THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

W. C. DOWD JR., Publisher · J. E. DOWD, Editor · HARRY S. ASHMORE, Associate Editor

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 1946.

Speaking Of Vision--I

IN the Foreword of that ubiquitous brochure, "100,899," issued by *The News* in 1941 to call national attention to this city's arrival in the fast hundred-thousand-population class, there appeared this blurb:

"Though blessed with no great single natural advantage, such as deep water or junction of railways, the little town that was Charlotte long ago decided upon the direction it would take. Consistently it has followed a forward course.

"It was ambitious. It was alert. . . . It had vision.

"And so it grew, not only in population but in outlook, not only in importance but in appearance. Its present phase here spread out for view, is that of a city which has arrived at a distinction which it confidently expects to be only the starting point for greater progress."

Huh?

Some time ago the Lions Club of Charlotte embarked on the venture of creating for the people of the city a new civic feature. It was to be a wondrous park. Freedom Park, not only commemorating the valor of our sons in war but providing for them and their sons a place of beauty and recreation.

The Lions themselves dug down into their pockets and laid something more than $40,000 of the $400,000 quota on the line. They organized a city-wide campaign and took an energetic part in it. And when, finally, the last subscription card was turned in, the quota was only half met.

A good many people excused themselves from giving to Freedom Park by saying that what Charlotte needed was not a show-place park but parks and playgrounds in all parts of the city, especially the more crowded parts. They declined to accept the explanation that Freedom Park was something special which did not in the least compete with neighborhood parks and playgrounds, but on the contrary augmented them. And so there was held in the Spring of 1946 a city-wide election on a city-wide program for parks and recreation, and it was defeated. At the same time an election was held on a municipal auditorium, another sorely-needed feature, and it was defeated too. So were other proposals.

In contrast, the city of Winston-Salem recently put on a campaign for a memorial coliseum, which is a fancy word for an indoor arena. It raised $850,000 in donations, a figure expected to climb to $875,000 when all returns are in. An immediate explanation of the ease with which Winston-Salem raised four (and three-eighths) times the amount that Charlotte raised with great difficulty lies in Tobacco Town's noted millionnaires. A direct inquiry collapses that alibi.

The wealth of Winston-Salem toed the line as usual, and $375,000 was raised in gifts of $5,000 or more. But the other $475,000 was chipped in.

No one need be churlish because of Tobacco Town's new facility. But it may be pointed out, wholly aside from civic pride and boosterism, that the cities which maintain their rank in the procession are bound first to have the vision and then to match vision with provision.

Charlotte, we think, had better make a date with the eye-doctor and from his office go straight to the optometrist.

Speaking Of Vision--II

THIS is really a footnote to the preceding editorial, which ended with a gloomy remark about vision and provision. And this is a cheerful note, for it is really a preview of what Mecklenburgers will see once they have visited an oculist and obtained spectacles with a less rosy tint and a much sharper focus.

They will see, if they look in the direction of Independence Post of the American Legion, a group of young men who understand that vision must be combined with sweat. These veterans of World War II concluded a few months ago that the fumbling efforts of the various public agencies dealing with the veterans' housing problem would probably provide Charlotte's homeless with shelter along about 1964. They decided something must be done about it.

The result is a non-profit housing corporation established by the Legion post. The young veterans found plenty of credit available, public-spirited bankers falling over themselves to provide cash, expert assistance and sound advice. There still remained the greatest problem—finding scarce materials and labor and a contractor willing to undertake a housing project in these uncertain times. They took their troubles to Edwin L. Jones of the vast J. A. Jones Construction Company, and after a brief conversation they vanished. Mr. Jones agreed to build 50 five-room houses, *without profit* and at once, keeping the cost within the reach of a man with a $200-a-month income.

