THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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There's Still Time To Make Charlotte One Of Dixie's Most Beautiful Cities

IN spring a young city's fancy should turn to thoughts of beauty — or so it seemed to us one day last week as we gazed moodily at the world around us.

It was early morning and Charlotte was radiant in a tender mist. It lay like a tapestry upon the urban landscape, mercifully concealing the grime and clutter of "toadstool" progress. For a few precious moments the city was a fairyland of sorts—but soon the sun rose and the mist burned away and reality returned.

There is an angular gauntness about Charlotte's own peculiar brand of reality. There are the tall, grave buildings of Nebraska Gothic. There is the gridiron system of lots of streets left over from the 18th century and completely out of date in the 20th. There are the long, gray lines of blight, medieval in squalor and wretchedness, that spread outward along the great motor thoroughfare. There is the jungle of electrified tubing that, day and night, hawks wares of every description. Finally, in magnificent contrast, there is the exquisite remoteness of the First Presbyterian Churchyard, singularly polished and mellow and poised in the Queen City's core.

It is not an ugly city. At least, it is no uglier than many another adolescent metropolis struggling for identity in the mid-20th century.

But that is precisely the point. It is neither uglier nor prettier than most cities of its type and to be merely "average" is damnable indeed.

We remember a French visitor of several years ago. After being shown the local sights he was asked what he thought of Our Town. He shrugged his shoulders with that typically Gallic gesture and said: "It is like Des Moines, no?"

No, Charlotte is not even remotely like Des Moines. But to a casual kibitzer it might well have seemed that way.

For distinctive beauty and charm does not just happen. It must be planned. And, in Charlotte, there has been far too little *planned* beauty.

* * *

FROM time immemorial, man has dreamed of building beautiful cities. A few European cities—notably Paris, Rome and Berlin — have at times attained a considerable measure of loveliness by the construction of monumental public buildings, well-designed plazas, great tree-lined boulevards and attractive river embankments. But few U. S. cities have attempted anything quite so noble — mainly because their growth has been so sudden.

Charlotte is still young, however, still in its formative stages of development. It is not too late to start thinking in terms of creating a city that will be as pleasant to look at as it is to live in.

The tools are available. The metropolitan community has a planning commission and it is manned by intelligent and imaginative craftsmen. Unfortunately, its activities in the recent past have necessarily been directed along other paths. It has been concerned primarily with urban efficiency — and it has a long way to go before even this goal is in sight.

But simple "efficiency" is not enough. Efficiency is cold and often inhuman. It produced "The Lonely Crowd," explored in a notable book of the same name by David Riesman. It produced the bulldozer-and-ready-mix-concrete era of "total urbanization." It has turned green countryside into deserts criss-crossed by superhighways with their massively unsightly cloverleafs. It has meant the erection of gaunt new barracks for the poor, the consolidation of city and trade areas into octopus-like metropolitan regions, the bulldozing of trees to make way for highway bargain bins, dormitory clusters and rural manufacturing sites. It has produced, too, a cult of "progress," the typically American confusion that assumes all change is good and all permanence and stability bad.

* * *

THE danger is that this coldly "efficient" mode of living will unravel the fabric of social organization and dehumanize it. It calls to mind what Lewis Mumford once wrote of the decline of the medieval city in a book called THE CULTURE OF THE CITIES:

"The city had almost ceased to be a common enterprise for the common good; and neither the local authority of the municipal corporation nor the universal authority of the Church was sufficient to direct for the benefit of the commonwealth the new forces that were making headway throughout European civilization."

Eventually the social ingenuity of man licked the problem of changing medieval life. But today's problems are fully as great and tomorrow's may be greater.

In a city such as Charlotte, the human values can be saved. The choice is still ours to make. We can build a beautiful city—a wholly livable city—if we plan it now. It should be a city that expresses Charlotte's own culture and personality. But it would make use of Lewis Mumford's ideas of green belts in metropolitan communities. It would give thought to tree-lined boulevards and spacious plazas. It would strip away dark, ugly structures that hide its finest architecture (as is the case with the Public Library) and give public buildings "room to breathe." It would make use of native artistic talent in decorating its great structures and in filling its parks with sculpture that expresses the spirit and aspirations of a great and growing southern metropolis. The blight of Brooklyn would have to be removed, of course, for social and economic as well as esthetic reasons. And all of the ingenuity of the planners would be required to improve the face of the aging central business district. This might even include the radical plazification of midtown, such as that proposed in the Gruen plan for Fort Worth and long recommended for Manhattan by Mr. Mumford.

