THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 1946.

The Veto Message Is Worth Reading

It doesn't seem likely that many Congressmen had time yesterday to digest President Truman's lengthy veto message on the Case Bill before they rushed to vote on it. That ballot, which sustained the veto by a mere five votes, cannot be used to gauge the merits and demerits of the President's argument. It was largely a political vote, reflecting the strained relations between Administration and Congress, the anger of many Congressmen at union abuses, and perhaps more than anything else the ragged temper of the times.

The President's veto message deserves the careful study of anyone seriously interested in effecting an equitable revision of the Federal labor code. Mr. Truman's argument is naturally a negative one: he points out what appear to him to be weaknesses of the Case Bill and makes no effort to outline in detail a legislative program to replace it. But it is apparent that he has given the matter deep consideration, and has listened to competent advisers. The thoughtful, unimpassioned message is reminiscent of Mr. Truman at his best, when as Senator, he attained national stature through his investigation of war industries.

Mr. Truman has done a really remarkable job of steering clear of the heated controversy between management and labor. It was his announced intention to consider the Case Bill "from the standpoint of whether or not it benefits the public." This brought Mr. Truman to the question of "whether it will help to stop strikes and work stoppages and prevent other practices which adversely affect our economy." It was the President's judgment that it would not.

Section by section, he documented his case against the bill. There were no high-flown bursts of oratory designed to soothe the union bosses who have attacked him so bitterly since he requested stringent emergency labor legislation (a request he renewed in passing). His criticism was technical, stemming always from his central point that the bill would cause more strikes than it would prevent, and he sought to show how the various provisions would work out in practice. Repeatedly he expressed his opinion that the Case Bill would not have prevented any of the major strikes that have thrown the reconversion program out of kilter.

There is reason, perhaps, to question many of Mr. Truman's arguments, but only on technical grounds. There is no evidence that he has yielded here, as he has so often in the past, to political pressure. The fact of his veto is guaranteed to alienate the unreconstructed conservatives, who favor any legislation so long as it is aimed at curbing the power of the unions. The language of his message, and his repeated insistence that the entire labor code must be overhauled, will not please labor, which is bent on maintaining the present favorable legislative status quo. No direct political gain is likely to result from the message, except as it serves to restore the President's battered reputation in the eyes of impartial observers.

In view of the events of the past few weeks it required forebearance, and courage for the President to appeal for a calm, dispassionate appraisal of the entire labor picture. His veto message, if it serves no other purpose, should demonstrate the futility of past Congressional efforts to meet a genuine crisis with a patchwork of legislation, conceived in anger and enacted in haste. The central problem was well stated in one of the concluding paragraphs of the veto message:

> Our problem in shaping permanent legislation in this field is to probe for the causes of lockouts, strikes and industrial disturbances. Then, to the extent possible, we must eliminate these causes. Strikes against private employers cannot be ended by legislative decree. Men cannot be forced in peace-time democracy to work for a private employer under compulsion. Therefore, strikes must be considered in the whole context of our modern industrial society. They must be considered in the light of inflationary pressures, of problems of full employment, of economic security.

President Truman's veto has halted, by the narrowest margin, a Congressional effort to reduce the labor crisis to two dimensions—employer against employee. He has reminded the Congress, and let us hope the public, that any final solution must be measured against the public interest. It was a good day's work.

The Democratic Choice Is Final

THE Raleigh News & Observer and *The High Point Enterprise* are engaged in a mild little campaign to reform North Carolina's election system in order to bring the party primaries and the general election closer together. Starting an election contest around March 1 and running it into November is just too much of a good thing, *The Enterprise* argues, suggesting that the first primary be staged on the last Saturday in July and the second four weeks thereafter.

We have always looked upon politics as a hot weather sport, like baseball, and we are in general accord with the suggestion. But it is *The Enterprise*'s reasoning that interests us most. That estimable journal argues with a straight face that the general election has some real connection with the Democratic primary.

