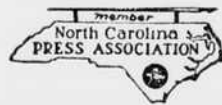


THE ROANOKE RAPIDS HERALD

CAROLINA'S FIRST
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THE LARGEST NEWSPAPER IN HALIFAX COUNTY



CARROLL WILSON, Owner and Editor

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EDITORIAL

THE DARK TRUTH HURTS

● ● Debnam, radio news commentator, this week read an unsigned message he received in which his critic charged his war comments with being the worst on the air because they were so gloomy. Mr. Debnam took care of his unknown assailant very nicely. We want to commend him on his frank and honest interpretation of what is going on along the war fronts. We also want to make the charge that most radio commentators and most newspapers have been guilty of glossing over the real facts and feeding the public what it wants to hear and read instead of what it should know.

Talks and headlines have been too optimistic in the past. There has been a tendency toward playing up the few bright spots and playing down the many dark blotches.

This column, also, has been condemned for presenting a gloomy picture. Our only answer is that the picture is, has been and will continue to be for some time, just that.

True, there are bright spots, such as the splendid response by the textile employees of the local mills when 90 per cent of them signed up for Victory Bonds last week and it is our hope that more bright spots like that will keep growing; but, there is also before us the fact that the United Nations are facing defeats on every front except the Russian and that relentless, well trained, well equipped foes are marching steadily toward important goals against our few, ill trained, poorly equipped allies.

Fact is that we are not ready for a total war against foes who are geared to and fighting a total war today. Fact is that with all our boasted potential power, we are getting started very slowly. Fact is that right here, in Roanoke Rapids, we are not doing a whole lot different than we did before the war . . . business as usual . . . pleasure as usual.

Fact is that unless we go all out for war in every part of this nation, we face possible defeat.

AND CONGRESS FIDDLES

● ● Nothing can be gloomier to those who want us to go into high gear and all out war preparation than the antics of Congress these past few days.

With the walls trembling about us, with our national future and honor at stake, Congress passes a bill which gives Congress a pension. Never has there been such a wrong time to do a thing. We do not wish to argue the merits of pensions for Congressmen. We do say that this is not the time for such selfish pettiness.

Then because they do not like Mrs. Roosevelt, they take up the rest of their important time in debating whether or not some actors and actresses should get some jobs. They hold up important money measures in order to vent spite at a few

Abraham Lincoln



THAT GOVERNMENT
of the PEOPLE by the
PEOPLE for the PEOPLE,
SHALL NOT PERISH from
the EARTH

people they do not like.

Time is essence, time is wasting, time is the most important item in the war today. And Congress wastes it on trivial matters. Such does not make the picture any brighter.

DRIVING TOO FAST

● ● A lot has been said about police cars being driven too fast since the Avenue wreck last Thursday night in which two police cars crashed. One police car was chasing a speeding car across Fourth Street while the other police car was heading North on the Avenue. They met at the intersection. The result was anything but pleasant for the two officers involved. Fortunately neither was seriously injured although both cars were badly damaged.

Criticism of fast police cars would have increased ten fold had the Avenue car been driven by a private citizen. Even had the private citizen escaped unhurt, automobiles have now become so important and difficult to replace that a wrecked car becomes a tragedy to the owner.

While it is true that a police car must travel fast in order to catch a speeding car, it is likewise true, in this case, that the law violator got away, so the speeding by the police did no good. We realize that there are emergencies when police cars must go fast but in such cases, which should not be often, a siren and a special flashing light should be used to warn traffic. The same thing is true of ambulances. There are a few cases when a few moments might mean life or death, but in many cases there is no need for speeding which endangers the lives of many people.

Since the wreck last week, there has also been much outspoken criticism of the speed with which taxis are being driven in the city limits.

The new traffic lights also add to the consciousness which all now have that there are few, if any, times when speeding can be justified.

All of which shows that the people here, most of whom are trying to save their tires and wear and tear on their cars by driving more slowly than they ever have before, are becoming speed conscious from a thrifty and patriotic standpoint and it's going to be thumbs down on those who continue to drive at breakneck speed.

STAY OFF THE STREETS

● ● Civilian Defense leaders here will do well to follow the training courses in some sections where, above all else, workers and citizens are being taught that the individual is pretty small potatoes as compared to the people about him. If war does nothing else good, it does make people realize that their own individual interests and desires must be submerged when they conflict with the best interest of the group.

It might not seem important or necessary to

cut off his light during a blackout. It is his light and he can do what he wants to about it. That would be fine if, in case of an enemy raid his house or place of business would be the only one hit. But when his light is the cause of his neighbors' loss, he has become an unwitting but important ally to the enemy and a source of danger to his community.

When a citizen breaks the rules and goes out during a blackout when he has no business out and then breaks a leg in the dark, there may be those who will say he got just what he deserved. The only trouble is that the broken leg means nurses and doctors must be tied up and that somebody must fill in the vacant place in the ranks where once the cripple had a part to play.

Ignorance, carelessness or foolishness have no part in this war picture. You ask what you can do? So far as Civilian Defense and blackouts are concerned, you can do your part best by doing exactly what you are told to do. For the most of us that means staying off the streets during the blackout, if possible, staying in our blackout rooms. Staying there cheerfully until the All Clear signal; gladly because it is a test and not the real thing.

We reprint the Local Defense Council's six simple rules in case of an air raid (or test blackout):

1. Keep calm and cool.
2. Stay home.
3. Put out lights.
4. Lie down.
5. Stay away from windows.
6. Don't telephone.

If you cannot get home. Stay where you are, if indoors; or get off the streets to nearest protection. If driving, park car and go to nearest shelter off the streets. Nobody but air-raid wardens and police officers should be on the streets during a raid. Unless special squads are called for in case of fire or explosion.

Do not use the telephone because it may be necessary for the Control Center to call your home at any time.

Be Quiet.