THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

THOMAS L. ROBINSON.....President and Publisher
BRODIE S. GRIFFITH.....General Manager
ROBERT H. LAMPEE.....Advertising Director
CECIL PRINCE.....Editor
PERRY MORGAN (on leave).....Associate Editor
R. L. YOUNG JR.....Managing Editor
JAMES McDOWELL.....Circulation Manager

MONDAY, MARCH 9, 1959

Assembly Should Pass Bell Plan Intact

THE aimless drift of North Carolina's 1959 General Assembly ended the moment court reform became a live issue.

Both the Senate and the House of Representatives have received bills covering recommendations of the North Carolina Bar Association's Committee on Improving and Expediting the Administration of Justice.

Thus, after 33 days of considerable dilly-dallying, legislators can now prepare to render the most important single decision that is likely to come out of the current session.

The decision will not come easily. The committee's proposals have already run headon into a rival court plan proposed by the State Constitutional Study Commission. Furthermore, heavy opposition is developing to several individual features of the bar association's package.

The need is for statesmanship above and beyond picayunish considerations.

The bar association's committee, headed by Sen. J. Spencer Bell of Mecklenburg, made the most comprehensive study of judicial operations ever attempted in North Carolina. It exposed the whole unhappy mess that passes for the administration of justice in Tarheelia. In the lower courts, especially, the situation is discouragingly bad. Since 1868, a crazy-quilt of more than 1,400 small courts has been established with interlocking, overlapping and conflicting relationships and with no administrative control. They bring delay, confusion, expense and inefficiency to the state's most sensitive governmental field.

To correct the consequences of nearly a century of neglect, Sen. Bell and his distinguished colleagues proposed a general reform that has the magnificent virtue of utter simplicity.

Basically, all that is being recommended is a unified system of justice to be administered by the North Carolina Supreme Court.

The chief justice would be the executive head of the system. It would be broken down into three divisions:

1—The appellate division, composed of the present Supreme Court.

2—The trial court of general jurisdiction, composed of the present Superior Courts.

3—District courts.

The district courts would handle the business now being transacted by the hodgepodge of local recorder-type and justice of the peace courts. The JP system would be replaced by magistrate's courts which would be a part of the district courts. The abominable fee system would be abolished.

To insure effective leadership, modern management and careful supervision, the Supreme Court would make the rules for this unified system of justice. District judges and trial magistrates would be appointed by the chief justice from nominations by senior resident Superior Court judges.

Sen. Bell's proposed reform is eminently sound. It would improve both the quality and efficiency of justice in North Carolina. It would place prompt, inexpensive justice within the reach of every Tar Heel.

Obviously, many attempts are being made to tamper with the package. This seems a shame. It is carefully balanced to assure maximum benefits. Any weakening of this or that provision will weaken the whole mechanism. We are convinced that the best interests of North Carolina will be served by passing the Bell plan intact.

Eating Crow Becomes A Pleasure

IT was April and we were feeling our spring oats. That's the only explanation we can find for the editorial needle we applied to Charlotte's excellent Little Theater in 1958.

The Mint Drama Guild had scheduled a production of Tennessee Williams' tender drama, THE GLASS MENAGERIE, and we are applauding the whole idea. So far so good. Then we suggested, in an aside, that since the Little Theater had been "devoting itself largely to frothy material," such as GOLD IN THE HILLS—OR THE DEAD SISTER'S SECRET, Charlotteans were looking more and more to the Mint for fine drama.

Well, sir, spring ended in a hurry. A member of the cast of GOLD IN THE HILLS, ETC. gave us an icy lecture in PEOPLE'S PLATFORM about Show Biz and we were even taken to task by fans of the Mint for "making trouble." There hadn't been anything like it since that day in 1954 when we came out against department store Santa Clauses.

We ate crow then and we are now prepared to request of our own free will another helping.

It's not that we take back one ounce of our admiration of the Mint Drama Guild. Under Dorothy Masterson, it is still contributing handsomely to Charlotte's cultural scene. The recent private reading of Dylan Thomas' UNDER MILKWOOD was an interesting case in point.

