THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

THOMAS L. ROBINSON.....Publisher
J. E. DOWD.....General Manager
B. S. GRIFFITH.....Executive Editor
C. A. McKNIGHT.....Editor

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1950

CONSERVING OUR WATER RESOURCES

THE wasting of our national water resources is a slow and gradual process, not apparent to the average American whose only contact with his water supply is through the faucet in his home. But it is a vivid and alarming thing to men who have taken the time and trouble to study the ever-lowering water level, and to anticipate the difficulties that future generations of Americans will face.

This week a group of such men who have served under Chairman Morris L. Cooke on the President's Water Resources Policy Commission made a voluminous report on their findings. Calling for "bold imagination and prudent husbanding of our resources", the Commission outlined 70 recommendations for co-ordinated water resource projects including irrigation, drainage, flood protection, development of Federal hydro-electric power projects, improved inland navigation, soil conservation, watershed management, silt and sediment control and the like.

At the heart of the report was the exposition of the multiple-purpose development of the great American river valleys along the lines of the Tennessee Valley Authority. It is this phase of the report that will doubtless draw the greatest criticism, if we are to judge by the immediate reaction of the American Watershed Council, an organization of river valley associations: "a boost for greater Federal Government control of the nation's major river basins," in the words of Council chairman Clayton Hoff.

It should be noted, however, that the Commission is not a policy-making body, that power residing in the Congress. The report merely noted that the nation "is on the threshold of a tremendous increase in volume of construction for Federal water projects—those now under way amounting to the entire cost of all Federal projects heretofore completed; while others planned but still in blue print form run four times greater."

Hence, in one respect, the argument over Federal power, irrigation, flood control, conservation, and reclamation projects is academic. The Congress has already set the national policy, and shows no signs of reversing itself. As long as that policy maintains, it certainly makes sense to strive for the maximum possible co-ordination, from the survey stage to appropriations, to achieve the long-range objective of water resource conservation.

As it is today, Federal projects are authorized on a patchwork pattern, designed to satisfy local constituents and pressure groups rather than to benefit whole regions.

The Congress will doubtless find itself more amenable to further Federal power projects under pressure of the current emergency. Because the will to resist will be low, it is more important than ever that Congress have before it a blueprint of the nation's long-range over-all needs. The first volume of the Commission's report, and the two additional volumes due next month, should be of great help to Congress.

A FAIR EXCESS PROFITS TAX

WITHOUT pretending to be expert in such a complicated field as corporate taxation, THE NEWS would suggest to businessmen in this area that they accept the Senate version of the excess profits tax bill as the best possible compromise.

The Senate is due to vote this week on its Finance Committee's revision of the House measure. Several important changes have been made. New credits for use in computing exemptions were written into the Senate bill, at a probable loss of revenue of some $350 million. But this loss was more than made up for by an increase in the base level of corporation taxes from 45 to 47 per cent. The latter change should produce some $500 million more than the House bill.

Leaders of both parties view the measure favorably. Senator Taft will vote for it, and his GOP colleague, Senator Brewster, describes it as "better in quality and quantity—it will produce more money and draw fewer squawks from those who pay the tax." For the Democrats, Senators George and Kerr agree that "We've taken care of the little fellows who would have been hurt unfairly."

Recent events in Korea have made academic the earlier debate over the principle of the excess profits tax. Tremendous sacrifices will have to be made by everyone before the defense program is completed and our military security restored. The new excess profits levy—75 per cent on income exceeding 85 per cent of average earnings in the three best years from 1946 to 1949—is high enough to recapture war profits and low enough to encourage frugality. Certainly it would seem to be adequate until defense expenditures mount much higher than they are today.

DAVID OVENS—PHILANTHROPIST

WEBSTER defines philanthropy, in its broader sense, as the spirit of active good will towards one's fellow men, especially as shown in efforts to promote their general welfare.

Philanthropists fall into three general classes: (1) those who give generously of their means to worthwhile activities and institutions; (2) those who don't have great wealth, but give generously of their time; (3) those who give generously of both their means and their time.

