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America Waits Impatiently For A New Political Era

By DORIS FLEESON

WASHINGTON

Intense dissatisfaction with the situation at the State Department is being buried here in the interests of national unity during the forthcoming discussions with the Soviet Union.

The same senators who are heaping praise on Secretary Christian Herter and probably persuaded President Eisenhower that Herter must be appointed expect little more from him than a holding operation. They will, in fact, be happy to settle for that.

It is the unfortunate net of years of failure to hold the Eisenhower administration to a high standard of accountability for its management of the government. The sentiments expressed are almost non-partisan, for few Republicans attempt to defend seriously the present management of the country's destiny.

NEW BROOMS

Candidates for president and their friends who busily cultivated the nation's editors here last weekend think they found what amounts to a fever of frustration. They foresee a period of popularity for new brooms, even those of untested efficiency.

One conservative editor who recently returned from an Asian journey bore out this opinion with complete candor. He said that in order to get vigor and fresh ideas he would be reconciled to almost any of the younger men who aspire to be president and hope that the responsibilities of high office would evoke the abilities commensurate to it.

CAMPAIGNS BEGIN

Even before the editors met, the politicians who hope to be at the helm for the next few decades were embarking on ambitious programs of travel and campaign organization.

Vice President Nixon is going to the Soviet Union in July and frankly hopes to be present at any summit meetings. He says nothing to disassociate himself from the Eisenhower administration but does nothing to tie himself to its day-by-day routine and its failures. His defense of it is composed of generalities; he is rarely specific as to policy or persons.

Democratic candidates for President are in similar fashion fanning out into the states for their campaign organizations.

Sen. John F. Kennedy has returned from a successful foray into Wisconsin and other midwestern states.

Sen. Hubert Humphrey is headed toward California. Sen. Stuart Symington has an impressive batch of airplane tickets.

What these men find today is not just that times have changed but how very greatly they have changed. They are discovering what the men charged with routine here have failed to notice; that is, that the great names of the Roosevelt and Truman and even the Eisenhower era are not in the least compelling now.

WAITING FOR LEADERS

A whole new growth of political ideas is springing up. It has still to reach either a strong stand or decisive coloration, but it is there and waiting for its leaders.

No candidate naturally is going to say anything unkind about the old pros whose names are attached to the New Deal, which was a success, and the Fair Deal, which represented its final feeble flowering. But they expect in their 1960 plans to bypass such men wherever they can.

Are Things Going To Pot?

Year-Round System Of Public Schools Deserves Thoughtful Study In Tarheelia

The proposal that North Carolina adopt a 12-month system of public education generated considerably more heat than light.

Tar Heels were treated to a cacophony of sneers and cheers but no dependable information on the advantages and disadvantages of the plan was readily available. As is sometimes the case, legislators were shooting from the hip.

Obviously, this is not a question that can be decided suddenly on the basis of some sort of conditioned reflex. It is a complicated notion and would involve a complete revision of the school calendar. It deserves serious study by people who are genuinely concerned about the crisis in education.

The problems of overcrowded schools, obsolete facilities and a shortage of teachers are not being solved by the "conventional" techniques left over from Grandpop's day. The time is fast approaching when some boldly unconventional ideas will have to be put to work.

* * *

Year-around use of schools is one remedy suggested by many experts. They contend that the present nine-month program is outmoded, that it binds us to an earlier mode of living that is now out of date and that it shackles us to incredible wastefulness in our educational facilities. They frankly believe that a 12-month system of education would serve the dual purpose of relieving overcrowded conditions and of reducing the teacher shortage.

As early as the 1920s, some U. S. communities have experimented with variations of the year-round school plan. But these trials have been somewhat haphazard in application and, to this day, there has been no conclusive evidence which would either confirm or deny the claims of proponents. North Carolina could serve the cause of education generally, as well as its own special interests, by launching a comprehensive study of the plan. Such a study might even include a trial run in one or more communities in the state.

There are several approaches to the problem. Each should be carefully scrutinized.

One is the "four-quarter plan" which would place the schools on a system of four 12-week quarters. Students would be required to attend three of the four quarters. In this way, each student would still be in school the same length of time as at present but, because of the extended academic year, the schools would be able to accommodate about 25 per cent more students. Vacation schedules would be staggered throughout the year.