No, we *still* have affection for the Mint. We are selecting crow on the menu solely because the Little Theater has proved to us and to Charlotte what a fine, artistic job it can do with good dramatic material.

Exhibit A: The Little Theater's current offering, THE HEIRESS. It is the dramatization by Ruth and Augustus Goetz of Henry James' 1881 novel, WASHINGTON SQUARE, and was first produced in New York in 1947.

What Director Thomas B. Humble and an excellent cast have done with it here is nothing short of wonderful. It is hardly "froth." It is a beautifully mounted, tightly drawn drama with some of the best acting we've seen at the Queen Road playhouse in quite a spell. The performances given by Ray Rawlings, Pat Lee, Bernice Terheun and James Cremins are superb.

So is Mr. Humble's direction. So is the set.

This is little theater at its best and, if you like, the adjective "little" may be removed. Charlotte is extremely fortunate to have the services of both Mr. Humble and Mrs. Masterson. Both add something distinctive and refreshing to the community's cultural climate.

Tell 600 People And It's No Secret

THE oft-quoted and much publicized Frank McGuire of the University of North Carolina's basketball fortunes has managed to singe himself again.

As an aftermath of a cage brawl at Wake Forest College involving the Tar Heels, prober Jim Weaver, conference commissioner, verbally whacked Coach McGuire, among others, across the knuckles in handing down his findings.

The reprimand rankled Brer McGuire. That was natural. However, as a public figure he made a further misstep.

Writing an open letter to 600 members of the UNC Educational Foundation (the athletic boosters club) McGuire complained: "I emphatically do not agree with his (Weaver's) judgment, and I truly believe he is prejudiced, having been the athletic director at Wake Forest for a number of years."

These comments duly appeared on sports pages across the state.

The stopper came when Coach McGuire allowed his letter was not intended for the press. This was just in the family.

Really now, could a letter to 600 people be kept a secret? We don't know six people who can be honor-bound with a confidence.

Pooh and balderdash.

Such a pose of naivete is difficult to believe.

We just hope the conference commissioner takes a tolerant attitude, attributes the unfortunate letter to Irish temper and takes no further action.

But we couldn't blame him if he invites the Tar Heels' mentor to a private session in the league's woodshed.

From The Richmond News Leader

MOUNTAIN BIRD, WITH TAIL-PLUME

ONE of the nice things about the Japanese, a strangely schizophrenic people, is the deference in which they hold their Imperial family. At hand are some editorials from Japanese newspapers, which in other respects are thoroughly modern publications, that speak with an antique grace of the approaching marriage of the Crown Prince and his commoner bride, Michiko Shoda.

"Congratulations your Highness," said ASAHI. "Together with all the Japanese people we offer you our heartfelt felicitations. You once composed a beautiful poem: 'In the valley verdant with fresh grass, appeared a mountain bird with white tail-plume trailing.' This poem seems to be symbolic of the ideal girl you have met, and makes our hearts warm to you."

Said MAINICHI: "His Highness, the Crown Prince, is a person who should serve as a good model for the youth of Japan. It had been our hope that he would approach the selection of his bride with an open mind, and with an attitude rich in love, in a manner befitting the youth of today. We cannot help offering our praise, now that our hope has been realized."

Another paper speaks of the Crown Prince emerging from the "the heavy chrysanthemum curtain" of Imperial tradition, which is a pretty image, and still other papers have been flooded with poetry in tribute to the couple.

The last crown princes of our own benighted realm who married while their pop was in the palace were the Roosevelt boys. Nobody ever wrote any poetry about James and Elliott.

'Oh, Yes—Things Are Ticking Right Along'

Egg Hit The Fan

Pasternak Enthusiasm Fades

By ROBERT C. RUARK

PALAMOS, Spain

MY enthusiasm for Boris Pasternak, the fame-bedevilled Russian author of "Doctor Zhivago," never quite managed to reach a seething and bubbling point, and it continues to dwindle with the recent uproar over his hoodlegged poem.

If Pasternak were anything but Russian, I would swear that the furor over him and his Nobel Prize-winning novel was nothing more or less than a cleverly conceived and masterfully executed stroke of publicity designed to peddle a book — a book I couldn't make it halfway through, I might add, and which I will wager has not been completely read by 95 per cent of the people who bought it just to be fashionable.

