THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Tar Heel Senators Ignored Cries Of Textile Tycoons

By JOSEPH ALSOP

WASHINGTON

As a footnote to American political history, it is worth noting the kind of thing that was fruitlessly done to secure Adm. Lewis Strauss' confirmation as secretary of commerce.

STRAUSS

In the Eisenhower years, real pressure has almost never been applied to make Congress see things as the President saw them. Dwight D. Eisenhower's line has generally been, "I propose, Congress disposes." In this instance, however, the White House threw everything at the Senate, figuratively including even the kitchen sink, in a way that would have been considered just a mite shocking in other, less sacrosanct administrations.

ERVIN AND JORDAN

It is impossible to discover whether President Eisenhower himself really knew about the things that were being done in his name. The chances are that in his simple military way, he merely gave the order, "Do everything you can to put over Lewis Strauss." In fact the chances are that the President himself will be just a mite shocked if he ever learns how far Strauss and the White House staff went to win the confirmation which the Senate finally refused.

For example, President Eisenhower is heavily committed to a freer trade policy. Yet the promise that the future secretary of commerce would impose profitable restrictions on this country's world trade was freely used in the drive to win votes, as was the boast that he had already done so.

Among the Democrats who voted for Strauss, at least two senators were frankly tempted by the bait of restrictions on imports of Japanese textiles. A determined effort was made to change the votes of two other Democratic senators in the same way. But Sens. Ervin and Jordan of North Carolina ignored the pleas of the large textile interests in their state, which had been stimulated by the pro-Strauss high command here in Washington.

MUCH ADMIRATION

Again, the appeal was made to senators from oil-producing states that Adm. Strauss, almost alone among the President's close advisors, had argued for restricting imports of foreign petroleum products. One vote in the pro-Strauss Democratic list can perhaps be attributed to this appeal. But most of the Democrats appealed to in this way stood firm against the oil lobby, conspicuously including the two Texans.

Yet again, an indirect attempt

Sens. Ervin and Jordan: The Bait Was Tempting

was made to reach the two West Virginia senators by a promised restriction on imports of petroleum residues from the Caribbean, which the coal interest have long desired. On this ground, representatives of the United Mineworkers, generally the most powerful single political entity in West Virginia, put strong pro-Strauss heat on Sens. Byrd and Randolph. Randolph and the younger Byrd stoutly resisted, and they, like the North Carolina senators, have earned much admiration from their colleagues.

In addition, there are rather well-attested reports of a vain attempt to gain more southern votes with a promise that the Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee would join Sen. Eastland of Mississippi and his co-believers in refusing to report a civil rights bill at this session. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, the Senate has never experienced a similarly organized personal pressure campaign from grass roots business leaders.

ANTI-SEMITISM

One senator's wife is known to have left Washington in protest against her husband's decision to vote for Strauss, as requested by a very rich man close to both Strauss and Eisenhower who makes a habit of contributing to senatorial campaign funds. In another case, a leading Wyoming business man, in response to a request from Washington, telephoned Sen. Gale McGee to "lay off Strauss." He warned McGee that the Jewish people in Wyoming were accusing him of anti-Semitism — which was a demonstrable lie. In still another case, the pro-Strauss forces were boasting, "We've got Herman Talmadge in the bag," because the President's golfing crony, Robert Woodruff, had called the junior senator from Georgia to ask his support for the admiral. Since Georgians generally bow to the head of the Coca-Cola Company, the expectations of the Straussites were perhaps understandable; but in the end Talmadge voted against Strauss.

PERFECT TWADDLE

It is perfect twaddle that there is no recent precedent for the Senate fight on Strauss. An exact parallel, in which the man's character was the predominant issue, was the Senate fight against Henry A. Wallace when he too was nominated for secretary of commerce.