Into this latter group falls one of Charlotte's best known men, David Ovens, whose $250,000 gift to Queens College last week topped a long record of endeavor in behalf of Charlotte educational institution. Mr. Ovens tied no strings to his gift. It will be used precisely as the college trustees desire.

Queens is just one of the enterprises to which Mr. Ovens has devoted much time and money in his long Charlotte business career. He was a member of the Greater Charlotte Club, and continued working actively with the successor to that club, the Chamber of Commerce. He was chairman of the building committee for the new Presbyterian Hospital. He has headed the Good Fellows Club for many years, and was organizer and long-time president of the Community Concert Association. In 1943 he served as general chairman of the high-successful Red Cross campaign. And this year he headed the special committee to plan an auditorium and coliseum for Charlotte.

Queens has made great progress in the last decade. The college has grown steadily. The faculty has increased in stature and eminence. The scholarship level is higher. Material expansion of the plant has been accomplished.

But like all other private educational institutions, Queens has been facing a major financial problem in the past few years. Costs have soared higher than revenue from tuition and endowment income. For that reason, Mr. Ovens' gift is especially timely.

From The Raleigh News & Observer

SUSIE CLAUS

IT WAS probably inevitable. All the forces of a clean-shaven, a dietetic and a promotional age have long been arrayed, if restrained, against a fat man with apoplectic coloring and a bushy, hardly hygienic beard. Also increasingly all the really effective forces of our age have been seeking their symbol in almost identical little girls all standardized by wave sets, machine cut clothes and cosmetics put up in vats to be retailed in little jars.

Progressive Wilson, N. C., however, made the first move. Encouraged undoubtedly by the opening of a modern granary that can handle 500,000 bushels of corn, Wilson has taken the inevitable step. The central figure of its celebration at this Christmas-time was not an old obsolete Santa Claus but a pert—and grinning at you from the publicity pictures—Miss Merry Christmas. There is nothing strange or obscure about her. She is the same girl or her sister who is Miss This-and-That on every ceremonial occasion throughout the year.

After all old Santa Claus, so the scholars tell us, is not only an out-of-date old fellow but a character of very questionable origins. The best researches, indeed, indicate that his very name is only an American corruption of the Dutch form "San Nicholas", the Christmas custom associated with him having been brought to this country by the early Dutch colonists. There is nothing strange or frayed or obscure about Miss Merry Christmas. She is as fresh as a toothpaste smile and as lively as Bebop. And confidentially, she can always be counted upon to prefer a convertible to a sleigh—even a sleigh equipped with the eight reindeer power of Dancer, Prancer, Donder, Blitzen, Comet, Cupid, Vixen, and Dasher—plus the extra that has been added named Rudolph with the red nose.

It must have been an easy alteration. Not only in recent years has Santa Claus been disclosed on the biggest billboards as finding it necessary to stop to rifle iceboxes of Coca-Cola as he rides, indulging at the same time in the pause that refreshes. This Christmastime, along with the emergence of Miss Mary Christmas as a substitute in our celebrations, similar billboards are announcing the fact that Santa is finding it necessary to take Hadacol.

Apparently we live not only in the age of the exploded atom but of exploding traditions. And old Santa Clause seems clearly about to be supplanted by innumerable and identical little girls just old enough to be over the acne. This is undoubtedly progress and Wilson is undoubtedly to be congratulated upon its grasp of this situation as well as the situation of the granary in it. The progress will serve merchants, promoters, all those who measure the warmth of any occasion by gleams in the eyes of the onlookers. The only sufferers would seem to be any little boys in Wilson who know how ready their big sisters would be to climb down any chimneys just at the time they are dressed up to be ogled at.

Another Racket To Crack Down On

People's Platform

Britain's 'Marshall Plan'

GASTONIA

Editors, THE NEWS:

MAY I mount your People's Platform to quote the "Don Iddon Diary" from New York as read in the Overseas Daily Mail from England.

He writes:

"Not a single U. S. citizen is aware that Britain has given to her neighbors approximately the same amount of financial and material help that she has received from the United States. The British 'Marshall Plan' is the vast unknown. Why? Because our Labour Cabinet has not publicized it. Because our officials have not said anything about it."

