THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Cash Money And Free Elections

SOME, at least, of the charges and counter-charges being tossed around in the contested Congressional election in the Fifth District have now been recognized by the State Election Board. The Board has ordered an investigation of alleged excessive campaign expenditures, and of voting irregularities reported in Surry and Stokes Counties.

Inevitably the investigators will find some exaggeration in the claims brought forward by supporters of Messrs. Folger and Chatham, who wound up the primary only a few votes apart. Perhaps they will never determine the exact extent of the fire that must exist somewhere beneath the dense political smoke. But the Election Board's concern in the matter is proper, and it is encouraging that the investigation was ordered without delay. It might also serve as an excellent example for Governor Cherry and Highway Chairman Graham, who have so far displayed no official interest in charges that persons connected with the Highway Commission improperly interfered with the same election.

From this distance we would never attempt to pass on the merits of the candidates' claims, but we find it significant that excessive expenditures is one of the main points of contention. The Folger camp has charged that upwards of $100,000 went into the Chatham campaign, and even allowing for the usual exaggeration for political effect, this is disturbing. Certainly there is sufficient evidence to indicate that a great deal of money was spent prior to the primary election.

There is not, unfortunately, anything unusual in this. Local politicians, who should know, have estimated that it would cost a successful candidate at least $50,000 to insure his election in a hotly contested primary in our own district. Rumor has it that that much, and more, has been spent in the past by an *unsuccessful* candidate in the Tenth. Obviously no Congressional aspirant, except possibly an extraordinarily wealthy one, is going to spend that much of his own cash to obtain a job that will pay him, at best, not more than $30,000 during the two years before he must face another campaign. The money, except in the most unusual cases, comes from the anonymous "friends" who sign paid political advertisements and sponsor radio programs. These financial supporters fall into two classes: (1) Those who have reason to expect the prospective Congressman to confer upon them some specific favor or favors worth the financial investment, and (2) those who feel it the better part of wisdom to maintain in Congress a Representative who shares their personal views on public matters. It is difficult to see how, in either case, the public interest is being well served. It is also difficult to see how a Congressman, who must call upon these same friends every two years for additional financial aid, can very well maintain his independence. It is only natural that he would come to feel a greater obligation to the few constituents who write $5,000 checks than he would toward those who can offer him only a single vote.

A question also arises as to how these large campaign funds are used. Certainly the entire amount cannot be laid out for such legitimate expenses as newspaper advertisements, campaign literature, billboards and radio time. There is room to suspect that some, at least, goes for the direct, or indirect, purchase of votes. It is for this reason, principally, that campaign expenditures are usually limited in theory by law, or by Party regulation; in practice, of course, politicians have found many workable methods of avoiding a full accounting.

We are not here implying that any of these conditions existed in the Fifth District. We don't know. But we do know that they are all too common in elections in North Carolina and elsewhere. And we are convinced that something can and must be done to limit campaign expenditures so that the cash invested by any candidate, or his friends, can have no decisive bearing on the outcome of any election.

An Ex Post Facto Argument

THAT line of Ernest Bevin's directed at the Soviet Union—"If you value peace above all else, do not miss it; it may never come again"—seems clearly designed for a place in the history books. But it comes, we think, too late, a year too late. The opportunity for peace, for real peace as opposed to armed truce, was lost somewhere between San Francisco and The Bronx. And the historians, we suspect, will conclude that Mr. Bevin's dramatic admonition should have been directed to his own country, and to ours, as well as to Russia.

The failure of three great powers to reach a mutual understanding is a mutual failure. Only the supernationalist will deny that his own nation, being the repository of all virtue, deserves no share of the blame. And yet this is the cry we're hearing now in high places, in Great Britain, in Russia, and in the United States. When it is voiced by men who know better it is designed for home consumption; it means that they despair of internationalism, and are preparing their peoples for a return to isolation.

The increasingly bitter exchanges between the Big Three are part of an *ex post facto* debate. They represent no serious effort to renew the negotiations that led to the formation of the tentative United Nations Organization. Criticism from all three nations is destructive, aimed at ripping away the old delusion of unity and clarifying a new, stark relationship, power cancelled out by power. And so, since Messrs. Byrnes, Bevin and Molotov have accepted a post-war settlement based on power politics, there is no longer any necessity for their maintaining the polite fiction of enduring friendship. The amenities, we should understand by now, count for nothing when peace is based on a stalemate.