Now 50 houses will not solve Charlotte's housing problem, but after a year of big talk and little action the Legion project is a first-class miracle. And yet the manner in which it was worked is quite simple. There has been a tendency in Charlotte to approach every civic problem in negative fashion, thinking up reasons why it couldn't be solved rather than methods of getting the job done. The Legionnaires simply reversed the usual procedure; once they made up their minds that houses must be had they moved rapidly and with apparent ease toward their goal.

It can be argued that their success depended upon the generosity and public spirit of a good many private citizens—the bankers, Mr. Jones, the Legionnaires themselves. But that is precisely the point. That spirit has always existed in Charlotte, and it still exists. It is, in fact, our greatest civic asset and our tragedy has been that in so many cases we have failed to exploit it.

The young members of Independence Post have done a good deal more than insure the construction of 50 houses—important as that is at the moment—and they are due the thanks of all of us.

How To Perpetuate A Legend

A LEGEND started in Atlanta a few weeks ago and finally turned up, curt, clear, complete and unqualified, in *Time*. There are, according to *Time's* version of this tale, "25,000 almost-new passenger cars . . . rusting and rotting in an Atlanta depot." Publicity in Atlanta newspapers, *Time* said, had forced the Army to give up 7,000 of them.

Now even a considerable error in fact can be forgiven a journalist if the general point he makes is valid. The implied charge against the Army in this case was a grave one— waste, inefficiency, and an arrogant disregard for the public interest. But the facts upon which it rested were absolutely incorrect.

In a remarkably restrained letter to *Time*, Major General F. L. Parks points out that the Army purchased only 20,000 passenger vehicles during the entire course of the war. The Atlanta Ordnance Depot is a collecting point where surplus vehicles are assembled, repaired if possible, and disposed of by transfer to another Government agency or sale to the public. There were only 525 passenger cars there when *Time* published the legend, and only 48 of those were in serviceable condition.

Time, as its custom, offers no apology, only admitting its error and agreeing that "Reader Parks' breakdown is correct." Apparently the newsmagazine considers the matter of little importance. But that legend, to which *Time* lent credence, will haunt the Army for at least a generation. It will crop up in print, in barroom conversations, in letters to a hundred editors. Every critic of the Army will cling to the old charge, insisting that the Ordnance Department let a hundred acres of shiny sedans rust away while the footsore American public begged for transportation.

The Army, as long-suffering an organization as the nation affords, will have to be satisfied with *Time's* brusque, and essentially futile, correction. But it seems to us that any publication which has thus added a completely false charge to the Army's heavy burden of real sins could at least say it's sorry.

Another Voice

Auditioning The GOP Program

ANOTHER audition of the Republican campaign thunder of 1946 comes to us by courtesy of Brazilla Carroll Reece, the G.O.P. national chairman. However, it adds nothing to what everybody has been led to expect from that quarter.

The voter will be asked to choose, says Mr. Reece, between Communism and Republicanism. The Democratic Party will be trotted out, we hear once more, as the broomstick of such Marxist witches as Harold Ickes, Chester Bowles, Henry Wallace and Sidney Hillman. Mr. Reece seems to assume that it will be enough to turn the trick.

Of course, this means nothing at all. These are simply words that we hear. We fancy the average citizen would be quite startled, perhaps even to the extent of doing what Mr. Reece suggests, if he were to hear just once an even slightly convincing statement of what he would get for his choice of "Republicanism."

Just what will happen, for example, in the field of price control, or farm programs, or social security, or medical care, or labor legislation? What, as to foreign policy? What, actually, does "Republicanism" promise, beyond a simple negation of what "Democratism"—or, as Mr. Reece puts it, Communism—has done or sought? Would we acquire more benefit, or less, and what would it be, in either case?

Neither locally nor in the broader field is Mr. Reece's party dotting any i's or crossing t's. And at the rate he and his lieutenants and his candidates are going, it looks as if the country will be asked to buy a pig in a poke, for all that there is any definition of programs. The times call for something more than this—*Louisville Courier-Journal.*

Not only is a little nonsense now and then relished by the best of women but in the case of millinery is compulsory.

