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DERNIERES NOUVELLES

On January 7th, former Senator Robert R. Reynolds announced that "the Republican party is dead and the Democratic party has been taken over by Communists, Reds and pinks" and therefore he is forming "a new major political party which will be known as the Nationalist Party". Mr. Reynolds explained that "the new party has been developed through an educational organization known as the American Nationalists' Committee and various factions and groups already set up throughout the country are being contacted by the Nationalist Confederation."

This gibberish has an ominously familiar ring. What are these "factions and groups throughout the country"? Who "set them up", and just why should anyone take it upon himself to set up factions and groups when we are engaged in a dangerous war. Is this a time to have anyone going around our country saying that our long established political parties are no good, and setting up a group dedicated to something else? And just what is this something else.

This is not the first time Mr. Reynolds has assumed the role of founder of a new political party. Twice before he has sponsored groups professing the same aim as this new group, the same narrow fascist-Christian-Front-American-First-party aim.

His activities have been met with a certain amount of easy ridicule, for he is a hard man for Americans to take seriously. But there is another group of people, another nation which finds Mr. Reynolds more worthy of attention. To them he does not cut an absurd figure. Our enemies know that Robert Reynolds and his "factions and groups" may well be the answer to a Nazi's prayer.

Though we do not believe in giving to prisoners of war any reading matter which might undermine the Nazi influence, our enemies are not so ingeniously scrupulous. Before this writer is a small newsheet printed in French, which was originally in the possession of a French prisoner in Germany. It is the daily paper, called Dernieres Nouvelles, which the Germans give out in the prison camps. One page is devoted to war news in which allied losses are stressed, and incidentally, enormously exaggerated, and to accounts of destruction of French lives, property and historic monuments by allied bombing; the other page contains short news items, either false or so cleverly written as to give a false interpretation of the truth. Among the latter is the following (quotation translated into English): "Robert Reynolds, a prominent statesman of America, has recently officially withdrawn from the Democratic party and founded a new political group, called the Nationalist Party. The object of the party is to defeat the theory of isolationism. It contains already numerous outstanding individuals who have resigned from the Democratic and Republican parties."

This item is put in the French prisoners' paper for a purpose; to weaken their morale by shaking their confidence in the good faith of America. And if, beyond that, their reaction goes farther, back even to France, to create the beginning of a rift between them and their ally, America, so much the better. Clearly the Nazis look upon it as grist for their mill.

If this were the only result of the ex-senator's actions it would be serious enough. But there are possibilities of greater danger.

Two spies were caught not long ago. They landed on the coast of

Maine. What were they sent here to do? First of all, certainly, to find out and transmit to Germany all they could about troop movements. And second: surely to find out and trace down every possible point for attack on the American home front. And might not such a point of weakness be the man whose castigations of our political parties, and whose founding of a party of his own struck the Nazis as so important that they printed it in their propaganda sheet? This man is of the demagogic type, he has been intimate with some of those recently on trial for sedition, he has a large following, he is now enormously wealthy, he is ambitious. What more likely than that the name of Robert Reynolds is high on the Nazi list of possible American collaborationists.

The landing of the spies shows that we cannot afford to relax our vigilance. For two who were caught, ten may be at large. Our enemies are very far from giving up. Clever, imaginative, and persistent, they will try every trick to divide us from our allies; they will search out every chink in our national armor, and they will be ever alert to seize upon and use to the utmost any man who, through stupidity, through personal ambition, through reckless irresponsible action invites their crafty speculative gaze. The innocent tool can sometimes work more evil than the actual conspirator.

Despite their seeming innocence, Robert Reynolds and his new party must be watched, as must every other sign of weakness or disaffection in our ranks. —KLB

A YEAR ROUND SANTA CLAUS

This little tale is about Santa Claus. It isn't a belated one either, because it will fit any day of the year. Yarns about Santa Claus aren't necessarily stories to be told exclusively the night before Christmas. Shades of the Great Forest of Burzee, No! It's only after the dead Christmas tree has long been disposed of and the last bit of tinsel swept away that the deeds of the old coddler begin to drift in.

The particular Saint we are thinking of is a local one. You have seen him. He was on the village streets. He was in and out of the stores. He brought a warm glow to the hearts of those grown-ups who KNOW there is a Santa Claus and need no proof. He romped with the youngsters in the park and was revered by that group of childhood who have a still greater devotion.