A second possibility is the "12-month plan" which would establish a 12-month academic year consisting of two semesters of 5½ months each. All students could be given a one-month vacation at the same time, or this could be varied to make it compulsory for all students to attend four quarters of school with one week of vacation between quarters. Although this would not permit the schools to handle a larger enrollment immediately, it would enable students to complete their public schooling in either nine or ten years.

* * *

Both plans offer the obvious advantages of greater utilization of school plants, facilities and trained personnel. It is possible that many teachers would object to the strain of year-round teaching and find it difficult to receive the graduate training required. But year-round employment would mean a hefty raise in teachers' salaries and it is likely that graduate courses could be redesigned so that teachers could continue their studies without difficulty. Colleges and universities could place more emphasis on extension work, Saturday and evening classes and in-service programs for graduate credit. Furthermore, leaves of absence every two or three years would provide opportunity for study or travel.

These are but a few of the many factors involved. But the possibilities are attractive and they deserve thoughtful examination in North Carolina.

* * *

The tremendous waste of laying off teachers and letting multimillion-dollar buildings stand idle for the portions of the year makes little sense from a practical business standpoint. As D. B. Markham, a leader in California's campaign for better schools, put it recently: "Education in 20th century America—despite its purpose—is still big business, costing billions of dollars in salaries and facilities alone. Isn't it time that we put education on a businesslike footing and get our money's worth for a change?"

It is indeed.

'I Don't Want To Seem Like An Alarmist, But–'

Student Force Shames The Legislature

Raleigh legislators were caught with their session down Saturday, and for the five remaining on sentry duty it was a rather embarrassing situation.

The House had three members present when Wilmington students, 74 strong, marched into the gallery. The best that could be done was to have all in attendance rise and repeat the Lord's Prayer.

Shifting to the Senate, the children found but two present, including Mecklenburg's Sen. Spencer Bell. There, the senator latched the ball to Sen. Arthur Kirkman of Guilford, and it fell the latter's duty to explain the situation.

"We have held our session this morning. It lasted about two minutes and is held only because it is required by law," he explained, in part.

Sen. Kirkman then got himself in hand and described weekday action, concluding ". . . we regret that you did not get to see the Senate in session."

The Guilford orator has a very good point there.

A pity the General Assembly cannot use Saturdays, Mondays and most Friday afternoons for floor action.

Admittedly, home fires must be stoked; it's a long haul to Cherokee County and a costly proposition to bunk at the Sir Walter Hotel for three months, give or take a few caucuses.

But a legislative system operating a 3½-day week for three months of every 24 is at best a casual sort of operation.

Now we learn the state's educational system can produce a sort of pressure.

It is to be believed that if delegations of students are pre-announced Saturday visitors, there will be legislators on hand to greet them. After all, these are the voters of the future.

Once assembled, delegates might realize they could actually transact the public's business—if only "because it is required by law."

Davidson's Martin: A Happy Salute

For more than 100 years Davidson College has concerned itself with producing graduates of uncommon rank. Its success is measured in men of every field who have proved superior.

Today this school honored one of these graduates, breaking its own tradition to install a president who is neither professional educator nor minister.

David Grier Martin was a happy choice to lead his college on what appears to be a broadened path to a great era.

Outstanding as a student, he became a successful businessman, returning to Davidson as business manager in 1951. His was the popular name to succeed Dr. John Cunningham when that sturdy educator resigned to direct the Presbyterian Foundation.

Thus, Davidson has given its captaincy to a man who has already demonstrated keen insight in the difficult task of college administration.

Davidson's future is secure in his hands.

People's Platform

Criticism Of Dulles Not Well Founded

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

You're capable of some right bright and admirable editorializing when you put your thinking caps on. Which is to say, I congratulate you on the editorial tribute to one of the ablest, most dedicated American secretaries of state of this century —John Foster Dulles.

During his tenure, Mr. Dulles, like a sturdy oak, weathered a terrific critical gale from the leftwing establishment. This criticism reached a climax about 15 months ago when the left, almost in unison, clamored for his resignation. Dulles' "brinksmanship," they said, was leading the republic on a straight path to hell and destruction.

Now I won't contend that the republic's course in general is not charted toward that unhappy destination; but I do contend that the past hysteria and criticisms of the left toward the general foreign policy of Dulles have proven not well founded.

For indeed we see today that the same critical left is paying tribute to the man and expressing profound regret that it has become necessary for him to step down from his post. (All of which, incidentally, lends optimism to the "hope of the right eye" that vision is not altogether dead in "the left eye.")

