THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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TUESDAY, MAY 19, 1959

Geneva, One Week To The Winds

The foreign ministers at Geneva have thrown a week to the winds — not surprisingly — for that is the way diplomats get down to work.

The revelation yesterday that the West is willing to negotiate separately on the keystone issue of divided Berlin puts a stop to the treadmill. We are moving toward the "moment of truth." The French and West Germans, who would have prolonged the "package" bluff, are not happy that the secret agreement to treat Berlin separately has so soon come to light. The game was bound to end sooner or later, however. With both East and West holding fast to irreconcilable positions on Berlin, and with possibly unlimited war in the balance, it is no time to torture the world's twitchy nerves with fantasy. Diplomatic gain does not come in bulky packages; and seemingly we would have learned the peril of packages from the immediate postwar experience of Yalta and Potsdam.

At last, the ministers will this week sharpen their focus to the manageable proportions of Berlin. What would that mean?

Velvet tones in Geneva actually conceal harsh realities. The Russians now hold in abeyance their threat to turn over control of the access routes to Berlin to the East Germans, almost surely waiting to see whether we will pay the price of acknowledging that the Communists do govern East Germany and East Berlin. The minimum Western position is equally vague. We would want the Russians to admit that the East Germans would be their "agents," even if Russian troops were withdrawn — which does not answer the question of what we would do if these "agents" — puppets in more direct language — blockaded Berlin's western sector. And, of course, lacking inside information no one really knows to what extent the East Germans would be "agents."

This briar and bramble does, however, yield a key fact. The West is unlikely to make any headway in dealing with Moscow until we recognize in some way that communism is stable or at least established in the satellites. This no doubt gives Herter and the others pause; this is the pale cast of thought that makes the West "rigid." Once the West takes the step of admitting the political hold of communism behind the iron curtain, the central myth of U. S. policy since 1947 will be gone. The West will have given up, in symbol, the dream that the East Europeans don't really want to be Communists after all. That, given the chance, they would bolt to our style democracy and liberty and show Moscow their defiant heels.

Should we do it? That is what Western policy-makers will have to decide as days lengthen at Geneva. The idea will not be lightly cast away. The idea that anti-communism is a moral as well as a political crusade has been the amulet of the West; it is like the crucifix of the crusaders. Casting it aside will be a calculated risk at best, since it is only a possibility that the Russians really want to stop at the present status quo and breathe a while.

Fortunately, there is the hope that new events will reduce the urgency of a "moral struggle." China may become a menace greater than the West to Moscow — who can say? Religious certitude, of the kind Mr. Khrushchev and Dulles have exchanged for several years, has a tendency to slip away sometimes in the press of events. The "politiques" who mediated the fiery religious disputes of the 16th Century were thought wicked by absolutists on both sides. But perhaps they saved Europe. Once the Western ministers "recognize" communism in Berlin or East Germany by dealing with it, they will be "politique" to the religious anti-Communists. If they make the free world livable and diminish the threat of war, their gain will make their compromise seem less wicked to the rest of us.

Protecting 'A Sacred And Moral Trust'

The General Assembly is on the verge of making hash of necessary legislation in the highly sensitive field of confidential communications between North Carolina clergymen and their communicants.

Efforts were made early in the current session to write into the state statute books a principle of human behavior almost as old as religion itself. The proposed law provided that "no clergyman, minister, priest or rabbi of an established church shall be required to testify in any action, suit or proceeding concerning any information which may have been confidentially communicated to him in his professional capacity under such circumstances that to disclose the information would violate a sacred or moral trust, when the giving of such testimony is objected to by the communicant".

So far so good. This is in line with traditional practices and is similar to laws in many states. Now, however, it is proposed that an addition be made to the language of the bill which would obliterate the very principle its sponsors sought to protect. The amendment would permit the trial judge—any trial judge — to compel the disclosure of any information if, in his personal opinion, it would be in the interests of the administration of justice to do so.

It is an unwise and unreasonable change. It clearly should not be within the power of any judge to order a clergyman to violate a sacred or moral trust. There are reasonable and appropriate limits to the power of the law to obtain evidence — and even within these limits wisdom dictates forbearance and restraint. It may be that the legislature can compel a betrayal of conscience. But even advocates of unlimited legislative power might draw back from this ultimate conclusion. For, as John Stuart Mill once observed, "A state which dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands even for beneficial purposes, will find that with small men no great thing can be accomplished."

Even A Marble Suffers These Days

Out Texas way in a town named Humble, which is an oddity for anything in that state, they have an economic problem at an elementary school.

The boys can't play marbles any more.