With the suspension of the Marshall Plan in the news this week, this timely observation of Mr. Iddon's may be of interest to your readers.

—J. MOORE.

Time For All Things

PITTSBORO

Editors, THE NEWS:

THERE is a time for all things. There is a time for realism. I think Mr. Truman now appreciates that fact and will declare a national emergency.

There is a time for many other things also—things that the average citizen must realize and incorporate in his thought and action. It is time for us to realize that we are not actually a prosperous nation, that what so appears is false, that it is the result of twelve years of war economy, which can never be the basis of prosperity. Realize the fact that we now have a national debt exceeding the aggregate debt of the free nations of the world should cause the average man to revise his thinking most radically. A $300 billion national income means but little when you stop and think that a dollar today buys in labor, services and goods just what 33 1-3 cents purchased ten years ago.

The average American must now realize that inflation is the most dangerous phase of our home-front difficulties. Many nations are relics of history as a result of loose fiscal policies—and ours has been most loose for the past two decades.

Furthermore, the average American must realize that we, of necessity, are entering upon a controlled economy, which control must, to be less than disastrous, be spread evenly across the board with all cost factors rigidly frozen. There can be no compromising with pressure groups or the playing of favorites. We are all in the boat, same boat, and will survive or perish together.

And bringing the cause home, to which it must be done to make our to-date most desperate effort successful, I am, for the duration, to use a much hackneyed phrase, eschewing politics, which is and always has been what Balaam was riding on that Biblically historic occasion. I love my country infinitely more than I dislike its political history for the past two decades. At best, we can hardly escape a dictatorship (I do not see how we can otherwise clean up the mess we are in), but God forbid that it be of the Russian variety. I shall do my dead-level best to prevent it. So long, and may a Merciful God preserve us.

—JOHN W. HESTER.

Mr. Smith's Labor Views

Editors, THE NEWS:

JUST how wrong can Wallis Smith be? Is he trying to undermine the people of North Carolina by repeating this filthy phrase: "I can't vote for any bill that will force people to belong to an organization and pay dues just to get a chance to work?"

Now, this would be like saying every lawyer in the country should have the privilege of belonging to the American Bar Association without paying his membership dues, or like a stranger moving into town and not paying any city tax. The forefathers of Charlotte have spent years building up the city. They have streets, water systems, sanitation, police, firemen, city government, etc. Should we say that outsiders can come in and benefit from all this free to get a chance to work?

Unions are similar. They set up and operate very democratic organizations and work for decent contracts; all of which makes dues necessary. To let outsiders come in free would be like the Royal Cotton Mill at Wake Forest, of which Mr. Smith is part owner, giving away its product just because the building is paid for.

This same part of the Taft-Hartley law which Mr. Smith refers to is corrupt and aimed at dividing labor so that management can conquer.

One can't escape taxes but he can escape union dues by going where they are unorganized. This should be easy enough in North Carolina because only a small percentage of the workers are organized. So, Mr. Smith, why all the scare about a chance to work?

He does not like the organized worker. Does he care about the unorganized either? He won't deny that he told a legislative committee in 1947 that a 40-cent minimum wage law for the working people of North Carolina is harsh, unreasonable, and unnecessary." Yes, Mr. Smith believes in a chance for us to work—work like the corporations want us to—for a pittance.

—HOMER GALLIMORE.

Quote, Unquote

Narrow Hog

(V. C. Marley, Asheboro Courier-Tribune)

Sy Pell was in Monday while it was raining. He said he was going to kill a Poland China the next day if he could get him sideways to shoot him. Thought he was so narrow he would split a bullet endwise. I think Sy bought the pigs from Mike York and they were accustomed to rich fare. Sy said he couldn't get them to eat common hog feed at all. He ought to have fed them every other day, then he might have had good bacon, streak o'lean and streak o'fat.