Holding the primaries in mid-Summer, *The Enterprise* solemnly points out, "would give the Democrats and Republicans time enough to prepare for their November battle. It would interfere less with the work of our Congressmen in Washington. It would tend to reduce the cooling off of public interest." A Republican-Democratic battle? The battle, except in isolated instances (notably the Al Smith campaign when the state went off its rocker) consists largely of a Democratic effort to shake out enough stalwarts to guarantee against an energetic Republican effort to capitalize on the majority's lethargy.

In a few Congressional districts, where the Democratic general election majority sometimes drops as low as two to one, there is probably enough of a Republican threat to keep a Congressman's mind off his business in Washington. But in most the situation is similar to that here in the Tenth, where Messrs. Jones (Dem.) and Burkholder (Rep.) theoretically are now engaged in a titanic political struggle. The silence accompanying this bi-partisan campaign for Congress is deafening.

If it is wishful thinking in which *The Enterprise* is indulging, we'll be glad to join. We also look forward to the day when the general election will serve some function other than to provide perfunctory confirmation for public officials actually elected in the Democratic primary. At the moment, however, it doesn't seem to make a great deal of difference whether the primaries are conducted in the cool of Spring or the heat of Summer; the Democrats still exercise the final choice of state and Federal officials.

The Wonders Of Television

TELEVISION, we have been led to believe, will change the character of broadcasting. The new dimension of sight, added to sound, opens new fields of endeavor, guarantees Everyman a ringside seat wherever history is being made. The great radio stars of today who happen to have lovely voices coupled with repulsive faces are bound for oblivion. The static radio stage—a table, a liebt panel, a microphone and a clock—is on the way out.

Well, maybe.

We have at hand a graphic description of the first television broadcast, over ABC, of one Henry (Here's) Morgan. Mr. Morgan's Boswell, a press agent named Hy Gardner, reports that a number of "firsts in television" were established on this historic program. It was the first time "a studio audience was encouraged to laugh out loud during a broadcast." We pass quickly over the horrible image this invokes, and proceed to the second first Mr. Morgan, complaining of the heat of the television lights, performed the first strip-tease (to the waist only, Legion of Decency) in television history.

But it is the note on Mr. Morgan's commercial that disturbs us most. As described in Mr. Gardner's non-stop prose:

> It was the first time a sponsor's slogan was animated via television—Morgan demonstrating, with a boy and girl of the same size, how, by changing into Adler Elevator Shoes "You Can Be Taller Than She Is"—a preview of television commercials of the future. . . .
>
> A preview of the future, you will note. The day is coming when, right in your living room, you will be able to look at, as well as listen to a soft drink hitting the spot, an animated potato chip, a happy little wash day song, a young lady in a coma induced by Mals Oui perfume, a bright young man getting rid of his dandruff, body odor being routed, and perhaps even an elderly stomach-sufferer making a marvelous recovery from a bilious attack.
>
> Science we always say, is wonderful.

As usual, after unleashing the atomic monster, science is frightened stiff at what it has done. Thus it has been ever since Dr. Frankenstein invented Boris Karloff.

Another Voice

Eddy Gilmore Comes Back Home

WHEN Eddy Gilmore's plane stopped at Charlotte, the enterprising newspapers of that city took pictures of the now famous correspondent and his lovely Russian wife and welcomed them to Mr. Gilmore's old home state, North Carolina.

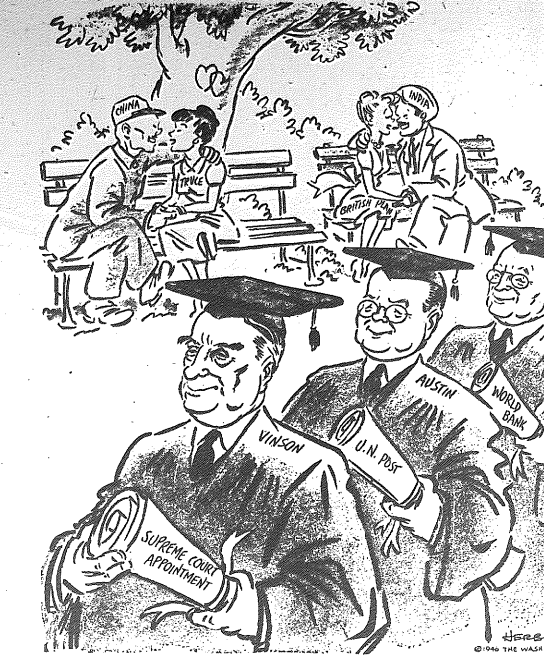
When the plane stopped here, we took pictures and welcomed Eddy and his wife to his old home state, Georgia.