It seems the poor shots in the crowd played for keeps, lost out, bought more marbles and lost again. Floyd Burton, superintendent, noted frequent intra-class warfare sparked by these losers and promptly banned the game.

Times are just too good.

The value of a marble is nil. Another victim of inflation, a swirled-glass period to end the statement that it takes a dollar to send a child to the movies.

This unhappy state was not always so. Just as our children were stunned to learn we didn't have television as original Tom Mix addicts, so they should be taught that back in "olden times" a small sack of marbles was princely wealth.

They were jealously hoarded. The only time one committed them in a game for keeps occurred when the owner figured he had at least an even chance. A prized shooter was never in competition and certain rare cat's eyes and aggies stayed in the bottom of the sack.

Now comes the Texas story and with it the hope by us that the boys will not be discouraged and continue to play on Saturday.

Even though they might involve a hundred marbles instead of ten, somewhere along the line they've got to learn the right way to knuckle down and shoot from taw.

It's one of the most important lessons in all of youthful years.

Life In America

A 71-year-old Palm Springs, Calif., great-grandmother, Mrs. Zaddie Bunker, broke the sound barrier twice in a Super Sabre jet fighter the other day at George Air Force Base.

From The New York Times

FIVE CRIMSON DOVES

Wild columbines are in bloom, enriching shade-dappled ledges with gold and scarlet and spangling the air with the early butterflies they attract. Unseasonal heat has hurried them past their prime in many places, but where the shade lies deep in the hilly woodlands they will be glorifying the rest of May and even early June.

The columbine belongs to a big and widely varied family, the crowfoots, and is kin to buttercups, marsh marigold, anemone and larkspur. Its strange blossom, with its five spurs, those deep, red nectar pouches, has long appealed to the imagination. Botanists call it Aquilegia, seeing a resemblance to the eagle's beak in those spurs. The common name comes from the Latin word for dove, columba, and reminds us that country folk long ago thought that those spurs looked like five tiny red doves perched in a huddle on the golden sepals. Whatever the name, the flower is unique. And it seems almost to float in the air on its thin stem above the dainty blue-green foliage.

The columbine is not a picking flower. It is a wilding and it belongs in the leaf mold on the rocky ledges, along with hepatica and the anemones. It's a flower to admire where it grows, as much a part of the hillside woodland as the wood thrush and the drumming partridge. Here and there it creeps down to the quiet back roads, and often it grows beside the busy brooks that only fishermen know. But mostly it keeps to the rocky hillsides, companion of the birches and the bloodroot and wild ginger, and always it glorifies May, a gold-and-crimson bangle for a fine May day.

Doesn't it seem funny that cold girls never get the fur coats?—Elberton (Ga.) Star.

How Labor Cultivates Weapons With Skirts

By DORIS FLEESON

WASHINGTON

In the earliest presidential campaign in years, labor is getting ready actively for the battle of 1960. There will be exceptions, but the chief targets will again be the Republicans.

David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers, has sounded the tocsin. He has told his union's convention in Miami that the way must be cleared for "a positive rather than a negative government." He is a member of New York's Liberal Party, but he was speaking for the Democrats against the Republicans — the only choice which greatly matters in this country.

THE NADIR

Labor has learned a great deal about politics since the days when it went down to de-

DAVID DUBINSKY
Positive Politics

feat with "Jumping Joe" Ferguson in the effort to purge Sen. Robert Taft. That was the nadir of labor's political reputation in America, if not its fortunes. It has learned a great deal since.

One of the things it has learned is to keep quiet about what it is doing politically. Today labor rarely brags in public of its power; neither does it openly threaten its foes.

SOLID VOTE

It learned the hard way that the political choices made by its officers cannot always be effectively communicated to its members. In this area it has recently done its most effective work. There is little doubt but that in the 1958 campaign labor voted more solidly than ever before. And perhaps more members of labor unions voted than had ever voted in a non-presidential campaign. Labor was helped notably by the presence of right-to-work proposals on the ballots of several states.

A secret discovered by labor's political experts is now paying off. That is that a powerful factor in a union man's vote is his wife's opinion. With remarkable assiduity, labor has been cultivating its wives for four years.

WOMEN AS WEAPONS

The effort has paid off to an astonishing degree. Now, not only union women but the wives of union men constitute the most formidable political weapon in labor's arsenal.

The two women who head this work, Esther Murray in the East and Margaret Thornburgh in the West, are personally unassuming. They have, nevertheless, become among the most influential women in American politics.

Labor's political education committee is now holding a series of 20 area meetings of local officials in preparation for 1960. An AFL-CIO officer says that the meetings are for the purpose of "studying our navel." Actually, the meetings are for a reassessment of labor's performance in 1958 and a preview of 1960 techniques.