Another court, in Illinois, holds a wife's dieting no reason, in itself, for divorce. A man of honor will stick to her through thick and fashionably thin.

'What's The Matter—Don't You Trust Me?'

People's Platform

An End To Bickering

WINSTON-SALEM

Editors, THE NEWS:

SOMETIME ago widespread publicity was given in the Charlotte newspapers to a rather sharp attack upon Winston-Salem relative to the facilities of the North Carolina Division of the United States Veterans Bureau in an interview with Mr. J. K. Finch, National Service Officer of the Disabled Veterans. Although we all knew the situation at that time was not good, we also knew that it was only a temporary setup and that it was a matter of a short time until we could adequately house the Veterans Administration in a very fine office building.

Yesterday it was announced that the Veterans Administration had signed a five-year lease for most desirable space in the Nissen Building, one of the finest office buildings in the Southeast, and I think we are safe in saying that the North Carolina branch of the Veterans Administration is as splendidly housed and as comfortably situated as is any Veterans Administration office in the United States. We feel that you will, in fairness, want to take cognizance of this fact and point with the same pride that we do to the fact that Winston-Salem is doing a good job in taking care of the Veterans Administration.

You will have noted that we made no attempt to answer the charges in the press or otherwise because we felt we were so busy trying to improve the situation that we had neither the time nor the inclination to enter into an inter-city debate. Frankly, there are so many things that can be developed in the Piedmont Area of North Carolina that it is utterly silly for our communities to indulge in petty bickerings and criticisms. Often both cities will go after the same project. The one who loses should drop out with good grace and spend its energies in pursuing other projects rather than harping on a loss or trying to take away from a neighboring city something which it has acquired. That is our policy and I feel certain it is the policy of the citizens of Charlotte. We have so much to gain by working together and so little to gain by fighting.

—HARRY J. KRUSZ,
General Manager,
Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce.

The Columnists

DALLAS

ERIC BRANDEIS is a worth-while writer. I enjoyed reading his column and was sorry when you discontinued it. And I thoroughly agree that the doings of actors and actresses are of comparatively little interest to serious-minded readers.

I am late in saying this, but I was very disappointed when you discontinued the column of Randolph Churchill. It was enlightening to read the viewpoint of an English writer. And I think it is our loss as well as theirs that we know so little about Britain, and they so little, really, about the U.S.A.

We need to exchange viewpoints, to dissipate as much as possible the prejudices and false notions our two countries hold against each other.

The two English speaking countries must stand (or fall) together.

—MRS. EDNA C. HENDRICKS.

CHARLOTTE

THE phrase, "the triumph of mediocrity" was invented by someone trying to explain how Eric Brandeis ever rated a column. He hasn't got anything! Good riddance.

What happened to Dorothy Thompson? Some of us feminists miss her.

Glad to have Dottie Knox back. I don't necessarily agree with her—but she's a good person and I respect her.

—R. S.

KANNAPOLIS

I WANT to know if Eric Brandeis will be back on the back page of THE NEWS. He's surely missed, and I'm hoping he'll be back soon!

Glad Dottie Knox is back.

—MRS. RUTH PRESSON.

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.

Like A New Man

OCCASIONALLY a comical side develops in an election like this one which originated in Leesburg County in Ohio a numbers of years ago. The candidate for sheriff in that county went into a small newspaper plant to insert an advertisement in support of his candidacy. The country publisher was addicted to strong drink, and on this particular morning he was carrying quite a load. His printer was also taking on a few snorts, and between the two of them they got the candidate's advertisement mixed up with a patent medicine advertisement, with the following results in the paper the next day:

"I wish to announce to the voters of Leesburg County that for 25 years I suffered from asthma and lumbago on the Democratic ticket and thought there was no cure for me until I heard of the office of county sheriff for which my doctor advised me to run.

"I have never held county office, but have been troubled with nervousness, itching palms, and handshaking, so feel I am well qualified. I was operated on for appendicitis two months ago, so feel I am cut out for the duties that are required of this office. I have had fourteen teeth extracted to see if it would help me in my fight for office. I have gained 40 pounds and hundreds of votes and am feeling like a new man.