Santa Claus isn't wrapped in complete obscurity. Lightened by fable we will call ours "Van". It's shorter and will save time. When mail directed to the North Pole reached the Southern Pines postoffice, it went without the slightest deviation, straight to Van's box. Next to Santa Claus our village postmaster knows a lot. Keeping the North Pole mail moving was no task for him. All kinds of mail went down the chute. Some had only Christmas seals. Some tuberculosis stickers. Some air mail stamps. All headed for a man in a red suit, and in this case the Dead Letter office did not have a chance to arbitrate. Santa Claus and the postmaster knew how to collaborate. One father dropped his son's scrawled effort into the office only to satisfy a small boy. It was the father, not the boy, who was surprised when an immediate answer came right from where it should—Santa Claus.

Van had no secretary. He just got around the way only Santa Claus can. The mail bags had an extra bulge all because a man had time to spend on the children. Van doesn't confine his enthusiasm entirely upon the children. He has proved a veritable saint to the service man and his family. He has met trains discharging soldiers until we couldn't estimate them. He meets late night trains and those that come in when only strays are out, or very early morning risers. He has given his own bed time and again when no space was to be had at our overcrowded hotels and boarding houses. And when his own quarters overflowed he has slept in his car and rumor says he has laid himself down to sleep in the station. He has piloted many a weary soldier to a cot in a church and brushed away some of the lonesomeness with a cup of coffee or a bite to eat, while the town and its people slept.

Many holidays and many festivities and many occasions have been set aside by men to carry out their sentiments of patriotic or religious devotions. Christmas is different than any other day

in the calendar. It is the beginning of a period in human progress. It is a season when men have a devout appreciation for the underlying forces of existence. It is a time when it is a little bit easier for most of us to lend a helping hand or extend a kindly word. But far too many of us concentrate on the one great day and forget entirely the other 364.

Van does not wait until a climax of good feeling sweeps the world. He exercises that gift, the most powerful among all the factors that hold and will hold our great civilization together—good will to men—right along. For throughout the rest of the year, if he runs according to schedule, he will be awake on his job, or perhaps asleep in the station. Southern Pines has its own personal Santa Claus and that Santa Claus is Van.

For the old Scout who knows how to stretch out a Christmas that will last until our trees are illuminated on whatever evening follows sunset; for our immortal Santa Claus, our perennial Van, a character so steeped in liberality he will continue to make glad the heart of mankind, we offer a tribute of appreciation that comes from a horde of friends. —Helen K. Butler

Sand Box Being Filled Weekly BY WALLACE IRWIN

If I were king, and this were my birthday, how I'd love to hand out some birthday honors. Upon the waistcoat of Charley Picquet I would pin the G. O. S. (Golden Order of the Sandbox). Not that he needs another shining badge of merit. His quiet, patriotic work in the two Carolina theatres has been recognized, officially, with a citation. Well done! The world, great and small goes by the showman's wicket. In times like these he occupies a strategic position. Mr. Picquet's welcoming smile at the Carolina's door brings us together at a time when unity is most needed. His theaters are fine morale builders. More practically, perhaps, they have contributed a lot to the war effort.

Now who's next? Martha P. Hyde, step up and take a bow. Your contributions from Washington are of metropolitan size. None too good for the Pilot, I mean. But newsy, readable copy.

How about decorating Mrs. Bessie Cameron Smith for getting out a paper so lively that I hardly begrudge the weekly dime I spend out of my salary (\$2.50)? ... Maybe this is just another red apple for teacher. So I'll sit down.

The above remarks, you'll notice, are guardedly polite. Tournaments la politesse isn't my original idea. I have borrowed it from my rival columnist, Mr. Westbrook Pegler. Since he went to work for Mr. Hearst, Brother Peg has become an authority on the subject. Last week he opened a column with a lament on the decline of chivalry in public life. The President, he informed us in a hushed, offended voice, is guilty of conduct unbecoming a gentleman; else how could he have been so gauche, unmannerly and—really, you know, not quite—as to criticize America's newspaper columnists, publicly? Blushing for the barnyard vulgarity of "newspaper excrecences", which the President aimed at our columnists, Galahad W. Pegler extolled the beautiful relations that exist between columnist and columnist. O cherish these flowers for their fragrance, blow not upon them, Winter, lest they fade.