When the plane reached Birmingham, the hustling press there took pictures of the couple and welcomed them to his old home state, Alabama.

When Eddy gets back to Moscow, we will wager a pretty penny, that *Pravda* and *Isvestia* will welcome Tovarich Gilmore back home after a stretch in foreign parts.

Eddy is that sort of fellow. He is at home anywhere and everybody is proud to claim him. In that respect, he has it all over that Homeric war chronicler of long ago—for whom seven cities warred when he was dead, but "living had no roofe to shrowd his head."—*Atlanta Journal.*

June Is Busting Out All Over



People's Platform

From The Distaff Side

ROCKINGHAM

Editors, THE NEWS:

THEY say there are two sides to every question but only one side was brought before the public in the recent rail strike. People condemned the strikers for throwing the nation into pandemonium without realizing that they were justified in their demands for higher wages and better working conditions.

How many people, on the other side of the fence, know that the railroads are still operating under outdated rules which came into effect twenty-five years ago? How many are cognizant of the conditions under which the men work? If conditions were as ideal as you heard they were why did the Government continue to hand out unemployment compensation checks while the railroads begged for manpower?

I don't pretend to understand all the pros and cons of labor and management but I, along with millions of other people who depend on wages for a living, recognize a dirty deal when we meet it face to face. Being the wife of a railroader, I am in position to know a little about the state of things where he works.

My husband started work on the yard as switchman and brakeman during the Winter of 1943, at which time, due to so many men's hands being in the armed forces, it was necessary for one man to just about do the work of two. He went on the job when called, at irregular hours, day or night and frequently worked for many hours on a stretch, in snow or sleet or any kind of weather the weather man saw fit to provide.

Railroading is, at best, a hazardous occupation but doubly so when the men have to climb to the top of slippery box cars which are not equipped with the safety devices so much needed, in cumbersome rain suits, and ride a line of cars down the track when they can scarcely see a foot ahead in the driving rain. But come rain or shine or bitter cold the railroad man is on the job.

In Summer the boiling sun mixes with the dust and smoke and cinders and I have seen my husband take off his shirt and wring the sweat (and I mean sweat and not perspiration) out of it. It would take many minutes of his precious rest period to scrub away the grime, which was embedded in the very pores of his skin, before he could drop into bed from sheer exhaustion. Many times when there were personal matters which he had to attend to, he would go back on the job for another sixteen hour shift with only three or four hours rest.

He became almost a stranger to our two small sons who, in our abbreviated living quarters, had to be constantly "sh-ushed" to "let Daddy sleep"—and this was not the most restful thing for any of our nerves. Even Sunday made no difference. When God set aside the Sabbath for a day of rest He certainly was not thinking of the railroad man.

All during the war the men worked day or night, away from their families, in any kind of weather. Some of the hardships they endured could not have been far behind those suffered by the soldiers in fox holes. Indeed, many were "wounded in action" in the frequent unavoidable accidents just as sure- ly as if they had been on the battlefields. In their uniforms of soiled overalls they were good patriotic soldiers. But did they get any medals or purple hearts or recognition of any kind? No, and they did not expect to. It was taken for granted that the wheels would keep rolling—and they did.

Then when the war was a thing of the past it was decided to ask for some of the improvements which they so richly deserved. Everyone knows the way in which their demands were met.

The Missouri farmer who found himself in the chief seat in the White House by unfortunate accident was greeted by "a rousing cheer" by people who could not have known what they were applauding when he resorted to Hitler tactics to settle the strike. MISTER Truman, in indulging in a temper tantrum over the railways lost not only his dignity but the respect and vote of many a working man (AND his loyal wife.)