And More Besides

(Camden Chronicle)

The adjectives used by a member of Congress the other day in applying an unprintable epithet to Drew Pearson made us think of the woman who denounced her ex-husband as an abhorred, barbarous, capricious, detestable, envious, fastidious, hard-hearted, ill-natured, jealous, loathsome, malevolent, nauseous, obstinate, quarrelsome, saucy, vexatious, abominable, bitter, captious, disagreeable, execrable, grating, malicious, nefarious, peevish, restless, savage, tart, fretful, growling, hateful, inattentive, malignant, odious, perverse, rigid, severe, boisterous, choleric, disgusting, gruff, hectoring, horrible, pettish, sour, testy, tiresome, tormenting, touchy, arrogant, awkward, brutal, bullying, churlish, clamorous, crabbed, cross, currish, dismal, dull, dry, grumbling, horrid, huffish, insolent, irascible, morose, murmuring, noisome, offensive, outrageous, overbearing, petulant, rude, spiteful, splenetic, stubborn, stupid, sulky, sullen, surly, suspicious, treacherous, troublesome, turbulent, tyrannical, virulent, yelping dog-in-a-manger.

To Assume Isolationism Now Would Be National Suicide

By JOSEPH & STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON

A NEW, EXTREME isolationism is being born of the defeatism that now horribly pervades this confused city. No leading figure has as yet dared to give public voice to that important trend. But all over Washington, in the lobbies of the Senate and House, among the more tremulous policy-makers, and even in the recesses of the military staff the same subterranean muttering is going on.

Our Allies cannot be depended on. We have not the power to carry the burden of world leadership alone. We must "contract our commitments" (the new catchword). We must abandon first Asia and then Europe to their fate. We must retire into our own hemisphere, which we can defend. So goes the story. It makes even Senator Robert A. Taft, who at least proposed a Monroe Doctrine for Europe, look like a rabid one-world man.

The simplest way to see the poisonous falsehood of this reasoning is to have a look at the effect on the value of our only major military asset, the stockpile of atomic weapons. To put the cart conclusion before the horse of proof, the atomic stockpile which is our only security will lose almost its whole value, if the above-outlined program is blundered into or adopted.

The causes are plain enough. In the first place, plutonium and even hydrogen bombs, no matter now numerous they may be, or how great their destructive power may be, have no value whatever locked up in a cave in Kentucky. They must be delivered to their destined targets, or at least they must be possible to deliver, in order to fulfill their purpose. As of today and for a long time to come, the value of our atomic stockpile must therefore be measured by the capabilities of our strategic air arm.

The strategic air arm is presently composed of fourteen groups, of which four are B-36 groups designed to strike targets in the Soviet Union from bases in this hemisphere, and ten are "medium-range groups equipped with B-29s, B-50s and B-47s. Improvements in Soviet air defenses in recent months have considerably depreciated the worth of the B-36 groups, since so many other characteristics had to be sacrificed to build a great range into this airplane. Hence the "medium-range" groups, which are all to be equipped eventually with the admirable B-47, must be regarded as vitally important.

The worth of these medium-range groups in turn obviously depends upon the availability of bases for them. By the tricky method of refueling in the air, they can in theory reach targets in the Soviet Union from airfields on this side of the Atlantic. But in practice, even the enthusiasts frankly admit that the efficiency of the strategic air arm will be hopelessly impaired, if these medium range groups, which now comprise over two-thirds of the total force, are denied bases overseas.

At the moment, the necessary overseas bases are available and ready. They comprise the large airfield complex that has been built up in Eastern England; another important complex in the British-controlled North African region of Cyrenaica; a vital, very advanced base on the British-controlled island of Cyprus; bases now abutting in French North Africa; and airfields used by us as "transport bases" in Tripoli and at Dahran in Arabia. A glance at this list reveals what is now rapidly becoming almost the central fact in the strategic situation of the United States.

We may control the atomic stockpile, but our Allies, and particularly Great Britain, control most of the bases we need to give the atomic stockpile any value.

There are a thousand other reasons of course why the program of abandoning our Allies to their fate and withdrawing to our hemisphere is a quick way to national suicide. Some of them will be examined in a subsequent report. Meanwhile, the significance of the situation outlined above ought to be faced by every American. We have gone on smugly for five years, supposing the atomic bomb was ours to use or not to use, as we alone saw fit. We have gone on smugly for five years, neglecting our own defense and the defense of the free world, and relying for security on this magical weapon.