If Pasternak had not jumped, or been pushed, into a refusal to accept the Nobel Prize, "Doctor Zhivago" would have been in translation for a very select few wistful lightbrows who profess to see profound sermons in unheartfelt unwieldy stones.

ODD AFFECTION

Pasternak has constantly bleated about his great love for his native land — aldtime native land, I guess — but he beat the brains out of his native land in its current aspects. He edited the world's sympathy as a brave man, speaking his mind against the iron monster that is today's Russia, but as far as I can read all he has done was bootleg his book first, his poem second, amid a furious whimpering as he backed off from his stand.

After all, his book was not published in Russia, and until the publicity egg hit the fan, the Russians seemed to think quite kindly of the old gentleman. They had installed him in quite a respectable country villa, or dacha, and if he had a wine cellar to fit all the various sizes of glasses which I saw in a photo of his dining table, the inner man of Pasternak was not suffering — at least not below the gullet.

LOADED WORDS

Mr. Pasternak has frequently moaned that he didn't know his book was loaded, and all he wanted to do was to be left alone to brood into his Chateau Yquem. But he writes a poem, once again knocking his nation, gives it to a British newspaperman to smuggle out of the country, and then wails that he was betrayed.

Personally, I wish Mr. Pasternak would stop moaning about invasion of privacy while simultaneously giving interviews and making magazine covers. If his hassel with the Soviet Writers Union still continues, perhaps he could smuggle himself down the backstairs and make it to a border if things are so touchy around the dacha. It is even possible that the Russians might issue him a passport to vacate the premises and get him off the free list of subsidized writers.

BIG SURPRISE

Somehow, instead of impressing me as a self-starting martyr, Pasternak reminds me of a man who writes a lot of foolish love letters, and then seems painfully surprised to hear them read aloud in court. But one way or the other I wish he'd make up his mind over whether he loves his land or hates it badly enough to die for the privilege.

I weary of the whole business. Zhivago, his author, the Soviet Writers Union and the Soviet government, and I'll bet a close poll among the Nobel Prizers would show a similar reaction. I suspect there are times when they wish they had chosen another author with less flair for personal publicity, more definite defense of his work and few cutglass globlets on his simple table in his simple hut, religious liberation when they are a minority such as they are in America, until they gain control.

God save us from having a president who is bound to Rome. Certainly our highest office should be a symbol of freedom.

I suggest the Little seventh grade student go further back than the history of the U. S. and study the general history of Europe, not religious, but just plain history. And just take a look at Spain and Colombia. Do the Protestant people have the freedom the Catholic Church has? Hardly.

— MISS MYRTLE PORTER

People's Platform

Auto Strikes You, You Are Covered

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

REGARDING an article in The News of March 5 on studying your auto policy, you have used a West Virginia policy to indicate that no medical benefits would be available to one whose car wheel falls on him.

The standard family auto policy in North Carolina reads: Coverage "G" to pay all reasonable expenses . . . medical . . . surgical . . . funeral, etc. for injuries . . . caused by accident while occupying or being struck by an automobile.

We must admit the car struck the man if the wheel pinned his hands down. Companies in this state would pay (without court action).

— GRAHAM C. REICH

Political Machine In Catholic Church?

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

I AGREE with Mr. (J. W.) Jewell 100 per cent. Let the Catholic dictators stay in Spain and Cuba and South America. We have no need of them here.

Everyone knows the Catholic Church is nothing but a political machine with a pagan religious doctrine and it is a fact that they do not believe in religious freedom. Of course, they believe in

A Puzzle To Aged In Social Security

Hendersonville

Editors, The News:

IN THE Charlotte News of March 4 is an article which states that the financial problems of the aged are getting more attention.

I for one can testify to the correctness of that statement. I am 64 years old recently and my Social Security was raised from $20 to $33 and my old age assistance was reduced from $29 to $26. No warning or reason was given.

— J. G. PHILLIPS

Quote, Unquote

"A short letter to a distant friend is, in my opinion, an insult."—Samuel Johnson.