ORGANIZATION

The meetings have been embarrassingly successful. They were doubled in number this year so that they would be smaller and supposedly more effective. The attendance has remained as high as when far fewer meetings were held. A recent workshop at Cleveland for labor leaders from Ohio and Pennsylvania drew 1,500.

Labor has now forged, and is perfecting, an organization which in many states is far better manned than the organization of either major political party. And whether leaders of national labor like it or not, the organization is beginning to produce candidates. That was certainly not the intention, but for those schooled in the mysteries of politics, it probably is the inevitable result.

People's Platform

Summit Won't Solve Anything

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

The approaching summit conference is being anxiously awaited by people all over the world in the hopes that it might bring a satisfactory solution to the Berlin situation. The sad part of it all is that most statesmen, politicians, members of our Congress, and also many wise laymen, have faith that this conference can bring good results.

I am not anxious to disillusion anybody or discourage people's good hopes. But as a realist who observes things as they really are, not as we would like them to be, I cannot agree with them; because I know their aims and that nothing constructive can result out of all these conferences which may benefit humanity.

The trouble with people in general is that they would rather be wishful thinkers and hopefuls than look realistically into existing facts.

The last 14 years should have been sufficient evidence for everybody to know that the Communists have no intention or desire to live in peace with non-Communist countries; because their only aim or goal is to conquer the whole world for communism without any compromises. Their system refuses to make any concessions with non-communists and their aim is to achieve it by hook or crook, by intrigue, conspiracy, even murder.

There is only one reason the Communists suggest conferences — because this is their only good outlet for world propaganda. Their signed agreements have no value because they break them as easily as they make them. And the only time they do sign an agreement is when they are convinced beyond doubt that the NATO countries are united and stand firm by their demands, never otherwise.

NATO is now meeting the challenge for its future survival. The Soviet Union has frequently tried, and still does, to bring friction between NATO countries, and continuously looks forward to find the weak links among them. As soon as they are able to do so, then they will continue to work on them till they can break these links.

The Berlin problem is their test. The only country I fear most to weaken is England, which is always ready for appeasement. And let me warn the United States that if we, England and France are not firm in our demands and give in to the Soviet Union, it will affect not only Germany but the whole world. Because there will be no power that could stop them except the chance of war.

—HENRY KAYE

Junior Achievement Sends Its Thanks

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the editorial that appeared in The News May 7 ("Charlotte's Bold Experiment Paid Off").

Your paper has been very helpful during the past year in educating the people of Charlotte about Junior Achievement. We are grateful for your support.

—WILLIAM A. BURGER
Executive Director,
Junior Achievement of Charlotte

'He Really Has A Summit Complex, Doesn't He?'

A Glum Face Grins

Gromyko's Modest Hope

By JOSEPH ALSOP

GENEVA

A small yet dramatic episode of Andrei Gromyko's dinner for his colleagues at the Geneva conference is worth describing, for the modest hope it offers.

At this Gromyko party, held last week, Secretary of State Christian A. Herter was as usual disinclined to self-assertion. Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd led the talk, which was friendly. At a certain moment, however, the Soviet host chose to expatiate on his own restraint and amiability, pointing out that he had never yet tried to get his way by repeating Nikita Khrushchev's threat to sign a peace treaty with the East Germans without further delay.

EXHIBIT

Thus Gromyko exhibited, without exactly brandishing, the Soviets' weapon-in-reserve for bringing the Berlin crisis to an immediate head. After signature of such a treaty, for instance, East German highway controls would at once replace Soviet controls on the access routes to Berlin.

Turning to Herter with a seeming-friendly smile, Gromyko added that he hoped the Western allies would be careful not to force him to abandon his remarkable self-restraint. There was a moment of silence, until Herter answered, unsmiling:

OPTIMISM

"I cannot decide what others do or say, but I wish to make one point absolutely clear. The United States will not go onwards in a conference at the summit under any sort of threat."

As the story is told by those who should know, there was another moment of silence, and the conversation was then resumed in another tone and on other topics. Thus, in a single short exchange, Gromyko and Herter summed up the reasons for comparative optimism that the past week has produced.

The Soviets' omission of their usual open menaces, noted by Gromyko, is one of several encouraging omissions. The failure to insist at great length on full admission of the Czechs and Poles is another sign of the same sort. Still another is Gromyko's own relatively human demeanor. (Two years ago, Nikita Khrushchev told this reporter with a grin, "Even our glum comrade Gromyko can be taught to smile on occasion." And here is Gromyko, no doubt after many a painful lesson, grinning away like a novice candidate for Congress.)

ANDREI GROMYKO
A Modest Reminder

PAVING THE ROAD

These signs are of course far from decisive. Yet perhaps too hopefully, the Western representatives most expert in dealings with the Soviets have now begun to rule out the very worst possibilities.