On that occasion, however, President Roosevelt read the signs rightly. He accepted a deal stripping the secretaryship of commerce of all real power, in return for getting Wallace confirmed to the empty title. On that occasion, moreover, the Roosevelt administration, so often accused of dictatorship, refrained from using anything like the methods that were used this time. As Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson warned his Republican opposite number, Everett Dirksen, the heat was so great that it helped to burn Strauss in the end.

From Chief James, Great Expectations

Now that everyone has had his little joke about Jesse James' name and the humor of the situation has been mercifully exhausted, Charlotte can decide what it expects of its new chief of police.

The answer is plenty.

It was not without reason that public sentiment favored the employment of an outsider who would bring unusual ability, training and experience to the local law enforcement agency. It was based upon a strong belief that a fresh start was needed here, that past administrations have bred too many cliques and alliances, that the healthiest foundation upon which to build for the future would be a whole new order.

That is what Chief James will be expected to provide.

He ought to be given the time and the tools to do this job without any political meddling, intradepartmental backbiting or external interference.

Fortunately, Chief James has a sturdy nucleus from which to build his new administration. There are many fine officers and men in the department and surely no ruthless purge will be necessary. But the new chief will be expected to make the best possible use of available resources and seek whatever additions are needed to strengthen the force for an era of increasing responsibilities.

Policing Charlotte is becoming a bigger job every day. It is no task for the lazy, the shiftless or the untrained. Major crimes are commonly committed by experts. The trails they leave can be followed only by officers of the law who are equal to the professional criminals' art of concealment. Prevention of crime often takes even more skill and enterprise.

As it grows, Charlotte will continue to require the services of the most competent, efficient and honest police force it is possible to have. Furthermore, it must be a force that is completely insulated from politics.

But even the most loyal and alert patrolmen are handicapped in keeping the peace unless they are backstopped by a few mechanical marvels. Appropriate scientific equipment must be provided and local policemen must be trained to make the best possible use of it.

In this regard, most U. S. cities still have a long way to go. Despite efforts at improvement in recent years, experts maintain that we are still far behind the great European cities in the type of personnel attracted to the service and following somewhat logically from this, in the application of science to detection.

What the community will expect from Chief James then is vigorous, honest and effective police administration that still does not lose the common touch with the public that is so vital in a democracy. The new chief obviously has the background and experience to deliver the goods if he can also have the support and confidence of the City Council and the public at large. We wish him well.

Chief Jesse James

The President Avoids A Giant's Battle

President Eisenhower has once again shown his quaint faith in the "invisible hand" that guards public interest, whether in politics or in the market place.

At his press conference last week, he declared he would not use his office or his personal power to avoid an impending steel strike. He merely said, as everybody knows only too well, that everyone has a stake in the future of steel wages and prices now in negotiation at New York's Roosevelt Hotel.

Many would say it's a good thing that Ike is reluctant to go warring with courts and steel magnates as Harry Truman did in 1948.

Indeed, the present steel crisis is different. A strike beginning midnight, June 30, would be mostly a bad joke on the public, the coalminers, and the already enfeebled railroads. The steel industry expects to cut back to about 70 per cent of capacity this summer, anyway, and Detroit's automobile hutches are approaching the 90-day stockpile necessary to ride out a strike. A steel strike would give steelworkers a lever to raise wages and the steel managers a pretext for higher prices; otherwise it would mean little.

The important point is that consumers can only sit and gape. Active participation, rash as it may seem to some, is more relevant to the public interest than the President's pastoral homilies, unattended as they are with any wish to mediate.

The "invisible hand" is as extinct as the dodo, if it ever worked at all. If it worked now steel prices would have plummeted this time last year when steel was running at 50 per cent of capacity. But no. Prices rose, defying every "law" of olden econimics. At this hour, steelworkers say they fear inflation and believe a wage increase not related to productivity would be folly — yet there sits Mr. McDonald, steelworkers president, facing steel's bargainers across the table.

