THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 1959

A Report To Our Readers

The Minutes Of The Last Meeting

LIKE everyone else, we are turning over a new leaf today.

Good resolutions are as much a part of New Year's Day as the bowl game, hog jowl and blackeyed peas. But, as Oscar Wilde once mused, the fatality of good resolutions is that they are always too late.

The real trouble is that the past is more or less indissolute. It is almost impossible to sever it from the present. However many new leaves may be turned over, there is always something scribbled there from the past.

Consequently THE NEWS traditionally takes this opportunity to share with its readers something we call "The Minutes Of the Last Meeting." It is a review of our goals and achievements during the year just past and a red-faced confession of some of the prize bloopers we have committed. Finally, it gives us an opportunity to look ahead into 1959 and rededicate ourselves to some continuing causes.

We can thank our readers for the achievements. We have only ourselves to thank for the bloopers.

* * *

AS usual, last year's events served us up a nice bait of crow. We gravely assured all who would listen that France's Gen. Charles de Gaulle was a better diagnostician than a physician and couldn't begin to cure the republic's ills. As it happened, he made a rather handsome beginning. Call us soreheads if you must, however, for we still harbor a few dark doubts about his professional skill regarding a cancer called Algeria. But, by all means, let's wait and see.

We were dour dissenters when it came to the administration's handling of the Quemoy crisis, too. But the bluff and bluster of Secretary Dulles got results—if only temporary in nature—and we are happy to admit it.

Then there was the time when we had Theodore Roosevelt settling the war between Japan and (horrors!) Germany when all the time we must have known it was Russia and not Germany that Japan was fighting. Earlier, we came out second best in the Great Debate over homebaked pies. We even had a recipe thrown at us by a hungry reader from Rock Hill—which, we suppose, was better than having a pie thrown at us.

Pass the salt, Dad. This crow tastes terrible.

* * *

IN Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, the flavor of things was much more satisfying. We campaigned long and hard for a clean-up of the mess in City Recorder's Court and, by year's end, noted important reforms in the conduct of the court's business—and more in prospect.

Our long editorial campaign for the consolidation of the city and county school systems was also paying off. Even now the two school boards are at work on ways and means to accomplish this necessary task.

Consolidation of the city and county tax offices, another NEWS editorial project, was in the works, too, by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, THE NEWS plumped hard for the merger of the city and county police departments and was gratified to see a joint committee go to work investigating the possibility.

But one of THE NEWS' most vigorous editorial campaigns was for an urban redevelopment program to rid the community of the blight of Brooklyn's slums. This, too, was actually in the works when the year ended and federal money had already been allotted for planning.

* * *

ANOTHER of the year's most gratifying moments arrived when the county's juvenile diagnostic center came into being after some lusty drumbeating in THE NEWS' editorial columns.

THE NEWS spoke out early and often for a united fund-raising campaign for the fine arts and that, too, became a reality during 1958 with the first drive to be held some time this year.

In the local political arena we supported J. Spencer Bell in a spirited three-way battle for Mecklenburg's seat in the State Senate. His victory, we firmly believe, was good for the entire community. Throughout the year we made frequent attempts to promote more political vitality on the local level—to no great avail. But our advocacy of the two-party system hereabouts was undiminished in tone and volume.

In higher education, it was a banner year. We gave our all for the Charlotte Community College System and the results exceeded our fondest expectations. An overwhelming vote of confidence was given Charlotte and Carver Colleges during the Nov. 4 bond issues, and earlier, tax support for the two institutions was extended to include the entire county.

THE NEWS continued to support the City School Board in its thoughtful efforts to meet the requirements of the Supreme Court's desegregation decision. We backed the city's perimeter road plan, efforts to preserve the vitality of the downtown shopping district, extension of city services to the perimeter, and stern measures to treat the juvenile delinquency problem. On the other hand, we had a few harsh words to say to the City Council about its handling of the court scandal and the firing of Police Chief Frank Littlejohn.

There were other major and minor concerns but, all in all, 1958 was a great year for community progress.