Well, that was off Mr. Pegler's chest; from him we had learned that public utterances should be mannerly, even to the point of daintiness. So in his next day's column he opened up barking, "Newspaper excrecences!" at Mrs. Roosevelt's published articles. No book of etiquette can be more confusing. Is it correct to eat with the knife, the fork or the carpet sweeper?

Can it be that Mr. Pegler, like many another constitutional bully, is shocked and surprised when the other fellow hits back? Don't be afraid, honey. Nobody's going to censor you out of print. Just read a lot of other columns, and you'll find about anything can be said, short of passing military information to the enemy. About the only information the enemy gets from our newspapers and periodicals is that somebody's always grouching about something.

The other day the Herald Tribune had a good cartoon. A frenzied Little American was bludgeoning the Russian bear with one hand, and with the other he

was tying a knot in the British lion's tail. The legend ran, "How to start a war with England and Russia." Nazi propagandists are eagerly striving to promote an anti-Ally mania in this country. Remember how they sent out that fake broadcast from an alleged "BBC", a very British voice complaining that England was deeply disappointed in Americans as fighting men. A clever trick, as dirty tricks go. Hitler still struggles to promote disunity in our ranks. One of his more handsome fakes was the rumor that Russia was giving up the war on the eastern front—answered last week by the colossal Russian Drive in Poland.

Believe it or not, I've taken time out to read over Tolstoy's "War and Peace". The volume I have is 1138 pages, and I have a sprained wrist from holding it up in bed. From it I have learned that Ivan Ivanovich is Russian for Jack Johnson. The trouble is that Ivan changes his name every other paragraph. Part of the time he's called Prince Shuffuloffsky, but his friends address him as Offyndeshyaska, which boils down to Pyetrovich Pumm.

No wonder the Russians are so hard to lick. Their enemy never quite knows what to shoot at.

From the Nation's Capital

BY MARTHA P. HYDE

Washington, Jan. 18—It's an All-Star cast for the reception and dance to be held by the North Carolina Society of Washington this Saturday night at the Shoreham Hotel. The new Governor will be there, with Mrs. Cherry. There'll be the vice chairman of the National Democratic Executive Committee, Mrs. Charles W. Tillet—she's a sister, incidentally, of L. T. ("Judge") Avery of Southern Pines. Two NDEC members, Wilkins P. Horton and Miss Beatrice Cobb, will be on hand, as will the Lindsay Warrens, the Kenneth Royalls, Gen. and Mrs. Albert Cox, and from the White House secretariat, Jonathan Daniels, with Mrs. Daniels.

These occasional gatherings of North Carolinians in Washington are typical of the way the Tarheel-bred and Tarheel-born stick together, wherever they may be. They are nice reunions and nice parties, and this week's bids fair to bring out more of a crowd than usual, coming as it does on Inauguration Day. Hearing the President repeat for the fourth time the words, "I do solemnly swear," etc., is what lured the State's new Governor and others from "down home" to the Capital this weekend.

Inasmuch as the Army's top general has acquired a home in the Sandhills, perhaps you'd like to know something about the fam-

ily. What Papa is and what he is doing is an open book. As for the Army's "First Lady," we are told that she has great dignity and simplicity of manner, is quietly efficient, and a charming hostess. She has a soft, low voice which may be traced to her early training as a Shakespearean actress. She is interested in books, music and people, and in all activities which she thinks benefits Army personnel.

Personal item: The engagement was announced this week by Mr. and Mrs. B. A. Tompkins, formerly of The Paddock, Southern Pines, of their daughter, Jean, to Lieut. Henry Wheeler, of Manchester, N. H., a Marine fighter pilot. Joan passed many winters in the Sandhills, riding to hounds and in gymkhanas, and for a time attending The Ark School.

Washington, which has long been noted for turning the heat on, has been having the unique experience of turning it off this past week—on orders from Assistant President "Jimmy" Byrnes. Following his demand for not over 68-degree temperature in Government buildings, to conserve coal, various snoop newspaper folks went around town checking up, and oddly enough, found the most flagrant violator of the edict was the office of the Fuel Conservation Commission. It was nearly 80 in there.

Add Hope Springs Eternal: Bureau of Internal Revenue statisticians estimate that some 20,000,000 Americans will get refunds on 1944 income. The present tax system is so complicated that this many have overestimated the amount they owed Uncle Sam. When that Treasury check comes—Buy War Bonds!

Try baking winter squash without removing the seeds first. The squash will not dry out on the top, and will have a better flavor.

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