* * *

THE opportunities are unlimited, but they must be seized. Beautiful cities, as we said, are manmade. Whatever is done will be done in the same community spirit that made Charlotte what it is. For, as one poet expressed it, we are pioneers like our forefathers who "came like shadows" across the land, "exploring and hoping . . .

"We are their children, we too explore and hope."

Gorillas And Kids: A Kind Of Parallel

WE'RE glad to see that the keeper of Colo, a gorilla by trade, has rallied to the practical defense of his ward.

Colo, in case you missed the news entries, has been adjudged disorganized and somewhat intellectually retarded. The survey was promoted by a pair of Ohio State University psychiatrists.

It took no little spunk for Columbus zooman Earl Davis to admit that Colo frequently outwitted him. He also inferred in a zoo magazine that he and fellow workers might not shape up too well in the same tests given the half-year-old ape.

Davis sounds like a parent in this case, and there is a parallel to be drawn.

All too many of us who are in the captive role of parents needn't worry too much if our offspring don't ring the jackpot bell in intellect.

It is folly to compare children with science's norms and worry if a child is slow or dull or disorganized.

Some of us are born to lay brick and cut wood. And how much better if from a moderated childhood one became a good bricklayer rather than an incompetent artist or college failure.

Love, consideration and guidance are still basic. No clinical battery of tests or comparisons thereof will ever replace them.

Colo's keeper scored a point when he said:

"All our efforts were bent to raise a good healthy gorilla, and she is."

From The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ABOUT BUCKWHEAT

KENNETH Harris, who lives near Anabel in Macon County, grows his own buckwheat, grinds his own meal and has his own scientific formula for making buckwheat cakes. "Plan your day in advance," he says. "Prepare the concoction at 8:30 p.m. Be ready to have your wife serve you at 4:30 a.m. I have found this batter reaches its maximum at 4:22 a.m. Terminal stage increases rapidly thereafter."

We approve Mr. Harris' scholarly approach, including the use of buttermilk and a spoon of molasses, and side-dressing of preserves or sorghum, but he has carried science too far — or not far enough. While the science of the buckwheat cake indeed calls for overnight patience, the art of eating one calls for something later than 4:30 a.m., even if there is a sure recipe for getting wives up at 4 o'clock.

We know a hotel in Tokepa, Kans., whose buckwheat cakes reach terminal stage at 7:30 a.m. or thereabouts. This batter also rises overnight, and once it is depleted, a customer must do without, or accept ordinary flapjacks. No bribery would lead a good chef to serve buckwheat cakes from new batter.

It is all a matter of timing. Let us regard the buckwheat cake not as the night-blooming cereus, but more as a morning glory, basking in the glow of sunshine and strawberry preserves. Science be hanged.

Charlotte Symphony Orchestra In One Of Its Ovens Audit orium Performances: "Music Is The International Language"

People's Platform

Charlotte Takes A Giant Step Toward Progress

Chapel Hill

Editors, The News:

IT IS A pleasure to hear that Charlotte will essay a broad cultural program, relating to the arts, specifically. May I extend my felicitations to all of the civic leaders who are taking an active part in this project.

SWALIN

As we contemplate our civilization today with its growing population, increased leisure, and the yearning that the youth has for that which is invincibly good we are fully conscious of the necessity for permanent values that will serve as a guide to our people. Many of the so-called material things possess only ephemeral value and cannot be regarded, therefore, as a basic part of our potentialities.

On the other hand, some of the civilizations that have preceded us are remembered largely because of their achievements in the arts—their music, literature, painting, architecture, and other forms of creative expression.

Charlotte needs some vital concentration on the arts, and such efforts will inspire our creative talents and benefit our people in manifold ways. They will expand our horizons and serve to "stretch" the mind of the youth. So often it may be said that our youth seeks bread, and we give them a stone.

There is a specific and tangible benefit to organizations such as the Charlotte Symphony, Charlotte Opera Association, Mint Museum, and other artistic and cultural endeavors, since many people under an Arts Council will ascribe to these arts their rightful position as significant and related arts—and the efforts of the people will be a united one, I am sure.