* * *

ON the state level, THE NEWS was an outspoken advocate of governmental reform. The most hopeful signs of life in this wide-open field came in the courts where a special committee headed by Mecklenburg's Sen. Bell was at work. We supported, with no important reservations, the Bell Committee's proposals to give North Carolina a unified judicial system. At the same time, we urged that the state constitution be overhauled from stem to stern and a commission is presently at work on the project.

We gave serious attention during the year to role of the University of North Carolina in the state and in the region, urging that UNC reassert its leadership in an era of great social turmoil. Our editorial comments on the subject touched off a statewide debate in which the governor himself participated.

In the quarrel between UNC trustees and the State Board of Higher Education we urged a settlement of differences, but one that would not diminish the University's vitality and its capacity for public service.

We plunged into the dispute over new state taxes and came up with the suggestion that tobacco be the target if new revenue simply had to be raised.

There were other North Carolina editorial concerns—diminishing water resources, the surprising appointment of Everett Jordan to the U. S. Senate, the attraction of new industry—but they were often overshadowed by regional problems. We attempted to put into words throughout the year our ideas about a new South—its hopes, its apprehensions, its dreams and its destiny. We urged that it put aside its fears and face the future with a faith that is at least as strong as its memories.

* * *

THE national picture during 1958 was filled with too many triumphs and tragedies to document in detail here. Little Rock continued to haunt the country's conscience and we urged time and again that the Supreme Court grant a breathing spell so that desperate social problems could be tackled in an atmosphere somewhat less tense than exists at present.

We proposed anti-recession measures in vain and, through pluck or luck, the nation emerged from its economic slump without help from the White House. In fact, the abdication of leadership in Washington was one of the year's sharpest tragedies with Dwight Eisenhower becoming more and more a part-time President. The nation's disillusionment was eloquently expressed in the November election. But with the Democratic Party's great victory came a greater responsibility. At times—particularly in the party's relationships with its southern members—it appeared that the national Democratic leadership could not or would not pass the test.

New crises erupted with frightening rapidity on the international scene and frequently the administration's handling of them left much to be desired. There was a continuing need for new ideas and new directions. The prospects in 1959 are not reassuring.

Throughout the year, we gave readers the best outside comment on current problems being written in America. Our stable of experts included Walter Lippman, Joseph Alsop, Marquis Childs, Doris Fleeson, Drew Pearson. In addition, there were special research reports presented and editorial page articles by Harry Ashmore, Paul Green, Eric Sevareid, Harry Golden, Gerald Johnson, Florida Gov. Leroy Collins, North Carolina Attorney General Malcolm Seawell, Assistant Secretary of Defense Murray Snider and others. There were also editorial book reviews of significant books by Ashmore, Golden, Alsop, Childs, Pearson, Herbert Block, Field Marshal Montgomery, John P. Frank, Henri Alleg, George W. Cable and Ina Woestmeyer Van Noppen.

* * *

LOOKING ahead, our editorial policy in 1959 will continue to reflect the principles we have always held dear at THE NEWS—a deep belief in the importance and the dignity of the individual and his ultimate triumph over any form of tyranny, profound respect for our system of constitutional government, great confidence in America's resilience, staying power and willingness to sacrifice for national ideals, and the firm belief that mankind will eventually succeed in saving the world and itself from the suicidal follies of its national fears, jealousies and ambitions for power.

Separate medical reports recently have blamed dandruff, ulcers and heart trouble on the stress of competitive jobs. This is great. By the time a man is a success he can't eat anything, climb stairs or wear a dark blue suit.—ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES.

Mr. Dulles Should Upgrade Diplomats & Stay At Home

By WALTER LIPPMANN

WASHINGTON

MR. Rowland Evans Jr. wrote a story the other day about a big effort being made in the administration and among the Democratic Senate leaders to work out arrangements for the conduct of foreign policy. This is necessary, even when the administration has a commanding majority in Congress. In the new Congress there could, at least theoretically, be a series of stalemates. On this or that measure, especially if it requires money, the Democratic majority could refuse to support the President. And also, on this or that project which the Democratic majority wants, the administration may refuse to act.