Command Needed

Lyndonmanship

By JOSEPH ALSOP

WASHINGTON

IT IS a bit late to be adding to the commentaries on the bold attack on Lyndon Johnson's Senate leadership by Sen. William Proxmire of Wisconsin. But after all the other returns are in, two highly important things strangely remain to be said.

In the first place, grumblings from independent-minded progressives are always heard, when the congressional leadership is strong. Often they are justified, too. Yet there was no historic justification for the Wisconsin senator's most specific complaint, that Lyndon Johnson has the habit of making his own plans of action without consulting his colleagues in the party caucus.

SEN. LYNDON JOHNSON
He Has His Way

NO PRECEDENT

Of course Johnson does not hold party caucuses. But then no other strong leader in the Senate or House has ever been addicted to caucusing his followers, since the bygone days when the rule of the caucus was rather strictly binding on those who joined in it.

Under that forgotten rule, the grim old tyrant of the House, Uncle Joe Cannon, was happy to caucus his cowed fellow-members at frequent intervals. The same was true of the Senate leaders of that period. But the strong leaders who came after, when the rule was changed, would no more have called a caucus to ask what they should do next, than a good infantry captain would ask the sergeants and privates of his company when he ought to order the next patrol.

ALL AUTOCRATS

All the great speakers of the House after Cannon — Champ Clark, Nicholas Longworth, John Nance Garner, Sam Rayburn — were more or less benevolent autocrats; and Rayburn still is a benevolent autocrat. Autocracy is more difficult in the Senate. Yet consider Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas and Robert A. Taft of Ohio, the only two other Senate chieftains besides Johnson who have truly led the Senate in the last quarter century.

Taft viewed his position almost as a military command. As for Robinson, he not only held no caucuses, he never consulted anyone at all except James F. Byrnes of South Carolina and Pat Harrison of Mississippi. Barring these two brilliant lieutenants, this super-autocrat seldom spoke to other senators except for the purpose of issuing orders. Robinson led, in truth, almost entirely by the favors he doled out, and the great fear he inspired.

NEEDED QUALITIES

In sum, the willingness to lead, the habit of command, the sense of responsibility of a good field commander, are all essential qualities in any strong legislative leader. Sen. Proxmire could have his caucuses; but he would also have weak leadership. He would certainly not wish to enter a caucus whose vote was binding.

One wonders whether he would be any more ready to pay the price of weak congressional leadership. That question raises the even deeper point that also needs to be brought out. Putting it bluntly, a special need for strong leadership in Congress has been created by the present state of the presidency.

President Eisenhower came to his great office with the out-of-date conception that an American president ought to reign but not rule, preside but not decide. Countless insistances can be cited of his habit of handing on to Congress the task of making what are essentially presidential choices.

FINE EXAMPLE

His treatment of his own 1957 budget, after George M. Humphrey's famous "curl your hair" statement, is the most extraordinary example. Another example is the President's recent agriculture message, stating the factors of the appalling farm problem, but hardly beginning to recommend a clear-cut solution.

Since his unhappy illnesses, moreover, Dwight D. Eisenhower has been even less eager and active in wielding vast White House powers than he was in his first term. The United States has had other presidents — sometimes much - admired presidents, like Calvin Collidge in his time—who took this same approach. But by a strange accident of history, the United States has never before had such a president in a period of danger and crisis.

LIKE HUMANS

This is a period of utmost danger. The American system is a purely presidential system. So the body politic is now like a human body in which the heart muscles are no longer eager for their unending task, although the body is called on to great exertion.

Continuing the image, strong congressional leadership can never substitute for strong presidential leadership, any more than machinery can substitute for the human heart. But strong congressional leadership can serve to do what is done by one of those external, plastic heart pumps the doctors now use. It can help to get the body politic through a rough patch.

RIGHT MOVE

Lyndon Johnson's strong leadership did precisely that, on the very issue which aroused the ire of Sen. Proxmire and some other northern Democrats, the issue of Senate rules and civil rights. Without Johnson's courageous, firm-handed and national-minded intervention, this issue alone would have turned the American government into a public shambles, in the very midst of the Berlin crisis.