"While it has been impossible for me to see all the voters, I will state that it has been a God-send to me and I will appreciate your vote and three bottles of this wonderful tonic, which I hope will help me in my fight."

P. S. He got elected.—R. F. BEASLEY JR., in The Monroe Journal.

Quote, Unquote

AS a result of our present national policies we are headed for boom and then bust. What we are doing about wages, prices, subsidies, Government spending and related policies will hasten the effect of accentuating the boom and hence ensuring the bust.
—Leon Henderson, former Price Administrator.

Marquis Childs

In Defense Of OPA

WASHINGTON

IN spite of the never-ending stream of propaganda directed against it, the OPA still has considerable support. Bewildered, bewildered and beguiled as many people are by the barrage of hostile propaganda, still they recognize the danger if all barriers are swept aside.

That is why Congress in the end will probably strike out the amendments to the Price Control Act which would lift controls, ten days from now, on most essential food. If these amendments were to go through, then the housewife would see immediately what the effect of price control has been, and she and her husband would know whom to blame.

But even if these are knocked out, the booby-trap amendments, as Chester Bowles calls them, will be left in. Bowles says they can do as much harm as the direct-action amendments.

The point, however, is that the effect will not be felt until later. People have a way of forgetting after a few weeks have passed. They put the blame for their troubles not on the individuals responsible but vaguely on the Government, on Washington.

SUBTLE BLOWS

That is why the shrewd politicians in both House and Senate who have inserted the price-increase amendments on the slow-burn principle will probably insist on keeping them. Words like "decontrol" have a reasonable sound. The public will not understand what they actually do.

That, of course, makes the test for President Truman all the more tough. Bowles will recommend a veto if the booby-trap amendments are left in. But the choice before the President will be a painful one.

In fact, if a convention of witches had conspired to snarl up the whole business of price control, it could not have been more successfully snarled. To begin with, Congress, by delaying action until the last hour, made a sellers' strike almost inevitable. Just ordinary caution, if you were a manufacturer, would dictate holding off until you saw which way prices were going to move.

Then there was the unfortunate misunderstanding over the effort to obtain a no-strike pledge from the AFL and the CIO. That was first reported in terms of a clash between Bowles and the President, who was said to have turned it down. According to Bowles, this was not true, since it had been brought up at the White House merely in a tentative discussion stage.

That report did not enhance the chances of obtaining such a pledge from the two leading labor organizations. Those chances were tenuous at best. But if such a pledge were obtained on a condition that the Price Control Act be renewed in more or less its present form, then the prospect of realistic controls would certainly be brighter.

ELUSIVE GOAL

No such pledge would be kept 100 per cent. This, Bowles frankly acknowledged. That kind of perfection simply is not possible in human affairs. Conceivably it would have been kept about as well as the no-strike pledge was kept during the war. The wartime record shows an infinitesimal number of days lost through strikes in comparison to the number of days worked.

From time to time, angry readers have wanted to know why I continued to plead the cause of Bowles and the OPA. The answer is that, in my opinion, Bowles is a reasonable man. He wants to do a reasonable job of controlling prices until the machine of American production gets into high gear. He speaks out with a kind of Yankee forthrightness in the face of too obvious shams.

This quality of reasonableness was evident in what may prove to be Bowles' last press conference as an official of the Truman Administration. He avoided flesh-creeping talk about runaway inflation and bushel-basket money.

Instead, he pitched his argument for continuation of realistic control on what is the race between prices and wages would do to us as a people socially and politically. The damage done on the social-political side might be even greater, Bowles suggested, than the economic damage. It would exaggerate the argument over where the blame lay for our economic plight—whether with labor and the present Administration or with business and the Republicans.

PART OF THREAT

That same danger, vastly accentuated, is part of the threat of a boom-to-bust cycle which would be precipitated by soaring prices. It divides us as a people along alien, class lines. It prevents us, as Bowles in his reasonable way pointed out, from getting down to our job. That job is to show the world we are a going concern providing rewards and satisfactions for almost every one.

