de plume of an American just retired from a long stay in Italy. He presents some interesting, objective, and hitherto unreported facets of the Italian position today.—Editors, THE NEWS.)

REVIEWING the situation in Italy today, students of history cannot fail to recall that other dictator of Rome, Sulla, and, in doing so, find a remarkable analogy with the unhappy Mussolini.

During a period of unrest and riots, Sulla marched on Rome, revived for himself the ancient title of Dictator and assumed absolute power. Sulla, like Mussolini, became very popular, until, also like the Duce, he began a system of military colonies. Through his military ambition Sulla ruined the economic fabric of Rome and impoverished Italian agriculture.

SULLA SURRENDERED TO HIS PASSION

Having brought ruin and devastation, Sulla then became temperamental, gave way to fits of passion if he found the slightest opposition to his wishes, and finally had to retire because he broke a blood vessel during a fit of passion.

He became known as the Don Juan of politics, and although he preached a policy of "blood and iron," he spent his last days philandering with actresses while the empire he had tried to build crumbled about his ears.

One could take the life of Sulla, substitute the name of Mussolini, change the dates, and the story would read exactly like the history of Italian Fascism today, more than 2,000 years later.

Italians, depressed and disillusioned over their leader, watch him, too, philandering with actresses while Italy crumbles, its economic fabric disintegrates and its agriculture—which means the food of the poor—falls into a ruinous state.

But, say Italian students, while Sulla had his military ambitions, no other dictator used him as a pawn. He was master of his own fate, while Hitler controls the fate of the Duce.

Therein lies the canker that is eating the heart out of Italy and the Italian people.

GERMAN PSYCHOLOGY HASN'T WORKED IN ITALY

The Germans were never good psychologists. Had Hitler and his Nazi advisors shown any sense of psychology in dealing with their Axis partners the story might have been greatly different. But, their treatment of the Italian people has been crude, cruel and ruthless.

In Sicily, the Germans wished to build airdromes from which to try to dominate the Mediterranean. To do so, they tore down ancient homes and destroyed ancient estates. Concrete runways and huge hangars now blot the Sicilian landscape, the stonework of beautiful buildings being used in the construction. Protests by landowners were swept aside, and overbearing, truculent youths of the Luftwaffe overran the place in thousands.

Hordes of Gestapo agents descended on the cities, towns and villages of Italy and for no good reason at all, except to instill terror, made wholesale arrests.

This is happening in Italy today. Gestapo agents have taken control of all public offices. People who have been living quietly in the same place for years are suddenly given a few hours notice to remove to another part of the country. Homes are being confiscated by any Nazi who takes a fancy for becoming the tenant.

Food and raw materials, which are scarce anyway, are being loaded up and transported to Germany, while the people of Italy are told brutally they must starve.

NAZIS SHIP ITALIAN WORKMEN TO GERMANY

Italian soldiers are being ordered to Russia and the Middle East, not by Mussolini or his generals but by Nazi military commanders. Italian workmen are being sent by the thousand from their sunny homes to work in Nazi factories and Nazi fields, forced to leave their wives and families who are kept in ignorance of the breadwinner's whereabouts.

Italian defences are being manned by Germans who tell the people that the Fuehrer, not Mussolini, must be obeyed. Italian losses on Nazi fronts are not disclosed to the Italian people. Thousands of Italian women wonder whether they are widows, whose husbands have died, not for Italy, but for Germany. Thousands of Italian children, old enough to understand something of the tragedy, wonder whether their fathers and their brothers are still alive. No one dare ask questions. To do so would be to offer an insult to the Fuehrer.

Italian culture is being spat upon, figuratively speaking, by Nazi soldiery. Italian art is, wherever necessary in the eyes of a German, being fed into the voracious war machine.

All these things made the average Italian anti-Nazi. If they could or dare be, they would be violently anti-German.

ITALIANS REMAIN VIOLENTLY ANTI-BRITISH

But the British make a great mistake if they think that because of these things the people of Italy are pro-British. With the exception of a few intriguers in high places—people to whom political opportunity is the breath of life—and the Vatican, where all the Cardinals, with the exception of Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi, are anti-Fascist on religious grounds, the people are only pro-Italy.