First Adenauer, the German, and now Dulles, is vacating a vitally important post. Can Western civilization afford to announce departure of two Gibraltars of wisdom and courage in so short a span of time as three weeks? The answer is yes — ONLY if the basic wisdom that these men taught and the examples they set will, in great measure, be adhered to by their successors.

—J. R. CHERRY JR.

Present City Council Should Be Returned

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

What a bunch of candidates for the City Council! The new ones knoweth not what faces them. It would be better to reelect the ones in office . . . Experienced men can usually find a way out of a muddle.

City Manager Henry Yancey sees the handwriting on the wall. He's a smart man. He's going to fish while they sweat over finances.

Friends and citizens, let's send all the old boys back. We need a mayor, so let's give his honor, Mayor Smith, a big vote.

—W. C. McINTIRE

Their Opposition Was Misdirected

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

If the states of Virginia and Arkansas had spent as much money and time fighting the upsurge of the Reds as they did the Negro children we wouldn't have to worry about bombs falling after the May talks on Berlin.

—ROBERT L. MORRIS

He's No Dulles

Herter's Authority

By WALTER LIPPMANN

WASHINGTON

There is no disguising the fact that Secretary of State Herter's position in the forthcoming negotiations about Germany will be difficult. It could become an insurmountably difficult position if here and abroad Mr. Herter is judged by the measure in which he duplicates the role of John Foster Dulles, and is judged on specific questions as to whether he adheres to what are supposed to be the views that Mr. Dulles would have held.

There are two things we must bear in mind. The one is that it is impossible to duplicate the role played by Mr. Dulles in this administration. The other is that if Mr. Dulles were able to conduct the coming negotiations, he would not and he could not stand pat on all of the old formulae. While he was still active he said as much.

SPECIAL OBLIGATION

The relationship between the President and Mr. Dulles has had no precedent since the United States became a world power in this century. Although Mr. Dulles has been loyal and scrupulous in deferring to Mr. Eisenhower, the fact is that in our foreign affairs he is the man who has been really at the summit. The world has become used to the idea that this is what an American secretary of state is supposed to be.

This creates a special obligation on Mr. Eisenhower. It is the obligation to convince the world that he himself is participating in the decisions, and that what the new secretary of state says is the authentic and authoritative voice of the United States government. It will be very poor business to let the notion get about that the secretary of state lacks authority, and that there is a last appeal over his head to the Walter Reed Hospital.

A POLITICIAN, TOO

If the President, seconded by Mr. Dulles himself, deals clearly with the question of authority, then there is every reason to believe that Mr. Herter is highly qualified for the office he holds. He is a successful and experienced politician and public man. He is also a man with a large experience in foreign affairs. This is a very unusual combination. Mr. Acheson and Dulles were not politicians, and both paid dearly for it — Acheson in being persecuted by the Congress, and Dulles in appeasing those who had persecuted Acheson. By contrast with both of them there was Cordell Hull, who was a very astute politician but with little knowledge or aptitude for foreign affairs.

By and large under our system the office of secretary of state is not one that calls for an expert in foreign affairs. Under any President, but particularly under a President like Gen. Eisenhower who is not a politician, it is very necessary that the secretary of state be an old hand, in fact a professional, in the art of politics. He does not need to be an expert in foreign affairs to know as one might say the precise differences between the Arabs and the Kurds. But he must, of course, be an educated man with a trained mind who can work with experts and decide between them.

BE ON GUARD

In all these respects, Mr. Herter seems to me to fill the bill admirably. I am fortified in this estimate by knowing how excellent are his relations with Congress, and how greatly he has restored the morale and the discipline of the foreign service since he came into the Department of State.

We must be on guard against those who, if there is any departure from the official formulae of the past, will cry out that flexibility is appeasement, and that anything different is another Munich. There are a lot of people here and abroad who are opposed to negotiation with Communists. They like to believe that this is the real view of Mr. Dulles, and they will invoke his name as against any effort to work out by give or take a new modus vivendi in Germany.

They will have to be made to understand that while nothing substantial can or will be given or taken in the two Germanys and the two Berlins, the existing situation needs to be repaired and renovated if it is to endure. It is like a house which needs a new roof and a coat of paint. To be sure, it will not then be exactly the same house which it used to be. On the other hand, without the new roof and the paint, it will not for long be the same old house either, and in the end it may be no house at all.