BIPARTISANSHIP

During the Second World War and after, when the principle of a bi-partisan policy was established, the basic problem was how to persuade a majority in Congress to support big programs initiated by the executive. There was, of course, the conduct of the war itself. There was the question of adherence to the United Nations, and to the other international institutions, such as the World Bank, the Monetary Fund, UNESCO. There were the large reconstruction measures such as the Marshall Plan and the formation of NATO.

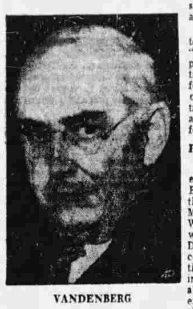
In all these cases the practical political problem was how the Democratic administrations, Roosevelt's and Truman's, could obtain the support of the more or less predominantly isolationist Republicans. During the war this was done by a general patriotic unanimity. After the war, it was done when Sen. Vandenberg, who had been an isolationist, changed his mind, then carried with him the bulk of the Republicans.

STATUS QUO

The situation today is somewhat different. The Eisenhower administration's line of policy is not to initiate great international projects but to defend the status quo, to resist firmly when any non-Communist position is challenged but not to deliver any substantial challenge to any existing Communist position. Always there is some talk about German reunification, and there had been some talk about the liberation of the satellites. Yet there are no indications that any moves are contemplated which will change the status quo and lead to the reunification of Germany or to national freedom for the satellites.

Thus, we shall refuse to remove our troops from West Berlin. But nothing is contemplated which would challenge the Soviet Union to remove its troops which surround Berlin and hold East Germany and Poland and Eastern Europe in captivity.

The Democrats will, of course, support Mr. Dulles in refusing to give up anything under duress. But, even if they were agreed among themselves on some kind of constructive initiative, the Democrats will not be able to compel the administration to adopt it. For Congress can lead the administration to water but it cannot make the horse drink. Congress cannot conduct the foreign policy of the United States. And it ought not to try to do it. Its proper role is to insist on being informed, and in a position, therefore, to hold the executive accountable and to debate intelligently and responsibly what has been done or what Congress is asked to approve before it is done.



VANDENBERG

NO FORMULA

There is no mechanical formula by which relations between Congress and the executive can be organized. Mr. Evans said in his story that some administration officials are thinking about "the recreation of an elite corps of totally-informed legislators who are continuously privy both to basic administration designs and to the information on which policy is being based." If what the officials have in mind is to give members of Congress all they want or need to know, they are thinking of something that ought to be done as a matter of course.

But in doing it, there ought to be no talk about setting up "an elite corps" of specially privileged congressmen. The true elite in the formation of foreign affairs are the members of Congress who will take the trouble to study foreign affairs and to keep themselves informed.

PERENNIAL PROBLEM

The problem of congressional-executive relations is perennial. But it is complicated at the present time by the way Mr. Dulles conducts his office. Washington is the center of a world-wide coalition, and Mr. Dulles for obvious reasons is in command of our foreign relations. As such, he needs to be in Washington most of the time, all of the time one might say except for extraordinary occasions. Why, for example, should he have thought it necessary to travel from Mexico City to San Francisco to deliver a speech which could just as well have been delivered in Washington? And why does he now have to go to Karachi just as Congress is about to meet, while Cuba is in turmoil, as Mr. Mikoyan is about to arrive, as the situation in the Middle East is so confused and so explosive?

Mr. Dulles has often defended his travels on the ground that face to face with foreign statesmen he can settle problems quickly which cannot be settled so quickly through diplomatic channels. But the fact is that while he is off to Karachi, or to Paris, or to Manila, to settle this or that, he is really out of personal touch with what may be happening in a dozen other places. And in his absence there is nobody at the center of things in Washington who has genuine authority to make a decision.