May I say that I believe that it is an important step toward progress and happiness. I am reminded of a quotation from Charles Darwin in which he stated, "If I had my life to live over again, I would have made it a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least every week. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature."

Music is the great language of the emotions. It is the international language of the world today, and thus it is the rightful heritage of all of the peoples of the world; it can be utilized for pleasure and enjoyment. It is a great personal art, and it is surely a great social art as evidenced in the music of the churches throughout the world.

—BENJAMIN F. SWALIN
Director
North Carolina Symphony Orchestra

Minister Opposes Sterilization Bill

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

THE following is a copy of a letter sent to Sen. J. Spencer Bell.

—REV. LAWRENCE J. HILL

Dear Sen. Bell:

AS a private citizen, I write you regarding the pending sterilization bill and ask your firm opposition to it. It has always been a pleasure to boast that North Carolina is my native state. If such measures as this sterilization bill are passed by our esteemed lawmakers, I shall be ashamed of my state. This is an immoral, un-Christian and un-American proposal . . . .

Rev. Lawrence J. Hill

Why Some Christians Oppose Sterilization

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

I HAVE been reading with interest the recent newspaper stories on the proposed sterilization bill currently being considered by the legislature, and thought you might like to know what some Christian North Carolinians think about it. Many of my friends and I are opposed to such a law on moral and religious grounds.

If the proposal to permit sterilization of certain individuals is intended as punishment, it is too severe to fit the crime and unfair in that it falls on only one party to an action which involves two. If it is intended to prevent immorality, it must fail; indeed it would be more likely to have the opposite effect. If the intent is merely to minimize a financial burden to the state, the cost in terms of human values is far out of proportion.

Man must not arrogate to himself the prerogative of God, which would be the effect of this legislation. God created us in his own image; who are men to attempt to alter this likeness?

Finally, to give such power to any commission or court, no matter how good the intention might be, would be exceedingly dangerous. If certain kinds of behavior are sufficient grounds for sterilization of a "guilty" individual, why not other reasons: An unpopular religion or political belief, or a minority race, for example?

I hope Mecklenburg County's legislative delegation will use its considerable influence toward defeating this bill.

—J. V. KILLHEFFER

First In Sterilization, Last In Education?

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

ATTACHED is a copy of a letter sent to our legislators by way of registering our protests against the bills mentioned in the letter. Since we wish this to be a matter of public record, we respectfully request that you publish its contents, hoping at the same time to accomplish something for the good of the public.

—C. J. LeFRANCOIS
Grand Knight
Charlotte Council No. 770
Knights of Columbus

Gentlemen:

THE 200 members of the Charlotte Council No. 770, Knights of Columbus, have unanimously voted to be on public record as opposing the proposed House Bill No. 248 and Senate Bill No. 113 which would provide for the sterilization of unwed mothers giving birth to two or more illegitimate children.

Although we recognize the great evil of illegitimacy, we definitely feel that such bills would result in much more harm than the evil itself which they are attempting to correct. It is to be noted that the state cannot exercise any public power to mutilate the human body or to permanently take away a human function as punishment in order to save the state money.

Unquestionable results of such bills would be: More promiscuity, more broken homes and more venereal diseases. Would there then be any end to future legislation that would little by little deprive individuals of their human rights? Let us remember Germany during World War II, with its torture chambers and shameful experiments with human beings—a hideous crime!

Our council supports our state officers' forceful bywords ". . . let us not make North Carolina the laughing stock of the nation; first in sterilization and last in education!" We need to progress, therefore we respectfully urge you to do your utmost to defeat the proposed bills referred to above.

C. J. LeFrancois

Shame On Tar Heels For Economic Gains

Florence, S. C.

Editors, The News:

THE sentiment expressed in your editorial of March 24, comparing the economic status of Virginia and Arkansas on the one hand and North Carolina on the other, is a serious reproach on the good people of North Carolina. In plain language, you seem to be proud that "North Carolina leaders" have sold the honor and integrity, the very soul, of the state for silver and gold. On the other hand, whether you intended it that way or not, it does credit to the honor and integrity of Virginia and Arkansas. We cannot believe that the people of North Carolina feel as you and the "leaders" seem to feel. Time will tell, and we believe it will tell that the people of North Carolina will repudiate the disgraceful mixing of the races in the schools.