That may not sound particularly optimistic. Yet the Soviets began the Berlin crisis on note of naked military menace. This Geneva conference itself opened to the echo of Nikita Khrushchev's latest bout of bomb-rattling. The differences of viewpoint between the British and the other Western allies still constitute a standing temptation to the Soviets, to try to divide the alliance by creating an atmosphere of tension and alarm. If this method is not to be used, the outlook is at least considerably brighter than it might have been.

This rather negative improvement in the outlook is coupled with something more positive. In brief, the Western experts are more and more inclined to think that the Soviets plan to pave the road to the summit with something that can at least be taken as evidence of good intentions, even if it is not very strong evidence.

SOLID PRICE

Last time, the price the Kremlin paid for a summit conference was the liberation of Austria, which was a good, hard, solid price indeed. In the new world situation, nothing like that can be dimly hoped for. But the Soviets may perhaps make the concessions that would lead to an accord in principle on halting nuclear tests — an accord much wanted by the Kremlin, much loathed and feared by Gen. de Gaulle, wishfully desired by British public opinion, and tepidly regarded in Washington.

If the Soviets merely give way a little on nuclear test controls, in order to get the accord they have always wanted, they can count on a strongly favorable reaction in the present state of world opinion. Maybe, as the experts say, Gromyko will go even further. Maybe he will create the conditions for an acceptable solution of the crucial, desperately dangerous Berlin problem.

DARK WORDS

If these hopeful forecasts prove halfway correct, however, it will also prove that Nikita Khrushchev has other subjects he wants to talk about at the summit besides Berlin and the division of Germany. The Berlin crisis will have partly served as a lever, in fact, to force discussion of these other subjects. The American ambassador to Moscow, the able Llewellyn Thompson, has long maintained that Khrushchev had something to say of great importance which he wished to say only in person and only to the President of the United States.

This special thing that Khrushchev wishes to say to Eisenhower could turn out to be the central topic at the summit. Whatever it may be, it is worth hearing, but it will probably not be pleasant to hear.

CHRISTIAN HERTER
An Unsmiling Reply

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

George Washington Set The Rule

WASHINGTON

The stern visage and powdered pampadour of George Washington seemed to hang over the hearings of Adm. Lewis Strauss last week. The precedents he allegedly set forth for restricting information to Congress were quoted, as they have also been quoted repeatedly by the Eisenhower administration in repeatedly narrowing the information given to Congress and the American people.

Interesting Question

The interesting question, however, is exactly what Washington did do as first President of the United States that gives Mr. Eisenhower and his Cabinet members the excuse for withholding all sorts of information as a matter of "executive privilege" — the glorified label for secrecy.

The question is important because right now some senators, such as Joe O'Mahoney of Wyoming and Tom Hennings of Missouri, feel that a vote to confirm Adm. Strauss as secretary of commerce is a vote to make official and permanent his refusal to answer congressional questions, thus permanently narrowing this already narrowed field of information.

What Washington Did

One man who has dug into these secrecy precedents is Russell Wiggins, executive editor of the Washington Post and Times Herald, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, and a relentless seeker of the truth.

The first and major test of whether President Washington was to give embarrassing information to Congress came after Gen. St. Clair's force of 1,400 men was surprised by an Indian attack near Miami, Ohio, on Nov. 3, 1791, with a loss of 900 men. The disordered defeat was highly embarrassing to the executive branch of government but the House of Representatives passed a resolution to investigate, and demanded the records.

President Washington called a meeting of his cabinet to decide whether the confidential papers should be sent to Congress. The minutes of that cabinet meeting, as set forth by Thomas Jefferson, are revealing.

Mischievous Secrets

"Hamilton," recounts Jefferson, "agreed with us as to the power of the House to call on heads of departments . . . But he thought himself not so far subject as to be obliged to produce all the papers they might call for. They might be secrets of a very mischievous nature."

And at this point, the founder of the Democratic party, Jefferson, added this parenthesis regarding the founder of the Republican party, Hamilton:

"'Here I thought he began to fear they would go on to examining how far their own members and other persons in the government had been dabbling in stocks, banks, etc. . . .'"

All Papers Available

"Finally agreed," concluded Jefferson, "to speak separately to the members of the committee, and bring them by persuasion into the right channel. It was agreed in this case that there was not a paper which might not be properly produced; that if they should desire it, a clerk should attend with the originals to be verified by themselves."

As editor Wiggins sums it up, "The House demanded the papers. The cabinet agreed that the House might institute inquiries. It thought it might call for papers. It thought the President should exercise discretion, but in this case decided to make all the papers available."