Samuel Grafton

The Champ Is Dead

LOS ANGELES

IT seems to me there has been a total loss of interest in all of politics since Mr. Roosevelt died; and that this loss of interest has taken place on what might even be called the sporting level. It resembles the way in which some people lost interest in baseball after Mr. Babe Ruth left the game. Occasionally there flashes across some field of human activity a figure so spectacular that persons not ordinarily concerned with the activity in question are fascinated and drawn in; this is the multitude, which does not care about opera, but cares about Caruso, which does not know about dancing, but knows about Pavlova. Mr. Roosevelt did something like this for Government. The people followed his battles because he was the champ; and since his passing there has been a relaxation into earlier and cooler popular attitudes toward national affairs.

IN PRO HANDS

From now on it is going to be something like tennis since Tilden; good enough in its way, but it is hard to remember the names. Politics will be increasingly professionalized and (until a depression comes along, or some other shake-up) the people will feel that politics is being taken care of by the politicians, much as they feel that the science of zoology is being satisfactorily taken care of by men whose names they cannot, at the moment, recall.

There is a terrifying innocence already about this, and a kind of bland acceptance of Government, as a standard article; it resembles our casual acceptance of Government in the early twenties, when we felt that we had a Government, the way we had a car, and could expect fair mileage from both without bothering to look under the hood.

DECISIONS ACCEPTED

In no other democratic country in the world are the decisions of Government accepted so unquestionably at face value, as they are here; regardless of whether those decisions are shaped so as to maintain our present magnificent level of caloric intake, or whether they are heading toward depression and war. We pride ourselves on our controversies, on our forums, on our Mr. Pro and Mr. Con; but the quality of American life (especially in lush periods such as the present) remains basically non-political, and our national credo to the effect that there are two sides to every question is in itself a denial of hot concern.

There stretches ahead, then, a gray sort of political period, a kind of snooze; and from such snoozes we have in the past, of course, been awakened by sudden bumps. As to how well we can keep ourselves aware of such dim potentialities as depression and war, without a Roosevelt, or a reasonably accurate facsimile, to do it for us, is uncertain. It is true that the Roosevelt era has left certain deposits behind on the American scene, notably a large labor movement; the veterans can be expected to be active on special issues concerned with mass purchasing power and newspapers and magazines will perhaps permanently devote more column inches to politics because there was once a Roosevelt.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Soviets Learn New U. S. National Anthem

WASHINGTON

GEN. JOSEPH T. McNARNEY, who is doing a better job as commander of occupied Germany than most people think, likes to sing. And when he comes up to Berlin for his regular visits with the other Allied commanders, he always engages in a song fest with the Russians.

As a result, the Russians have adopted a new song which they virtually regard as the American National Anthem. They sing it on any and all occasions. They think it brings pride and pleasure to the hearts of Americans; and the Red Army in Berlin, at least, is anxious to please Americans.

Actually, the song may bring great pride and pleasure to Gen. McNarney, but other Americans privately are getting a bit weary of it. The Russians have learned the English words, and to the tune of "The Stars and Stripes Forever", here is what they sing as the new American National Anthem:

"Three cheers for the Sam Jones Junior High School,
The best Junior High in Toledo."

There are a lot more words to the song, and the Russians apparently not realizing that not all American soldiers have had the benefit of an education in Toledo, Ohio, have carefully learned all the words.

The fact that they have done so illustrates a point which some of our top-bracket statesmen don't always realize—namely, despite our difficulties with the Soviet Government, we have no quarrel with the Russian people. Not much has been said about it, but relations between the American and Soviet armies in Berlin have been extraordinarily good. At first, the Russians were suspicious, didn't want any fraternization of their troops with ours. But that suspicion has largely disappeared. The Red Army is a large, unwieldly, badly disciplined, very human cross section of the Russian people, and that part of the Red Army which is in Berlin likes Americans.