America, . . . one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Can that be applied to a nation where men are forced to work under whatever rules are dictated???

—MRS. D. E. GRYDER.

(NOTE: Thanks to Mrs. Gryder for the most eloquent defense of the railroad man's position we have yet seen. Whatever disagreement there may be over the propriety of the recent strike, few, we think, will question her tribute to the magnificent record of the railroad workers during the war years.—Eds., THE NEWS.)

On Respectability

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

I READ Burke Davis' article in THE NEWS last week and he certainly was misleading in his write-up on the Piedmont Courts. In the first place every one that lives at the Courts didn't come from the slums. They (the bigger majority) could have come because of low income, etc., but just a low income doesn't make a family a city problem. They can be respectable citizens. The Courts in my opinion isn't a place for all down and outs to live, however there are some there that are down and some that need to be out.

We would just like for Burke Davis to know that a big part of us were respectable Charlotte citizens when we moved here. Burke Davis should stick to his liquor column and since he knows so much about it he should know that liquor is the biggest cause for slums.

—MRS. W. H. CUDE.

(NOTE: Mr. Davis did not intend to infer that those whose low incomes made them eligible for residence in Piedmont Courts were unrespectable. He did make the point that living conditions forced upon low-income families, before the Courts were built, made a decent, respectable existence most difficult. His article pointed with pride to the record made by residents of Piedmont Courts. His conclusion and Mrs. Cude's are identical—the majority of the residents at Piedmont Courts have always been good citizens, who only needed the incentive low-cost public housing provided.—Eds., THE NEWS.)

The People's Platform is available to any reader who cares to mount it. Communications should be less than 300 words, typewritten if possible, and on only one side of the paper. Libel and obscenity will be deleted—otherwise anything goes. Each letter must be signed although, in exceptional cases and upon request, we will withhold the writer's name.—Editors, THE NEWS.

Quote, Unquote

IF we treat it (atom bomb) as a weapon, we will never have peace.—Dr. Robert M. Hutchins chancellor University of Chicago.

There will be no war if we as a country remain strong physically and spiritually.—W. Averell Harriman, former ambassador to Moscow.

Marquis Childs

Maritime Problems

WASHINGTON

UNION bosses compete for power and the public suffers. The threatened AFL maritime walkout is a perfect example.

The bosses compete not only for power but in ideological warfare. Again the maritime unions are a good example. Harry Lundeberg of the AFL Sailors Union of the Pacific denounces the CIO maritime leaders as Communists. They call him a Trotskyist. This ideological warfare is even more bitter than the struggle for power. It has something of the ferocity of a religious war.

It is counter to reason. It is counter to common sense. It is counter not merely to the public interest but to the interest of the seamen themselves. The jobs of American seamen are precarious at best. American shipowners recently issued a blast declaring that acceptance "of staggering wage increases along with reduced working hours designed solely to produce added overtime pay" would place the U. S. merchant marine in "an impossible competitive position." Certainly the high pay of American seamen was one reason our merchant marine dwindled between the two wars.

COMPETITION FIERCE

Competition on the seas was fierce. The crews of some nations worked for half the wages paid our seamen out of Government subsidies. Their quarters and food would never have been accepted by Americans.

Behind this competition was the ever-present fear of unemployment. That same fear is behind the dispute in coal and on the railroads. Sweeping changes in technology threaten millions of jobs.

Business jumps at every opportunity to cut down wage costs because that seems to mean more profits. The answer of union leaders is to try to hold each job as a vested right. This explains "featherbedding" and similar makework practices.

When the two points of view by head there is a strike. That means violence and disruption and a growing conviction that the only possibility of settlement lies in the arbitrary use of force.

The reasonable way is the way of a conference now going on in Seattle. Called by the International Labor Office, the conference is trying to get international agreement on a minimum wage for seamen everywhere of 15 British pounds—about $64. Such an agreement is a start at ending the cutthroat competition of the past. Delegates from 40 countries are discussing the problems of seafaring men.

NO SOLUTION

A minimum of $64 a month would not, of course, solve the problem of American shipowners. The average monthly wage of American seamen today is $127. If the maritime unions get anything like their present demands, the possibility of U. S. competition on the high seas will be slim.