It may be a conscious choice of the President's not to meddle in the battle of giants, and the choice of the consumer to support him there. But signs of the "invisible hand" grow fewer, and if there are changes in steel they will surely issue from the wills of management and labor, tempered only by public outrage.

Our Own Solicitor? It Was About Time

One of the 1959 General Assembly's dying gasps was approval of a four-year-old plea for separate solicitors for Mecklenburg and Gaston counties. It was such a welcome concession that we are almost prepared to forgive legislators for their failure, at the same time, to agree to statewide solicitorial reforms.

Mecklenburg became a self-contained judicial district in 1955. But, for reasons best understood in the smokiest hotel rooms in Raleigh, it still had to share its solicitor with Gaston County. A bill introduced in the Senate late in the 1957 session would have corrected the situation but it was lost in the adjournment rush. This time the county's luck was better. A measure creating separate solicitorial districts for Gaston and Mecklenburg barely made it under the wire. Gov. Hodges appointed youthful James E. Walker to be the solicitor for the new Mecklenburg district just as the General Assembly adjourned.

The legislative action was long overdue. Operations in the criminal division of Superior Court absolutely require the services of a full-time solicitor if reasonable standards of efficiency are to be maintained. Mr. Walker is a capable attorney and he has served two terms as solicitor of Charlotte's City Recorder's Court. We feel confident that he will perform his new chores creditably and that the administration of justice in Mecklenburg will be speeded considerably.

From The Louisville Courier-Journal

'LET THEM EAT CAKE'

Excessively optimistic readers of the Times of London write to that paper complaining that Marie Antoinette never said: "Then let them eat cake." We say the Times' readers are excessively optimistic because the letters seem to breathe the hope that people will quit saying Marie Antoinette said something she didn't say. Well, they won't, and there's nothing to be done about it — not even by writers of letters to newspapers.

Take our own case. Every quotation book in our office warns against attributing the quotation to the famous and unfortunate lady. The words derive from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Confession, in the sixth book of which he quotes "a great princess . . . on being informed that the country people had no bread." Rousseau did not allege that Marie Antoinette was the "grande princesse" who said the country people ought to eat cake.

Bartlett's cautions us: "This remark is usually attributed to Marie Antoinette after her arrival in France in 1770, but the sixth book of the Confessions was written two or three years before that date." Stevenson's goes into further detail, asserting that the celebrated quotation is not even an entirely sound translation from Rousseau's French. "Brioche" (which the 'grande princesse' suggested that the people eat) is "not exactly cake, but a bun or fancy bread something like Scotch scones."

And yet with all of this scholarship at our command — to which is now added the learning of the Times' letter writers, who have delved far more deeply into the matter — we shall probably continue to fall into error, along with everybody else. We feel sorry for poor Marie Antoinette, but surely her shade has got used to being misquoted by this time and is reconciled to it.

Wife to her husband: "Why couldn't you sleep last night?"

Husband: "Because the window shades were up."

Wife: "Why didn't you pull them down?"

Husband: "Because they were across the street."—Lamar (Mo.) Democrat.

People's Platform

Oppenheimer Case Led To Strauss' Downfall

Monroe

Editors, The News:

The drive to humiliate Lewis L. Strauss did not begin when his name was sent to the Senate for confirmation as secretary of commerce. It began in 1954 after the AEC denied Dr. Oppenheimer access to restricted data for two specific reasons:

1. Because Dr. Oppenheimer caused the AEC, the FBI and the MI to feel "the effects of his falsehoods, evasions and misrepresentations."

2. Because of Dr. Oppenheimer's "continuing association with Communists . . . as recently as last December (1953)."

Adm. Strauss was chairman of the AEC during the Oppenheimer affair and for that reason was attacked with the venom that only people of the Pearson-Alsop type employ. Their columns which appeared in The Charlotte News in 1954 are proof of this fact.

In the ensuing years the attacks against Mr. Strauss mounted from many directions, increased in intensity until on June 18 he was publicly humiliated by the United States Senate after service to his country under four presidents.