In this sense, then, the effort to determine the exact degree of blame each nation should bear for the collapse of the peace conferences is irrelevant. It will have no bearing on the immediate international future, which depends now upon the trading abilities of those who gather at the conference table to define the limits of the two post-war worlds. But it should not be forgotten, now or ever, that the United States contributed its full share to the atmosphere of suspicion and distrust that grew thicker as the diplomats moved from San Francisco to London to Paris. Don't forget the atom, or the demand for compulsory military training, or the plan to retain military bases in the Pacific and the Atlantic, or the American troops who fought alongside Chinese "democrats" against Chinese Communists, or the treaty that will enable us to arm and train the armies of Pan-America, or President Truman's judgment that America can survive only if her military strength precludes attack. These were not the gestures of a nation prepared to place its faith in international co-operation, and they began even before Russia started to translate her own uneasiness into buffer states.

Our remembering these things will not brighten the future, but it might be good for our national soul. Particularly if we remember them on a day when as competent an observer as Eddy Gilmore of the Associated Press voices the opinion that the Russians have no imperial designs and are motivated largely by fear of aggression from the West. We know that the American and the British people do not want war. If we believe also that the Russian people do not want war, we will perhaps be better able to appraise the failure of the world's leaders—American, Russian and British.

Another Voice

Not Welcome In Georgia

IN moving against the Ku-Klux Klan, Governor Ellis Arnall of Georgia characterizes that organization as existing "primarily for the purpose of arousing, fostering, promoting and effectuating prejudice, hatred and intolerance through the concerted action of its members." One had thought these obnoxious aims already fully covered in the state where Gene Talmadge is always either running for Governor or being Governor. However, a resurgence of the old Klan insolence and flimflam has been conspicuously manifested there recently.

The more enlightened Georgia that Governor Arnall represents welcomes no comeback of night-shirted ghosts. The Governor has instructed the State Attorney General to prosecute the Klan for violations of its charter. He lists violations of non-profit and no politics provisions and cites unlawful activities aimed at the destruction of civil liberties. As in New York, the Klan has been masquerading as a purely eleemosynary and benevolent outfit—a masquerade which the United States Collector of Internal Revenue plans to explore with a tax lien for nearly $700,000. As to no-politics, the Governor writes, "It is a well known fact that its present chief political occupation is in the gubernatorial contest in this state." Two former Governors—Mr. Talmadge, of course, and E. D. Rivers—are contestants with James V. Carmichael, a liberal whom Governor Arnall favors as his successor. The Klan, we hardly need say, is not supporting Mr. Carchichael. Rather, in its usual stalwart fashion, it is making anonymous threats against him and Governor Arnall.

We wish Georgia success in whatever moves may be necessary to de-hood the Knights of the K. K. K., and, incidentally, to keep the state on the enlightened paths it has been following of late.—*New York Herald Tribune.*

Hitler's personal physician says Adolf suffered from flagging energy, double vision and tremors in the left arm. Sounds like a wild southpaw in the last of the seventh.

Cooling-Off Period

People's Platform

The Trainman's Reaction

CHARLOTTE

Editors, THE NEWS:

THE railroad strike was settled by the President, and how? By threat of force, Hitler methods. A purely un-American way as compared to the coal strike settlement, although the same Capitol Hill politicians or brain trusters or the President's Pendergast-backed political advisers settled both strikes.

Who built this great nation? Who made capital what it is today? Those are simple questions. The laboring people built this USA to where it is today and if it hadn't been for labor there wouldn't be any capitalist because the capitalists are not going out and do manual labor, yet the laboring man cannot stand up for his rights in a free democracy without being threatened by the President of the United States. Organized labor helped to put him where he is today and the same organized labor groups will help to remove him from the Presidency, come 1948.

Is the railroad man unpatriotic? Did the railroad man strike during the war? What did the rail carriers do that was patriotic during the war? I presume that charging the U. S. Government and the taxpayers of this nation such prices as about $5,000 per car for ammunition from shell plant (Pineville, N. C.) to the West Coast ($18,000 for some) was very patriotic, not to mention the millions of dollars worth of food, oil, troops and other war material that was moved, at a cost of less than $100 per car. Probably the Capitol Hill politicians should open their eyes.

The President has showed by his actions that he is a capitalist appeaser and disregards labor's legal or moral rights, and has made one step towards tearing down what organized labor has built up over the years. He has showed down the throats of organized labor and laid on the doorsteps of every organized laboring man in this nation a hate that cannot be forgotten.

Why is the general public not told the cold facts about the engineers and trainmen strike? Why are the carriers given all the publicity? Who profited by forcing the engineers and trainmen to accept the President's proposal? It is very clear that the President definitely sided with the capitalists; in fact we the railroaders think that it was a cut and dried proposition in advance of the settlement.