The net result of the Bridges-Curran-Lundeberg tactics may be wholesale unemployment on the waterfront. That might serve the political objectives of the extreme left. Certainly it would make no economic sense.

The U. S. maritime unions are demanding larger crews so that a shorter work day would be possible. Yet those who look at it objectively say the present crew system is a carryover from the past, with all the inefficiencies of the past. If union and management were to get together amicably, great changes in the direction of efficiency could be brought about. With increased efficiency, it would be possible to pay much higher wages.

But greater efficiency would mean fewer jobs. Therefore it is hard to imagine the union agreeing to such rational changes.

We talk glibly about planning our economy. We make tentative steps in that direction. But thus far we have made little progress in meeting the challenge of technological unemployment. We cannot ignore that challenge. Prof. Seymour E. Harris of Harvard said the other day that, in 1941, 60,000,000 workers did the work it would have taken 150,000,000 to do back in 1900. By 1980, 30,000,000 will do the work of 60,000,000. The advance of the machine is a threat and a promise that man kind has steadily evaded.

GOOD BEGINNING

The conference in Seattle is the sort of beginning we must make. A shortened work week is imperative. But it should not have to come through strikes and violence that can do infinite damage at this moment in history.

Samuel Grafton

Split Over Russia

LOS ANGELES.

I HAVE sat in on several political conversations during the last few weeks, in widely-separated parts of the country, and the dialogue is very different now from what it was a year or two ago. There is a grimness on the key question of Russia which did not exist before. Conversations about Russia are no longer efforts to thrash out what Russia has done and what we have done; they are sessions at which postures are matched. People label themselves; one is still friendly toward Russia or one is not, and there is a tendency to wall them off from the inside out, to let one's feelings shape one's view of world affairs, instead of, as during the war years, to work from the outside in, and to let the shape of world affairs influence and regulate one's feelings.

HARDENED ATTITUDES

And if there has been a swing to the right, so to speak, on the question of Russia, there has also been a swing to the left; so that while those who no longer have amiable feelings about the Soviet Union regard those who still do have them as bewitched, those who do keep them show a tendency to regard those who do not as being the vilest reactionaries. Attitudes have hardened, and, in spite of all other miracles of this age of communication, there is less communication every day between members of the two groups.

Sometimes, of an evening, in someone's house, the great question will come up, and the argument at once takes a familiar pattern. Since both the United States and Russia are great nations, whose busy governments do many things, it is possible to accumulate bits of evidence to fit any case, so that one side will declare that America is fostering reaction in Bavaria, and the other side that Russia is jailing too many people in Eastern Europe, and then the first will say something and the second will reply. And it is not a search for truth, but a jailing of half-bricks, with each side jealously hoarding its precious little stock of ammunition.

I recall one session in which the antis never gave up the question of how Russia treats American reporters, while the other side never left off the theme of America's desire for new military bases; and it was like two public meetings going on in the same room, and for all the contact there was between them they might as well have been held in different places.

IN-BETWEENERS

There is a certain in-between group whose members make it a kind of point of honor not to join in the hue and cry against Russia but who cheer when they know that a portion of the American press and forum has always been bitterly anti-Russian, and is not really disappointed by recent developments, but enchanted by them, and they do not wish to become associate members of this section of opinion. But this in-between group which is waiting and wondering is small and not happy.

It is impossible that so sharp a cleavage should not show up in the reflected ways which are familiar in conduct. More than once, after an evening argument of the sort I have mentioned, I have heard the host's cheerful: "Well, I'm going to get me a little farm and grow some things, and sit it out." One man, who has been most active in political affairs here, said, "I'm through with politics. Maybe I'm getting old. Anyway, I'm through."

HOPE EBBING

For war-time Russia was the vessel for hope that something in the way of world unity could be worked out, and with this outward hope ebbing, one turns inward again, for satisfactions, as well as for arguments. It makes up an interesting chain of ideas when a man, after denouncing the world for an evening as in a mess, turns toward midnight to speaking brightly of his little farm, and it is a kind of painful spectacle in the case of one who was until recently an advocate of interdependence, and a foe of isolation, in whatever form.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Missouri Pals Truman's Worst Weakness

WASHINGTON

THOSE who have studied Harry Truman over the years can't decide whether it is blind personal loyalty or some other bond which makes him go through hell and high water for the Tom Pendergasts, the James Vardamans, and the John Snyders.