Hull Was All-Politician

From The New York Times

SPRING PLOWING

Back in the hills to the north the farmers say that oats must be in the ground by April to make a decent crop, and before you can plant you have to plow. With the season the way it has been, this year's spring plowing has been a struggle with rain and mud, not mention deep frost that has been slow coming out of the ground. But, as always, the plowing gets done; and the farmer, despite his troubles, gets satisfactions out of the job just as the gardener gets intangible dividends out of his own lesser work with the soil.

The old days are gone, the days when a man wrestled a walking plow and a team of horses to get his plowing done. But the tractor hasn't removed a man's contact with the soil. You don't have to walk a furrow all day long to know the feel of the land, and not even the exhaust from a gasoline engine can smother the smell of fresh-turned earth on an open hillside in April. There's something elemental in that soil, no matter how many years it has been cultivated. It is still the stuff of growth, the rootbed. Adam knew and felt and saw and smelled such soil, and after he had to sweat at the job of tending it he came to appreciate it. Any man who works with it still respects it, for he knows that seed and sun, rain and soil are the prime essentials of life.

Farming methods change, seed is improved and yields are vastly increased, but earth, the soil itself, remains the basic element of growth. The roots know it, and the seed knows it. And every time the farmer prepares the earth-bed for that seed he knows it. That's one reason that spring plowing, even in a late season, still has its satisfactions. It is a kind of renewed contact with the earth's own vitality, with the substance of life itself.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Who Tampered With Hotel Records?

WASHINGTON

Congressman Frank Boykin of Alabama is considered the No. 1 champion of the Ku Klux Klan and the White Citizens Councils in southern Alabama. Gov. John Patterson is considered by many the No. 1 Negro-baiter in the State of Alabama. But last week the No. 1 Negro congressman in Washington, William Dawson, climbed into bed with them to sidetrack a grand jury which was working for clean government in Alabama.

What Happened

Arthur Perlman, investigator of the Government Operations Committee which Congressman Dawson, Chicago Democrat, heads, had gone to Alabama to investigate a smelly highway situation. Gov. Patterson's campaign manager, now finance director, Charles Meriwether, had been charged with trying to increase the appraisal of a piece of federal highway land from $1 to $180,000 in order to pay a political debt to another of the governor's henchmen, Bill Delaney of Mobile. The federal government would pay 90 per cent of the $180,000, so Uncle Sam, in effect, would be paying off Patterson's friends.

Investigator Arrives

The charge was made officially in the Alabama State Legislature by a preacher turned legislator, Charles Trimmier of Mobile.

When investigator Perlman arrived in Alabama, he was received on Sunday, April 5, at the governor's mansion in Montgomery and there questioned Charles Meriwether in the governor's presence. The cross-examination continued from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Mysterious Phone Call

The key question was whether Meriwether had telephoned Tom Cochran, one of the land appraisers, on Feb. 8 to say that the state would not appeal if Delaney was awarded $180,000 for the dumping of highway muck on his land.

Meriwether flatly denied making the phone call.

Two days later, Perlman was in Mobile and asked Frank Drane, manager of the Admiral Semmes Hotel, for the record of Meriwether's phone calls on Feb. 7 and 8. Drane hesitated, consulted his lawyer, finally produced them. The phone-call records had been tampered with.

"Has anyone asked to see this record?" the congressional investigator asked.

Hasty Journey

Drane huddled with his attorney.

"Yes," he finally answered.

"Who?"

"Meriwether."

"When?"

"Sunday night at 8 p.m."

In other words, Meriwether had left the cross-examining session at the governor's mansion at 6 p.m. Sunday in Montgomery and flown immediately to Mobile. It is 180 miles from Montgomery to Mobile. Perlman checked all commercial lines and found that Meriwether had not taken a commercial plane.

He must have taken a National Guard plane with, of course, the governor's approval. Two National Guard planes had been sent to Mobile on the day of preacher-legislator Trimmier's charges in order to get alibiing statements.

They Teamed Up

Yet despite this record brought back to Washington by Chairman Dawson's own investigator, Dawson teamed up with Gov. Patterson and Congressman Boykin to sidetrack a Mobile grand jury seeking to ascertain the guilty parties. After huddling with race-baiter Boykin, the Negro congressman either sent, or authorized to be sent, a telegram direct to the grand jury stating: "There is not a scintilla of evidence in the land case. We washed our hands of this case on the floor of the House yesterday."