This is the punishment given a man who fought for his nation's security.

—PETER J. KING

High Wages Are Causing Inflation

Talladega, Ala.

Editors, The News:

I don't blame anyone for wanting good wages, but I do blame anyone for demanding unreasonable wages, which some union leaders in big industry are guilty of.

The high wages in big industry control the prices of almost everything directly or indirectly which we buy.

A big wage hike in the steel industry will give us more inflation whether the steel union president will admit it or not.

Between the high cost of steel and the high cost of building automobiles, it puts the prices on automobiles so high many of the lower income people can't afford to own a car.

—CRESS JOINER

White Man Holds The Negro Back

Huntersville

Editors, The News:

On June 15, Mr. Charles L. Morris had a letter in People's Platform ("Negro's Progress Depends On Him"). Mr. Morris stated that the Negro's progress depends entirely on him. How can the Negro make progress if the white man holds him back? There is no way at all unless the white man helps by giving the Negro jobs in order to make money to live and the understanding to make progress.

If Mr. Morris has read any history books at all he should know that how the white man treated the Negro slaves. They were made to work in the hot fields all day. The slaves had little food or clothing. How can the Negro have anything when the white man takes everything he owns?

Mr. Morris said the Negro should start acting like a human being if he wants to be accepted as one. The Negro has always been treated as an animal. How do you expect them to act like human beings? If you white men are human beings why don't you start treating the Negro as human? Turn him loose so he can have something in life.

As for equal rights, the only way the Negro will have such rights is through integration. The Negro cannot get good jobs because he doesn't have the money to go through school to get the education needed in order to get a good job nowadays. The Negro cannot make progress if the white man doesn't give him a chance to make a go of things.

The Negro man doesn't want to be accepted as a white man. The Negro doesn't want to live and think as the white man does. The white man's thought is of trying to get all the money he can get his hands on. The Negroes have sinful lives; the white men have sinful lives. I know of many incidents where Negro molested white and where white molested Negro. Don't put all the murder and rape cases on the Negro. The white man is in it just as deep.

—VONETTA ALEXANDER

More Bond Debt Is Inflationary

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

I note that Buncombe County has scheduled a vote on June 23, 1959, on a steeply inclined capital outlay tax raise and also whether or not to issue several millions in bonds, which election somewhat parallel the one scheduled in Mecklenburg on June 30. The Asheville papers have been filled with letters to the editor on whether or not the high tax levy and additional bonds for schools should be issued.

Many people will remember that only a few years ago Buncombe County was bankrupt and could not pay her debts. While their bond election is only about one-fourth the amount we are called to vote upon, the citizenry of Asheville and Buncombe County is aroused. They no doubt feel that bond elections are about the surest method we have of encouraging inflation and bust . . .

The June 30 election for $8 million in new bonds and a drastic hike in the tax rate here in Mecklenburg is based upon the faulty and flimsy reasoning that certain school officials are afraid of what might happen if the 54-cent school is not voted and if the $8 million bond levy should fail. In other words, the fear of a handful of school officials is the basis upon which they ask for this inflation-ridden, bond - ridden, debt-ridden proposal. Their fears are not well founded.

—M. J. BLACKENSHIP

What Is Governor Up To In Russia?

Charlotte

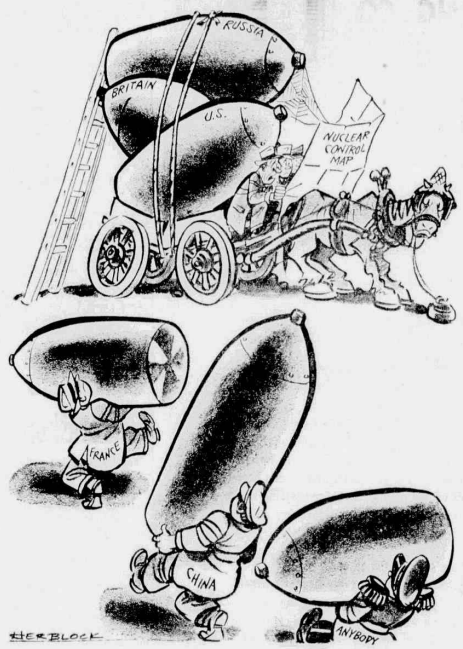
Editors, The News:

Now that our Tar Heel governor is off to parts unknown, behind the Iron Curtain, we are wondering if he is thus extending his search for new industry to bring into our midst or simply seeking the advice of Mr. Khrushchev on how to control labor disputes in our state more economically.

If, as he has suggested, it is to look into the methods of education thereabouts, we doubt the wisdom of such research. Should we learn, through such observations, to train the minds of our youngsters to their full capacities in skills and sciences, without properly training their consciences, as the Reds are doing, would we not possibly be creating a generation of little monsters, that would likely destroy us in later years?

—A. C. BUCKLE

'Say, If We Don't Get Started Pretty Soon—'



Quote, Unquote

"No laws, however stringent, can make the idle industrious, the thriftless provident, or the drunken sober." — Samuel Smiles.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

AF Jets Hustled Senators To Vote

WASHINGTON

Drama such as the Senate seldom sees took place behind the scenes when the world's No. 1 deliberative body finally refused confirmation of a Cabinet member for one of the few times in history. Seldom does the public get any sense of this drama. They see the senators debate on the floor. They feel the tenseness of the voting. But not even the press is permitted in Senate cloakrooms. However, here is what happened backstage as the Senate voted on Lewis L. Strauss as secretary of commerce.

Anxious Huddle

Republican leaders were huddling with GOP leader Sen. Everett Dirksen of Illinois. They had three absentee senators, whose votes they badly needed. One of them, Thruston Morton of Kentucky, could get back to vote by commercial plane. The others, Wallace Bennett of Utah and Milton Young of North Dakota, could not — except by military jet.

A call was made to the White House. Gen. Jerry Persons, who replaced Sherman Adams as assistant president, was asked to rush two Air Force jets to the rescue. Persons demurred. He said there were only two in the country.

At Taxpayers' Expense

Unbeknownst to the others, Sen. Norris Cotton of New Hampshire walked into another office, picked up the phone and called Adm. Strauss.

"Do you want to be confirmed?" he asked. "If so, you'd better call the White House and put the heat on them for two jets."

Strauss did. The two jets, one a tanker, the other a jet trainer, brought Bennett and Young to Washington—at the taxpayers' expense.

As early as June 12, Sen. Lyndon Johnson had asked for unanimous consent for a Senate vote. He kept repeating the request. On one occasion, Sen. Wayne Morse, Democrat of Oregon, objected, said he wanted to speak at length.

Finally, Johnson called Morse aside. "Let's let the Republicans do the objecting," he advised. "They aren't ready for a vote, and they want to put the excuse on you."

"All right," replied Morse. "I'll stay off the floor, or stay on the floor, or do whatever you say."

Disappointed Republicans

Johnson then asked unanimous consent to vote after eight hours of debate, divided equally. Republicans looked hopefully at Morse, but he made no objection. Reluctantly GOP leader Dirksen rose. "I am afraid I must object," he said.

It was after this that Republicans frantically called the White House to get jet planes to bring in their absent senators.

He Lost Control

After the vote was taken, Sen. Barry Goldwater was livid with rage. Jumping to his feet he approached Sen. George Smathers of Florida, Democrat, who had voted against Strauss. Without saying a word Goldwater rushed Smathers, his fists out. Smathers, who is lean and athletic, turned the Arizona senator aside with his shoulder as a football runner turns off a tackler.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked. "Do you want to step outside?"

Sen. Goldwater apparently had expected Smathers to vote for Strauss, and was so wrought up he lost control of himself. He turned and left the Senate floor.