A most undesirable consequence of his personal diplomacy is that it down-grades our embassies abroad and all of the foreign embassies in Washington. Mr. Dulles has taught the world to think that nothing of real importance can be settled except by him personally, that all other contacts, except at the summit where he is, are of secondary importance.

FUNDAMENTAL CAUSE

This is the fundamental cause of the discontent within NATO, not only of Gen. de Gaulle, who has not been consulted nearly enough, but also of the smaller NATO powers who have to get too much of their news of the alliance from the newspapers.

The remedy is not to set up another committee of consultation. It is to up-grade the existing diplomats and this can be done as and when Mr. Dulles, sitting at the center of things, communicates seriously with the foreign embassies in Washington and through the American ambassadors abroad. For if this became the practice, it would no longer be assumed that nothing of first rate importance can happen except when the head of a state or a foreign minister embarks in an airplane for a flight abroad.

And if our diplomacy were conducted in an orderly fashion, with the secretary of state in the capital of the United States, there would be far more opportunity for those informal contacts with Congress upon which understanding and good feeling depend.

Republican Senators Face Their 'Uncertain Destiny'

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON

IN THE lull before the congressional storm a lonely band faces an uncertain destiny. The liberal Republicans in the Senate, 12 of them by charitable count, are making valiant sounds of battle.

But the difficulty, as more candid members of this beleaguered company admit in private, is finding a piece of the political terrain on which they can stand. As Eisenhower Republicans they find President Eisenhower dug into a position offering them no comforting shelter whatsoever.

ALL-OUT FOR ECONOMY

The President is going all out for economy and balancing the budget. If his preliminary statement on the size of the next budget means anything, all expenditures will be deeply cut except for armaments, where there will be an increase approaching $2 billion over current defense spending. Even the Development Loan Fund, which was to be expanded to $1 billion a year, is to be held to the present level of $700,000,000.

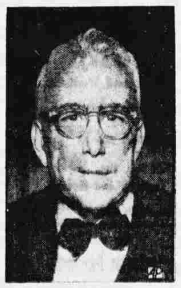
The stern economy cry out of the White House is reminiscent of the stand taken by Herbert Hoover after the congressional elections of 1930 went against the Republicans. The enemy in that earlier time was deflation, with a rapidly mounting total of unemployment. As viewed from the White House today, the peril is inflation. But the remedy proposed is like that of 1931 and 32—cut costs, save money, balance the budget.

HOLDING THE LINE

As the unhappy Hoover struggled to hold the line and "restore confidence" the Democratic opposition had a field day. Such wild-eyed radicals as John Nance Garner were proposing staggering sums — as much as $300,000,000 — for relief of the unemployed. The Republicans in Congress were demoralized.

Something like this could happen again, and the liberal Republicans know it only too well. The Democrats are bound to come up with spending programs — more defense, more foreign aid, more dams, highways, waterways at home — that the White House will try to repulse. For those who are unemployed, for farmers who face a further decline in farm prices in 1959, for the West where the tide of industrialization has slowed, these programs will have an appeal.

The liberals have in Sens. George Aiken and John Sherman Cooper two able candidates for the minority leadership. Aiken's record is in sharp contrast with that of the conservative candidate, Senator Everett Dirksen. An analysis by Congressional Quarterly shows that on issue after issue Dirksen voted against the Eisenhower administration, taking an isolationist and conservative line. In every instance Aiken voted for the administration, and that is Cooper's record, too.



AIKEN

A MAJOR COMPLAINT

One of the major complaints in the group is that the President has given them no recognition. Sen. Alexander Wiley, ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, feels deeply that he has never had his due in appointment to international commissions and delegations. Aiken, ranking member of the Agriculture Committee and a leading authority on farm problems, feels just as strongly that Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson has ignored him in policy-making.

Regardless of how the contest comes out — and the odds favor Dirksen at the moment — the liberals feel that by making a stand together they are bound to get more recognition. They will have impressed on the country the fact that there are a dozen or more Republicans actively opposed to the stand-patism of the majority. And they will always have the issue of civil rights on which they can count for the deep divisions in the Democratic party.