Obviously, it isn't just because they hail from Missouri. Truman loyalty goes deeper than that; almost takes the form of a petty vindictiveness—a tendency to wreak vengeance on anyone who has opposed an old Missouri crony. Truman takes out his vengeance on the public by putting that crony in a position of trust where the public must suffer without means of retaliation—until next election.

Thus, one of the first things Harry Truman did when he became President of the United States was to fire Maurice Milligan, the U. S. attorney who had jailed his friend Tom Pendergast. Milligan had only done his duty. But within a week after Truman stepped into the White House, Milligan began looking for another job.

Next, Truman fired the Attorney General, Francis Biddle, who had stood up for Milligan and tried to keep him as U. S. attorney.

More recently, some advisers proposed the appointment of Justice Frank Murphy to be Chief Justice. Murphy is one of the outstanding members of the Supreme Court, but not for one minute did he have a chance to be Chief Justice. For he was the Attorney General of the United States who ordered the prosecution of Pendergast.

It made no difference that Boss Pendergast operated one of the most crooked machines in the country. The guiltier he was, the more Harry Truman defended him, and the more vindictive he was toward Pendergast's enemies.

Snyder's Score Card

LIKEWISE with John Snyder. It makes no difference that Snyder got the White House into more economic trouble than any other Administration leader. It makes no difference that Snyder advised abolishing the War Labor Board, thereby throwing away the Government's chief key for stopping strikes.

It makes no difference that Snyder balled up the railroad strike, thereby throwing away all chance of a Democratic Congressional victory next November, and even Truman's chance of re-election in '48.

It makes no difference that Snyder released housing controls, then had to reinstate them; released woolen controls and caused a veterans clothing shortage; probably prolonged the coal strike by not letting John L. Lewis talk to U. S. Steel about a settlement in captive mines; and abolished the job of Economic Stabilizer Will Davis, then had to recreate it.

These may be costly errors to the country, may set the nation back for months. But they amount to nothing alongside the friendship of two old friends from Missouri.

Whether friendship is the only factor, nobody knows. Perhaps if the Senate probes deeply enough it can find out. At any rate, there is nothing Harry Truman would not do for John Snyder—at the expense of the tender fiscal affairs of the United States.

Patient Laundry Lew

SECRETARY of Labor "Laundry Lew" Schwellenbach is a patient man. He learned the virtues of patience as a Spokane laundryman when he had to handle customers' complaints about frayed collars and lost shirts. Patient as he is, Lew has had a tough time with his boss in the White House during the maritime strike negotiations.

Shortly after the talks began, Schwellenbach called on the newspapers, the shipping people, and Government officials to say nothing which would arouse feelings and imperil the negotiations. The very next morning, however, Lew's boss in the White House did exactly the opposite by announcing plans to use the Navy to break the strike. Thus, of course, he put the ship owners in a favored position. They were no longer under any compulsion to settle before the strike deadline. When patient Laundry Lew heard this, even he hit the ceiling.

Then the Navy announced, with White House backing, that it was calling on its reserves and volunteers to break the strike. Again this played into the ship owners' hands; again the Secretary of Labor was upset.

Finally, he sent Assistant Secretary of Labor John Gibson to the White House with a personal appeal to the President to refrain from prejudicing the negotiations. Truman agreed, issued a statement saying the Government hoped for settlement; did not want to be put in the position of breaking the strike.

Meanwhile, Laundry Lew has the sympathy of Secretary of State Byrnes and retiring Secretary of the Treasury Vinson. Vinson even told the President he doesn't want to be called in to help settle any more strikes at the last minute, after John Snyder had bungled things up. Secretary Byrnes was so fed up with the White House handling of the railroad strike that he told railroad union chiefs he had "washed his hands of the whole mess."