—D. L. BRIDGES,
Member, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen

Lawyer's Reaction

NORFOLK, VA.

Editors, THE NEWS:

IT was reported in the press that the President said at a college gathering that he favors small business and thinks small industry should exist, though he favors large business and gives large business all the advantages he can.

Did he not grant to monopolism the privilege of charging recent wage increases to workers to the general consumer of coal? Has he not seen that the wages of automobile workers are charged to automobile buyers in the form of increased prices for cars? Has he not favored monopolism with the license of increases in prices, while he has favored restrictions to small business and to consumers in general, so that the individual can do nothing to gain a just return on his ventures? What may be said of the impact of those increases on the limitations placed on rents, while monopolism in building apartments are favored with bulk purchase, bulk maintenance?

Such things as these do not favor that decentralization which he acclaims. Labor comes high to the individual, while labor to the monopoly, as to coats, remains the same. Commodities come high to the individual, while commodities, raw or finished, remain the same to the monopolies.

It is a clear and an undisputable fact that the cold impotency of a dead carcass lies shriveling at the feet of the impotent men at Washington. They make profits, the life of individual society, a matter of feeble motion. What is the life of capitalism but the earning of profits? If individuals cannot do this, are we not in that feudalistic condition which makes existence depend upon the will of an arbitrary few?

—GARRETT BAXTER,
Attorney at Law.

Senator's Reaction

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Editors, THE NEWS:

I HAVE your editorial entitled "No Time for Disunity". I find myself in thorough accord with the view which you express. I think the time has come when we have got to deal with the unions along the lines indicated in your editorial.

I am now and have always been fair to the workers and appreciate the service the unions have rendered, but the time has come when we have got to deal with them on the basis of their increased power and they must be made to understand that they cannot dominate the whole economy of the nation and threaten the very existence of the people by paralyzing transportation facilities and other necessary or essential industries. The labor dictators are responsible. The members of the unions have no voice in the matter because they dictate to their membership in the same sort of fashion that they seek to dictate to the public.

—CLYDE R. HOEY,
United States Senator.

The People's Platform is available to any reader who cares to mount it. Communications should be not more 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

Behind any Government of any kind there must be the consent of the governed in a very real sense. The peoples of the world must have confidence in the United Nations, and must believe that it will act justly and fairly with respect to their interests.—Dr. Harold C. Urey, atom scientist.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Truman Too Loyal To Bumbling Friends

WASHINGTON

IT IS now possible to give a play-by-play account of what happened inside the White House during the "lost weekend."

This columnist has been around Washington a good many years, but the events preceding Harry Truman's labor message to Congress were the most bizarre ever witnessed. They prove that Harry Truman's worst enemy is his own loyalty to friends. Here is what happened:

On Friday morning, just after the rail strike started, Truman held a Cabinet meeting. He was hopping mad at A. F. Whitney and Alvaniey Johnston. Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach was equally burned up, but not at the strikers. He was sore at likable John Steelman, the White House labor expert, and John Snyder, the war reconverter, for messing up the negotiations.

At the Cabinet meeting, Postmaster General Hannegan wanted Truman to go on the air with an appeal to the public, but no crackdown on labor. Secretary of War Patterson wanted the President to take over the railroads at once, even produced a blueprint for the Army's strike-breaking operations. Secretary Byrnes said he thought a settlement could be reached but not by Steelman, in whom the unions had lost faith.

Epring John Snyder

AT the Cabinet meeting also, Secretary of the Treasury Fred Vinson asked how much money separated the railroad workers and the operators—in other words, how much would it take to satisfy labor's unmet demands. Steelman, who had been conducting negotiations for more than a week, said he didn't know. So did Schwellenbach. So did Byrnes. So John Snyder volunteered that they were between 300 and 500 million dollars apart. This very large estimate led Vinson and Byrnes to the conclusion that there was no possibility of negotiated settlement, and they then cast their weight with the Secretary of War in favor of letting the Army run the railroads.

After the Cabinet meeting Truman lunched with Snyder and Steelman. They urged him to use force to break the strike, also to go before Congress and ask for new legislation. After lunch, therefore, Truman called a special meeting of certain Cabinet members and advisers, including Secretary of State Byrnes, Attorney General Clark, Secretary of the Treasury Vinson, John Steelman, John Snyder, Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach, and the President. Truman informed them he had decided: (1) To go on the air that night, and (2) address Congress the next day. He then outlined the general nature of what he wanted to say—some of it drastic.

At this point, Secretary Vinson, realizing an important break with Roosevelt precedent was imminent, once again asked whether Snyder was sure of his figures regarding the distance between the railroad operators and Brotherhoods. Snyder then sheepishly admitted that only between 25 and 30 million dollars separated the two.