If the corporations are not enthusiastic about establishing their plants in localities where the people choose to continue the way of life as they see it, they can go to some state where the people are willing to sell out — and the corporations themselves can and will reap due reward. If the corporations feel as you seem to feel, why not establish all of their plants in Washington, D. C.?

— THOS. R. MILLER

Racial Troubles Blamed On Fear

Laurinburg

Editors, The News:

AS a black man who has spent most of his life in the Deep South, I have seen racial discrimination at its worst, and I am convinced that the basis for all of it is fear. The white man's fear of black economic competition. Fear breeds hatred, and as a result there is violence.

The white man feels that if he can limit the black man's educational opportunities, he lessens the danger of his becoming an economic menace. If he can restrict the black man's political rights he has a pretty good guarantee that the black man will "stay put." It's the old idea of "keep the Negro in the ditch". But the white South must know by this time that you cannot keep a man in a ditch unless you stay there with him.

—REV. W. T. SHERMAN

Why Should Property Value Be Destroyed?

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

DARBY Acres should not be destroyed by any arrogant builder. These people paid a dear price for this property. Why should this value be destroyed? . . . Is this fair to the rest of us?

— MRS. A. B. THOMAS

'Now In This Case, They're All Waiting For A Call'

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Big Split Separates Ike And Macmillan

WASHINGTON

THE top NATO foreign ministers begin sharpening up Western defense strategy in Washington today, just as bad news is leaking from the tightly censored Camp David talks.

It takes some time for the real news to leak out of a high-level conference, especially when only a few men are present and it is held in a mountain retreat. However, more accurate details of the Macmillan-Eisenhower conference have now reached NATO diplomats and indicate a bad state of affairs between the leaders of the two great English-speaking nations. Herewith, from different sources, are the details.

British Are Appalled

From Camp David — Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan disagreed on almost everything except the general principle that they should stand firm on Berlin. Even here they didn't agree on how they should stand firm.

The British came away appalled at Ike's lack of homework. The President in turn began to think the British Prime Minister was almost as appeasement-minded as Neville Chamberlain, the umbrella-carrying Prime Minister who yielded to Hitler at Munich.

Tired And Confused

The British confided to commonwealth diplomats afterward that American leadership is tired and confused at a time when imaginative initiative is needed to prevent catastrophic war. Aside from repeating the usual cliches, they reported, the President came forward with nothing new. They had expected an elaboration of John Foster Dulles' statement that German unification might be obtained without holding elections. But there was no elaboration.

Foreign Minister Selwyn Lloyd despaired over what he privately termed the bankruptcy of American diplomacy.

Hope Dims For Dulles

From Dulles' Bedside — The chances of John Foster Dulles coming back to the State Department seem less every day. He is losing weight steadily and the doctors are pessimistic. The tenacious secretary of state has confided to intimates, however, that he is determined to help steer American foreign policy at least through the summer.

From the hospital and later from his home last week, he gave Prime Minister Macmillan some heavy-handed language regarding the danger of a summit meeting.

Macmillan Was Jolted

Dulles did not put it in so many words, but his associates say he is determined to block a summit conference this summer if it's the last thing he does. Macmillan was jolted by Dulles' words, but, because President Eisenhower was with him, said little in reply.

Nixon Miffed

From Nixon's Home — The vice president was definitely miffed at not being invited to Camp David. In his press conference the President said Nixon was a very busy man, and implied that he was too busy to go to Camp David. But the truth is that Nixon wanted to attend in the worst way. To make up for missing it, he held a special tea for the British Prime Minister.

The two got along famously—better than did the President and the Prime Minister.

Golfing Holiday?

From Other Sources — Though Ike is still hanging back regarding a summit conference without agreement in advance, the Prime Minister tempted him with the suggestion of using the Queen's Balmoral Castle in Scotland. The golfing nearby is wonderful and in July you can play until 10 p.m. Or there is the beautiful Glen Eagles Hotel in Scotland, near one of the finest golf courses in the world.

Ike's Confession

From Capitol Hill—The President confessed to GOP congressional leaders that the only reason he agreed tentatively to a summit conference was to re-elect Prime Minister Macmillan. He would rather face Khrushchev across the conference table, he said, than face the prospect of a Labor government in England.