This is not merely an ideological debate with an honorary office as the reward for the winner. Many of the liberals and those in the swing group between conservatives and liberals are up for re-election in 1960. It is a question for them of survival, since the trend that swept so many Democrats into office last November may still be running.

With his military background the President is a firm believer in staying strictly to channels in any and all negotiations. The departure of Sherman Adams has opened the White House door a crack. But liberal senators who have talked to the President recently find him no more receptive to their problems and their ideas than in the past. They must stand on their own feet and on the record they are able to make if they are to stand at all.

'The Rebel Claims Are Greatly Exaggerated, And That Shooting You Hear Is Just Static'

People's Platform

Preacher's Wisdom Ripens In Old Age

Salisbury

Editor, The News:

I HAVE often wondered why people would choose a young fellow for a preacher. A well-educated man is not much good as a preacher until he gets to be 40. He is a much better preacher at 50 than he was at 40. At 60 he is beginning to get to the place where his wisdom has started to get ripe. By the time he is 70 his experience begins to sound like it has common sense. By the time he is 80 he has become a sage.

If people want that world of peace they will have to depend on the wisdom of age in place of the rashness of youth.

— JAMES W. JEWELL

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

In Alaska Even Hamburgers Are Sacred

FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The latest Texas story is Billy Graham's definition of claustrophobia: "An Alaskan in Texas."

It's a story that delights Alaskans. For, as the biggest state, prepares officially and formally to become a state in 1959, it is bursting with pride and preening its feathers.

When Mrs. Helen Fisher, Democratic national committeewoman from Alaska, went to Washington for the last committee meeting she packed four suitcases. Three contained clothes to tide her through the customary sessions in the smoke-filled rooms. The fourth contained smoked salmon and other fishy edibles from Alaska. The airline proceeded to lose the first three suitcases containing clothes. But committeewoman Fisher was happy. She had the suitcase containing Alaskan fish.

Not only is Alaska proud, but like many youngsters it has a chip on its shoulder. It bristles at criticism like a Kodiak bear surprised in a berry patch. When word was published in Alaskan newspapers that I was about to report on a radio program that hamburgers in Alaska cost one dollar, signs appeared in Fairbanks restaurants, "DREW PEARSON NEVER ATE HERE —HAMBURGERS 25 CENTS."

And on a Fairbanks TV program during which I was hauled over the coals for a garbled Associated Press dispatch stating that I had criticized Alaska, the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce sent me three hamburgers for a dollar with instructions that I choke on them in front of the TV camera.

Not Even Hamburgers

Alaskans have fought hard for statehood and they don't even want their hamburgers belittled. They want it made clear that they have an area one-fifth the size of the other 48 states, more timber perhaps than all the other states, gold, copper and precious metals, bigger crops, potatoes and cabbages than any place else in the world.

I might add that they also have some of the most beautiful scenery, atrocious weather, biggest mosquitoes and most energetic people to be found in any of the 49 states.

A Notable 'Steal'

A few years ago the Soviet press was talking about the American "steal" of Alaska as if preparing for a drive to get it back. The idea of getting Alaska back couldn't have been very serious, but the description of the $7,000,000 price tag for Alaska as a "steal" was certainly accurate. Alaska was a much bigger steal than even Moscow realized, for neither most Russians nor most Americans know that the $7,000,000 was a concealed payment for the cost of sending the Russian fleet to guard San Francisco and New York during the toughest months of our Civil War.

In 1863, with Confederate raiders getting bolder and the British hoping to split the South off from the North, Abraham Lincoln was afraid Britain and France might formally recognize the South.

So he sent Bayard Taylor with a personal letter to Foreign Minister Gorchakov in St. Petersburg asking for help. It was secretly agreed that in case France and England recognized the South, Russia would ally itself with the North and attack any British fleet that came within hailing distance of the North.

Part of the secret understanding was that the North would pay for the cost of the Russian fleet operations, which was later worked out through the purchase of what was considered worthless Alaska.