Steelman also confessed that the three important rules changes the union was really insisting on would only cost the railroads 18 million dollars.

Vinson-Byrnes Explosion

AT this, both Byrnes and Vinson hit the ceiling. They claimed it was fantastic to let the whole country be tied up when both sides were so close to agreement. A settlement, they insisted, was both possible and probable, and it was unwise in the light of this information for the President to take the strong action he contemplated.

John Snyder, however, insisted that it was too late. Word had already gone out to the public that the President would address the nation and talk to Congress. He could not turn back. Truman agreed with Snyder and asked those present to return at 7 o'clock with drafts of the speech he was to deliver at 10 P. M.—a pitifully short time for any Chief Executive to prepare such a momentous pronouncement.

Shortly after 7:30, the group re-convened at the White House. Secretary Byrnes stayed only a few minutes, left to meet with union leaders Whitney and Johnston.

Principal speech writer turned out to be slow-moving, good-natured, Presidential Secretary Bill Hassett, known as a fair editor but terrible speech writer. He was only a second string man on the Roosevelt team.

Snyder showed up for the meeting, feeling no pain. He interrupted the speech-writing from time to time with inane cracks which served no useful purpose.

Several times Vinson and Schwellenbach tried to balance the speech by pointing out that the railroad operators had refused to make concessions. Each time Snyder and Steelman vetoed the proposal. Each time Truman sided with Snyder.

Twenty Minutes To Spare

SCHWELLENBACH and Vinson both opposed Truman's personal denunciation of Whitney and Johnston, but Snyder shouted wildly that the two union leaders were trying to destroy "The Chief," and that they had to be named. Truman agreed.

Finally, the speech was completed only 20 minutes before the President went on the air. At the time he made it, Truman didn't even know what kind of legislation he was going to request of Congress the next day. It was in this confused, uncertain atmosphere that the President of the United States made the most important political decision of his career.

Unhappy Jesse Jones

JESSE JONES, who used to hang around the Statler Hotel pulling backstage wires in the RFC, has now gone back to Texas where he is worried about political reactions there. Since Jesse doesn't like Texas weather this time of year, he must be plenty worried.

What worries him is the strength of hard-hitting Homer Rainey, ousted from the presidency of the University of Texas and now running for governor.

Also Jesse is unhappy about the political situation in Tennessee, where he was born. Jesse always has had a political alliance with Ed Crump of the Memphis, Tenn., machine, Kenneth McKellar, Cordell Hull, and Jim Farley. They operated the "block Al Smith" movement on the floor of the Houston convention in 1928 and Jesse—together with Farley and Cordell Hull—did some quiet spearheading of the stop-Roosevelt movement in 1940.

Now Jesse is distressed over the strength of liberal forces in both Texas, his present home, and Tennessee his former home, where the political power of McKellar and Crump seems to be wavering.

Marquis Childs

Alaskan Defenses

WASHINGTON

IN the latest blast from Moscow, American imperialism is the charge hurled by Russia in connection with the American interest in bases. This charge echoed loudly over the proposal to keep a U. S. base in Iceland. It was picked up in this country by champions of Russia.

Here is an important fact which certainly modifies that charge. It is a fact which was concealed by wartime secrecy.

At only one point are the borders of the Soviet Union and the United States in close proximity. Across the Bering Strait, the western tip of Alaska is separated from the eastern tip of Siberia by only 54 miles. In western Alaska, there are not only no bases but no defenses of any consequence.

The story of our defense system in Alaska, our farthereast frontier, is a curious one. The Army and Navy together have poured more than a billion dollars into Alaska. A great chain of bases has been built in southern Alaska and the Aleutians. With one or two minor exceptions, these bases are hundreds of miles—in the worst flying weather in the world—from the nearest border of our wartime ally, Russia.

MINOR EXCEPTION

One of the minor exceptions is Kuskokwim, a base built at the head of Kuskokwim Bay, which is about 300 air miles north of the Aleutians. Kuskokwim is now being decommissioned, as is another base on the west coast, Naknek.

The major bases were all aimed at Japan. They are far out in the Aleutian chain. Perhaps the largest is at Adak. One almost entirely unknown to the public is on the tiny island of Shemya. It was selected because it is almost the only island in the chain with sufficient flat surface to provide a landing field for heavy bombers.

Although it was hidden by top-secret restrictions, a start was made on a base on the Seward Peninsula, which is nearest the great Asiatic land mass. At great cost, materials were hauled to Port Clarence, north of Nome. They were to go into a base back of Port Clarence at Point Spencer.