But we have been wrong. When Prime Minister Attlee told Parliament the other day that he was sure we would not use our bombs without consulting the British Government, his promise was doubly guaranteed by the facts of geography and the ranges of our airplanes. If now, in the hour of peril, we abandon our Allies, we cannot hope that they will not abandon us.

Joe E. Lewis Reels Along, Glad To Be Alive—Usually

By ROBERT C. RUARK

NEW YORK

EVERY TIME the news is bad and the weather is lousy and the sinuses are oversecreting, I like to think of the wise words of Mr. Joe E. Lewis, a professional mendicant whose life has been compounded largely of lumps.

Mr. Lewis, a known gambler, has always been hardly used by horses, dice, women, whisky, and on at least one occasion, some Chicago hoodlums who carved him a new face. It was Mr. Lewis' belief that he was aroused on the stroke of 4 P. M. to regard himself wondrously in the mirror and remark, "What do you know. I made it again."

The pathetic gratitude of all modern mankind lies in Mr. Lewis' words. Even though he is artistically too sexy for television, Mr. Lewis is a symbol of his age. He knows that the sweet is ever dominated by the bitter, and has found wry humor in his acceptance of the clouts of fate.

Mr. Lewis was saying the other day that he has been banned by the Capitol Theater here since 1943. He was having a tough run of luck with the jukebox, and going one back 75 G's. Nobody monkey business.

The bank dick looked at him for a long moment. He spoke.

"Tsk, tsk," he said. "Oh, Mr. Lewis, you're drinking again."

ALTO CLEAR VOICE

Mr. Lewis' voice has often been likened to an all-clear signal in a flooding crap game, and he is generally a match for heckles. But recently in Philadelphia one addlepater heckler so sorely annoyed him for four days that the cops intervened, charges were preferred, and the pest was hauled to court.

"The bum says he's worth two million bucks," Joe says, "but when they ask him for bail and he can put up is two airplane tickets to New Orleans. New Orleans is my next job, and I know, when I get there, this creep will be waiting for me at the airport."

Joe also wished to see that Joseph was not plagued by thirst while in the Pacific, so he sent another case behind him. Joe had no sooner arrived in Australia than he got an urgent message from a colonel in Brisbane.

"Your other crate of theatrical props has arrived safely," the colonel said. "And it's leaking like hell."

Mr. Lewis' career has been a study in frustration. A long time ago, when Joe was a young and gayer Joe and a boon companion, Westbrook Pegler, remained awake and enthusiastic long after most birds had gone to roost.

Somewhere around 10 A. M., as the pair searched for a Turkish bath, Joe turned to Pegler and muttered:

"You got a reputation for guts. I wish to see how brave you are. We will now go stick up this bank."

"Least I can do," Pegler is alleged to have remarked. "We will helps same."

Joe pulled his overcoat menacingly around his neck and swaggered up to the bank dick. He had his hand shoved deep in his pocket.

"This is a stickup," he said. "You go in back of the cage and bring me back 75 G's. Nobody monkey business."

The bank dick looked at him for a long moment. He spoke.

"Tsk, tsk," he said. "Oh, Mr. Lewis, you're drinking again."

ALL CLEAR VOICE

Mr. Lewis' voice has often been likened to an all-clear signal in a flooding crap game, and he is generally a match for heckles. But recently in Philadelphia one addlepater heckler so sorely annoyed him for four days that the cops intervened, charges were preferred, and the pest was hauled to court.

"The bum says he's worth two million bucks," Joe says, "but when they ask him for bail and he can put up is two airplane tickets to New Orleans. New Orleans is my next job, and I know, when I get there, this creep will be waiting for me at the airport."

Truman And MacArthur

PRESIDENT TRUMAN came into a Cabinet meeting some time ago carrying a copy of the New Republic, the liberal weekly magazine.