That is to say, they would be as loath to regain their country for themselves from behind a barricade of British bayonets, as they would be to see Hitler become the Fuehrer of Rome, or to look forward to a time after the war when Italians were merely vassals of Berlin.

They feel that the latter is their destiny unless they fight now, but they would fight a British invasion, even a political one, with equal spontaneity and with just as much unison.

Their real trouble today is to discover ways and means of throwing off the Hitler yoke without becoming the victims of a full-scale German invasion in the way that Czechoslovakia and other countries have been invaded.

THE PEOPLE LEAN TOWARD MILITARY LEADER

The position, in the minds of Italians, is desperately urgent. Therefore, they are willing to be used by the militarists, the terrorists or anyone else who offers the opportunity of a coup d'etat that would not leave them worse off than they are now. Their leaning is towards the military leaders, who, they believe, could get control of the country and keep the Nazis out by force, because the rank and file of the army would be behind the leaders. For this reason the unsung hero of Italy today is the Duke of Aosta.

Aosta may or may not be able to bring off a coup d-etat. It is certain that if he gets an opportunity he will take it, and he, together with other military leaders are certainly watching the situation very closely.

But, in conclusion, it should be borne in mind that the mass of ordinary people in Italy are both incensed and hard pressed by restrictions and driven by a severe shortage of food which, however, were it not for the Nazis, would not amount to a shortage, so how far it is possible to starve and repress a naturally happy people before a revolution breaks out it is hard to say.

But everything points to the fact that the Italians are ready to take Italy for the Italians. When or how they will act is a matter of guesswork.

And Roosevelt Is a Harvard Man!

Christian Science Monitor

The announcement that Harvard University completed its fiscal year with a deficit of $25,676 indicates one of those issues that can be used for ball to catch more fish, if one remembers what former President Eliot said when faced with a similar situation: "A small deficit is an asset for a college." That remark gains point when one reads that the book value of Harvard's general and specific investments, composed in part of gifts made to cover past deficits, totals $157,000,000.

Senator Soaper Says:

Pondering the Far Eastern situation, Uncle George Norris isn't sure that a series with Japan wouldn't be a good thing, and picks the Yankees in four games.

There is fitful talk of another British expedition to Norway, where old Bill could look for a better ole.

The Ku Klux Klan has formed a "fun-loving branch," at $25 a member, called the House of Mirth. The Summer retreat, of course, would be Kill Kare Kamp.

A dog that wags its tail up and down instead of from side to side is shown by a coast breeder. Just the thing, we would say, for a pet in a china shop.

Even before he consulted the oculist in Havana, Arias of Panama was pretty sharp at reading handwriting on a wall.

Conquest Of Italy

By Raymond Clapper

WHATEVER satisfaction Germany may be taking in the news from Russia, Italy is becoming an increasing headache. So much so that even at this time when the organization of Russian resources must be requiring an enormous amount of attention, Germany is compelled to send her best economic trouble shooter, Walther Funk, and a staff of experts into Italy.

The purpose of this mission is clearly indicated by the internal situation in Italy, which has become desperate from the German point of view.

Resentment against Germany is rapidly growing. Information reaching this Government leaves no doubt about it. For some time Germany has been compelled to send growing numbers of officials and so-called tourists into Italy. As these arrivals became more conspicuous, Italian resentment increased and murmuring hostility became gradually louder.

MOST ITALIAN HEAVY INDUSTRIES HAVE BEEN SEIZED

Germans already had taken over most of the heavy industry in Italy. One of the largest iron and steel works is completely German-owned now. The larger portion of Italian chemical- and metal-producing plants is controlled if not owned outright by German interests. In practically all cases, the industries are at least controlled through the fact that most of the raw materials must be furnished by Germany. Italy has outstanding deficiencies in coal, petroleum, iron and steel, ferro-alloys, copper, nickel, tin, magnesium and rubber. She must look to Germany for all these, and for them Germany exacts her price.