However, nobody in the higher brackets in Washington or Moscow, is doing much to bring the Russians and American people together.

This column has long maintained that if we had the same US-USSR interchange of students that we have with China and England as a result of the Boxer Rebellion and Rhodes Scholarships, our Russian troubles gradually would go up in smoke.

Science And Big Business

PRESIDENT TRUMAN had a significant talk recently with his old friend Senator Harley Kilgore of West Virginia regarding the development of scientific experiments and their monopolization by big business.

The West Virginia Senator had introduced a National Science Bill which the great majority of scientists supported but which the National Association of Manufacturers has fought tooth and nail. They even induced nice, naive Congressman Wilbur Mills of Arkansas to introduce a counter bill by which the U. S. Government subsidizes scientific development, but big business will have a large hand in reaping the patients and the results of that subsidy.

President Truman told Kilgore that he was emphatically opposed to this business control, especially the Arkansas-NAM idea of having $1-a-year men operate the scientific board.

"If they try to put a dollar-a-year board in to operate the foundation," said the President, remembering $1-a-man inefficiency he had exposed as head of the Truman Committee, "I'll veto the bill.

"If they cut out your patent compromise," Truman continued, "I'll see to it that patents developed with Federal funds are made freely available unless Congress expressly directs in the bill that none of these patents can be made freely available."

Truman also assured Kilgore that he would put the whole Administration behind a move to pass the bill at this session of Congress.

"I'm afraid," he added, "the National Association of Manufacturers may have muddied the waters so much that we may not be able to come through right away.

"I don't know what's got into Vannevar Bush," he concluded, referring to the scientist who has been the chief front for the Manufacturer's Association. "He's getting this bill into the same trouble he got the Atomic Energy Bill into."

Wartime Chickens

AN interesting election takes place in Maryland today which will test people's memories regarding wartime patriotism.

During the war, Maryland State Comptroller, Millard Tawes, received nationwide publicity of a most unpleasant kind when he drove a twelve-cylinder Cadillac all the way to Georgia to attend a wedding. People who were carefully counting their gas coupons at home didn't like it a bit. Photographs, taken by Millard Tawes to Georgia was owned by the State of Maryland.

When a Republican editor in Maryland, Rives Matthews, brought out these facts, the Democratic Administration in Maryland jumped on him rather than on the gasoline-wasting Tawes. The Republican editor was indicted for criminal libel, while the Democratic Comptroller merely forfeited some gas coupons.

Now, however, the same Millard Tawes is running for Governor in the Democratic primary with the backing of Democratic Senator Millard Tydings. It will be interesting to see what the voters now think of his wedding march to Georgia.

Another interesting figure is also running in the Maryland primaries, likeable Gov. Herbert O'Conor, who now aspires to the U. S. Senate. At the time of the Tawes gasoline scandal, it was discovered Governor O'Conor's wife had been equally wasteful. She drove a car, also owned by the State of Maryland, all the way to Charleston, S. C., "for her health" when other people stayed home and walked. The gasoline which she used on this trip plus that used by Millard Tawes on his Georgia joy ride would drive the average Maryland family to church every Sunday for 30 years.

Now Mrs. O'Conor's husband is running for the Senate and it will be equally interesting to see how easily the voters of Maryland forget.

Capital Chaff

IT GOT little publicity, but President Truman pulled an A-1 man out of the Navy when he made Comdr. Jim Reynolds a member of the National Labor Relations Board. Reynolds is brother of famed war correspondent Quentin Reynolds, has been doing a good job handling the Navy's labor relations. . . . Harold Ickes had his first censorship difficulties when The Washington Star didn't like what he wrote about Senator McCarran of Nevada, and omitted the particular column. Ickes wrote The Star, in characteristic vein, that Frank Kent, who appears in an adjacent column, writes just as caustically as Ickes. Only difference is that the reactionary Star and the reactionary Kent see eye-to-eye. . . .