During the Cabinet session, Secretary of Defense Marshall complained about the difficulty of getting co-operation from General MacArthur. He indicated that MacArthur was a law unto himself. Truman listened, finally held up a copy of the New Republic.

"This is the way he handles that bird," he said.

Cabinet members, after the meeting, immediately sent for copies of the magazine. It contained an article by former Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes criticizing MacArthur for violating directives from Washington.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Price Control Law Excludes Many Foods

WASHINGTON

IT LOOKS as if the cost of certain key food items isn't going to be controlled very soon, after all.

Price Stabilization Director Mike Di Salle who came to Washington prepared to do a job for the housewife got a rude shock when he read the price-control law thoroughly. For the farm lobby had neatly inserted certain exceptions to price control, and one of them is grain. In brief, Di Salle has no power whatsoever to control the price of grain or any food made from grain.

So Di Salle will have to go back to Congress in January and get the law rewritten.

Aside from this the new price czar has decided that he will not try to control a whole variety of prices, but will stick chiefly to a few cost-of-living items plus basic metals and war production raw materials.

NOTE—Di Salle arrived in Washington from Toledo, Ohio, to find he had no telephone, no staff and no full legal power to stop price rises. All he had was a heap of angry letters from housewives. At first he was tempted to buy a return ticket to Toledo, but he has been getting to work at 6 A. M., going to bed after midnight and is gradually working order out of chaos.

Russian War Plans

OUTGUESSING the Kremlin is extremely difficult these days, but here is how American experts, trained to do this job, size up the immediate war future.

No. 1. Soviet strategy will probably be to grab off weak and isolated nations one-by-one.

No. 2. To lure the United States into committing men and resources in a big war in Asia. In this case Russia would throw enough armament into the battle to aid local Communists to hold down American strength.

No. 3. While we were tied up in Asia, Russian armies would drive across Western Europe. The latter move is not expected this year, however. The Kremlin wants to entrap us in other areas first.

A summary of Soviet war strategy can be paraphrased as follows: "Russian policy is to expand its borders as far as the indifference or timidity of its neighbors allow, and to hold or drive back when met by determined resistance, and wait for a new chance to spring at its victims."

Next probable Soviet victim will be French Indo-China, already torn with Communist revolt. Siam, Burma and Malaya would probably follow.

Another weak spot which may fall to Russia without a battle is Iran. Already, Soviet pressure has caused Iran to cancel broadcasts of the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Co. on local radio stations. Meanwhile, a secret Russian station has been calling Kurd tribes to revolt.

Happy Chandler's Tears

SENATE colleagues always knew Baseball Commissioner A. B. (Happy) Chandler as one of the happiest men in Congress when he served as Senator from Kentucky. But his smile turned to tears at his annual banquet for major league club owners in Tampa.

Happy had just been informed by his guests that his $65,000-a-year contract would not be renewed.

Yo one was expected to show up for the banquet that followed, but Chandler went through with it nonetheless. News reports that the party "proceeded without a hitch" were wrong. It started at 8:00 P. M.—two hours late. All but New York Giants' Horace Stoneham and St. Louis Cards' Fred Saigh came. Saigh is reported to be the big gun behind Chandler's ouster.

The unhappy host refused to take his customary seat at the head table, but sat by himself with his back to his guests. Several times he was forced to leave the room to wipe his eyes.

Chandler sitting alone, said he was sitting where he felt he belonged. Once he sent out for a box of cigars and presented them to Joe Cronin of Boston as an ironic gift for Cronin's anti-Chandler vote.

The atmosphere was tense and electrifying. Hardly anyone dared speak to other guests. Branch Rickey of the Pittsburgh Pirates, the Cincinnati Reds' Warren Giles and Bill Wrigley of the Chicago Cubs carried on whispered conversations.

Ford Frick, president of the National League, during the banquet whispered to William Harridge, president of the American League:

"What an unusual feeling. It's ghastlike."

"Not one man here is enjoying his food," Harridge whispered back. "Mine is stuck right here." He pointed to his throat.

As the club owners departed after the banquet, Chandler shook hands with them. His smile was forced. Each wished him well—perhaps in his next job.