The price is simply this. Germany is denuding Italy of everything. Italians see it as they shop. Germans in Italy are systematically buying up unreasonably large quantities of goods. When the Italian cannot buy what he wants, he blames it on the Germans. Some of the recent restrictions which Italy has placed on consumers' goods were for the purpose of checking further denuding of the country's stocks by German purchases. Italy has forbidden the export of automobiles because Germany was buying them up. During a two-month period recently Germany bought 5,000 Italian automobiles for shipment to Germany.

ITALIAN RATION IS HALF THE GERMAN RATION

All these activities have caused irritations among the Italian people as individually they encountered instances of German operations. Furthermore, letters coming home from Italian troops in occupied countries refer time and again to the attitude of German troops toward their less successful comrades in arms. Now bread has been put on the ration, and the Italians are heavy bread-eaters. This is provoking much complaint. Information reaching this Government shows that an Italian in Italy doesn't get any more to eat in a week than an Italian interned in one of our camps in Montana gets in a day. Our information shows that the Italian ration is barely half of the German ration.

Added to all this is popular suspicion of Germany's intentions. Italian individualism is coming to the surface again in a rebound from the oppression of totalitarian war. Italians see how Germany is stripping the country now. They feel a growing apprehension that if Germany wins the war, Italy will be given only meager spoils from the dominant partner.

The Conservative Opinion

Wall Street Journal

The late Chief Justice White was extremely conservative in his opinions. One day he was walking in the country with a friend, when the latter remarked, "Those sheep over there have just recently been sheared."

Replied the Chief Justice, "They appear to have been sheared on this side."

"Too Little . . . Too Late . . ."

Business Week

Variety, trade paper of the entertainment field, says the 20th Century-Fox Studios, while making the picture, "A Yank in the RAF," evacuated Dunkerque in 27 days with 1,100 extras—and remarks that Britain did the same job in three days with an army.

Visitin' Around

C'est la Guerre

(Lanes Creek Item, Monroe Journal)

Corn shuckings are early this year. I have never known one in September before. Maybe the people are trying to get ready for the maneuvers.

Any Holds Barred?

(The Charlotte News)

The Piedmont PTA will meet at 8 o'clock tonight in the school auditorium. After the business meeting, parents are invited to compete with their children's teachers in the gymnasium.

Dogs In Bed

New York Times

On cold nights many dogs of tolerable sensibility beg to be taken upon the bed. This is a situation we must all face squarely at this time of year. Some dogs are frank about it; they file their business papers in the bedroom. Dogs of slyer disposition wait until the master has dropped off to sleep and then blow in his face, hoping soon to be lifted up on the bed by the reflex action of a man not in full control of his senses.

Some dogs slip upon the bed unaided in the dead of the night, which cannot be detected only by wheezes from the mattress and light groans from the springs. But whatever advice a dog may use to get up off a drafty floor, we wish respectfully to advise our readers against countenancing this pernicious practice.

It is bad from several points of view. First of all, it is not hygienic. Even the cleanest dogs have a peculiar oil in their coats that leaves an unsightly spot on madame's blankets. A dog's paws are also soiled. What a dog's paws are to the top blanket is equivalent to what you do to the sheets when, on exceptional occasions, you go to bed with your boots on.

Dogs who sleep on the pillow are of especially doubtful hygienic value. We are definitely of the opinion that it is unwise for a man to sleep with a dog on his head.

A dog on the bed sometimes shatters a man's nervous system. This comes about in a way that is not generally expected. When the dog first calls up on the bed his weight is normal—ten pounds, 30 pounds, 60 pounds, according to species. So far, so good. During the night, however, the dog acquires poundage by a process that has never been scientifically explained. He can quadruple his weight before morning. That is enough to break the legs of a person who is asleep and unconscious of what is going on.

TODAY'S BIBLE THOUGHT

We know that there is no death. Christ proved this. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.—Romans 5:14.

Latin-American Conga Line

—By Herblock