In these circumstances, the nation is lucky to have two such men as Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson leading the Democratic majorities in Congress. Caucus or no caucus, good luck to them.

SEN. WILLIAM PROXMIRE
Way Off Base?

Swiftian Satire

'The Most Pernicious Race'

MY LITTLE friend Gildrig, you have made a most admirable panegyric upon your country; you have clearly proved that ignorance, idleness and vice may be sometimes the only ingredients for qualifying a legislator; that laws are best explained, interpreted, and applied by those whose interest and abilities lie in perverting, confounding and eluding them. . . It doth not appear from all you have said, how any one virtue is required toward the procurement of any one station among you; much less that men are ennobled on account of their virtue, that priests are advanced for their piety or learning, soldiers for their conduct or valor, judges for their integrity, senators for their wisdom. . . I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the face of the earth.—Jonathan Swift in "Gulliver's Travels."

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Why American Dairymen Quit Trying

WASHINGTON

MY wife has long been telling me that a newspaperman with one deadline a day can't afford to milk cows with two deadlines a day. I am now following her advice.

And as an absent-be emeritus milk farmer, perhaps I can shed some light on the current milk war in the nation's capital and on the milk problem in the rest of the nation.

Giving Up Cows

This spring around 1,000 milk cows will be sold in two Maryland counties alone. They will be sold for hamburger or to bigger, more successful farms. My cows will follow shortly thereafter. Reason: The dairy farmer is squeezed between three big millstones: 1. the high cost of farm labor and machinery; 2. the big dairy combines; 3. Jimmy Hoffa.

Prices Slashed

In Baltimore, the price of milk paid to farmers dropped last year 71 cents per cwt. can or at the rate of 1½ cents a quart. Simultaneously the price went up to the housewife 1 cent a quart.

In Washington last year the Teamsters, which set all local milk wages, got an increase of 8 cents an hour, plus another 7 cents due this June. Total, 15 cents. Meanwhile, the farmer shipping milk to Washington has been cut in price 92 cents per cwt. can since Benson entered office, or the equivalent of 2 cents a quart. During the same period prices went up to the Washington housewife 3.1 cents per quart.

Thus the Teamsters and the middlemen seem to be doing all right. But the farmers and the housewives are caught in the squeeze.

Large Opponent

The big dairy combine which has now challenged the farmers cooperative to a milk war in the Washington area to reduce prices further is National Dairy Products, though it operates under the local name of Chestnut Farms, a part of Sealtest. This is not just a little neighborhood dairy. It is one of the biggest milk combines in the world.

Competing Lines

It not only handles dairy products, but bread, vegetable oils, and margarine, which compete with dairy products. From all these, it made $44,050,000 in 1957 after taxes, accumulated an earned surplus the same year of $255,290,000.

This is the company which has now challenged the Maryland-Virginia milk producers, a farmers' co-op, to a price war in the nation's capital.

Smelly Windfall

What most housewives and farmers have forgotten is the fact that National Dairy Products was the biggest beneficiary from the amazing Benson cheese deal, by which the big dairy and cheese companies got a juicy windfall profit from selling cheese to Benson a few days before Benson was going to drop the price, then buying it back from Benson at a cheaper price. They never even moved it out of their own warehouses.

Organized, Too

After this column reported the cheese deal on June 6, 1955, and after Rep. Fountain of North Carolina put the dairy combines on the griddle, they were forced to refund to Uncle Sam. National Dairy Products was ordered by a federal judge to hand back $404,547.

The farm co-op against which Chestnut Farms and National Dairy Products have declared war in the nation's capital also believes in tight-knit organization. It has to, with the Teamsters on one side and a big milk combine on the other. It has also been in trouble with the Antitrust Act for operating its own retail dairy.

Chief difference between it and the Teamsters is that the Teamsters are not subject to the Antitrust Act. Aside from this, the farmers, though they cuss out labor, have organized exactly like labor to put a floor under the price they get for their labor on the farm.

Defensive Move

These are some of the intricacies of producing milk. If dairy farmers didn't organize like labor and big business, they would lose their shirts. Some of them do anyway.

Probably what's needed is a commission to regulate milk in the same way the price of electricity is regulated. Both are public service commodities.