Those materials have now been declared surplus. The plans for the base have been abandoned. Some of our Alaskan defense advisers believe this is a mistake. They argue that, with millions still being spent on defensive bases in the South Pacific, a little could be spared for a purely defensive base on the westernmost tip of Alaska.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

The whole of northwest Alaska is without any real defense system. One may ask what it matters—just a lot of frozen, empty country? One answer is that the Navy is preparing to develop what appear to be extensive oil deposits in northern Alaska. Another and far more important answer is that Alaska would give an enemy easy bombing range of U. S. industrial centers.

All through the war, Alaska was a main ferry point for Lend-Lease planes going to Russia. American pilots were not allowed to deliver those planes on Russian soil. Instead, Russian pilots were flown to Fairbanks, 500 miles in the interior. Wartime Fairbanks was an extraordinary spectacle, with Russians constantly going and coming. Yet in two or three instances when top-flight Americans wanted to fly into Russia by the back door, it took all sorts of negotiations. Special restrictions were applied on these flights. One visitor who went in that way was Secretary of Commerce Henry A. Wallace. Wendell Willkie, at the conclusion of his "One World" journey, flew out by the back door to Alaska.

Planning and construction of the base at Point Spencer was a top secret in its beginning phase. But Soviet flyers flew back and forth across that area almost at will.

About what is happening in the eastern tip of Siberia, we know nothing or next to nothing. It is a certainty, however, that the Soviets, with their far-reaching intelligence system, know the exact status of our Alaskan defense. What is printed here will not be news in Moscow.

BORDER DEFENSELESS

If the United States had imperialistic aims that in any way involved Soviet Russia, then the first place to establish bases would be where the two borders are only 54 miles apart. This country has shown no intention of fortifying our side of that border. What Russia is doing on the other side is only one small part of the great unknown.

Samuel Grafton

The Postwar Mood

LOS ANGELES

A MONTH AGO in North Carolina, a fortnight ago in the Deep South, and now today in Los Angeles, I have had the same, strong feeling that the people of this republic are passing through a bad hour, emotionally. It is as if they wanted something, and not only didn't have it, but didn't quite know what it was. It makes a hard kind of story to cover, this story of a mood; but what surprises me is the lack of any material which comes flooding out when I raise the question.

A candidate for Congress said: "There is a terrible weariness in people; it is almost like a momentary loss of faith. I don't understand it. My friends call me up and say, 'It's awfully hot in Washington, isn't it? You wouldn't like it as well as California, would you? Where are you going to live? If you're elected, you're not really going to be able to accomplish anything, are you?' They act as if I were running for the Federal Penitentiary. It is almost as if we had thrown up our hands and had lost faith in ourselves. You still hear political arguments; this is a very articulate community, but it is almost as if there were an inability to focus, and the arguments trail away into nothing."

FDR LEAVES VACUUM

My friend, the candidate, thinks the death of Roosevelt has something to do with this feeling: that a wave of fear followed FDR's passing, and that people have turned inward, and are thinking about smaller things, instead of bigger and bigger ones. He told me dourly about a questionnaire he had received from one association, which asked him, in one breath and in one sentence, if there were anything what will you do to reduce taxation, or what other qualifications do you have for public office?"

WOMAN'S VIEW

I asked a brilliant woman, a veteran resident of the city of Los Angeles, about the postwar mood, and she popped too.

"There's been a peculiar slowing down of the machinery," she said. "I feel it myself. I just wanted to sit in a patio and put my feet on the grass and drink beer. People are kind of milling around, in a futile way; they don't talk about the atomic age, any more, or any other kind of age. They run the unions mechanically, but without real interest; they don't actually discuss the strikes, and if you notice, there's been no scabbing. They don't know what to think. There just doesn't seem to be a voice anywhere in the world. Roosevelt is gone, Churchill is out, nobody has taken their places, and people feel it. They are still crowding into Los Angeles lots of servicemen are trying to stay here, but they are in a mood that's hard to understand. It's as if they don't see anything to look forward to and are afraid they won't find it. They are in what it is they are looking for. They don't want to take ordinary jobs and settle down with them and say, 'That's that.' It's as if there should have been something wonderful for everybody at the end of this war, and it isn't here. Maybe the wartime ads about the postwar future have backfired."

VOICELESS DISCONTENT

I remember the personnel officials at the Lockheed plant, earlier this week, and their bafflement at the curious state of immediate discontent which runs through industrial plants today.

"It isn't even a very interesting breakdown," said my friend. "It would be like the twenties it would not be so bad. It's the twenties without F. Scott Fitzgerald."