

The News-Review

Published Daily Except Sunday by the
News-Review Company, Inc.
Entered as second class matter May 7, 1930, at the post office at
Roseburg, Oregon, under act of March 3, 1879.
CHARLES V. STANTON Editor EDWIN L. KNAPP Manager
Member of the Associated Press, Oregon Newspaper Publishers
Association, the Audit Bureau of Circulations
Represented by WEST-HOLLIDAY CO., INC., offices in New York, Chicago,
San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland, St. Louis.
SUBSCRIPTION RATES—In Oregon—By Mail—Per Year \$9.00, six months \$5.00,
three months \$2.50. By City Carrier—Per Year \$10.00 (in advance), less than
one year, per month \$1.00. Outside Oregon—By Mail—Per Year \$9.00, six
months \$5.00, three months \$2.50.

WEEPING AND WAILING

We get sick and tired of the constant crying by railroad companies about competition, regulation, taxes and decreasing patronage.

Day after day our editorial mail carries "releases" from propagandizing railroad officials wailing about "subsidies" to rival systems of transportation, political and economic pressure, high wages, cost of material and public unconcern. It is obvious that railroads are being squeezed. But how much of the position in which railroads find themselves is due to a "defeatist" attitude on the part of management and a refusal to gear business to changing conditions?

Consider the following statement contained in a recent "release" by one of the leading railroads:

The American railroad industry, as it stands today, presents a critical and paradoxical situation.

It is critical because the political and economic conditions of the nation are forcing the industry steadily down the road of state ownership. Unless the trend is arrested, the day will inevitably come when the railroads can no longer survive as a free enterprise system.

It is paradoxical because the peacetime operating income of the railroads was never higher, its capital expenditures never larger, its equipment and facilities never more modern and its operating efficiency never better, yet despite all these accomplishments the industry finds itself in difficulty.

The political and economic pressure which is slowly strangling the industry is not of recent origin, nor does it represent the action of any individual group dedicated to the task of destroying the industry as a private enterprise system. This pressure is largely the product of general indifference and unconcern upon the part of business and governmental agencies toward the welfare of the railroad industry.

The political and economic conditions which have created the critical situation in which the railroads find themselves may be attributed to several basic factors; namely (1) excessive regulation and taxation, (2) increased cost of materials, supplies and wages and, (3) subsidized competition.

The impact of these forces has brought about an inadequate rate of return upon capital investment, thus largely shutting off from the industry the supply of venture capital. This has made it necessary for the industry to devote an ever-increasing proportion of its net income to the improvements of its plant, which has left a constantly shrinking proportion for the stockholders.

Ain't that too bad?

What business hasn't had a shrinking proportion of profits for stockholders because of regulation, taxation, and increased cost of materials, wages and supplies? Hasn't the whole economic structure been affected by political factors discouraging the investment of risk or venture capital? Are the railroads affected any more or any less by these factors than are other industries or businesses?

They certainly are in no different spot than newspapers. Newspapers are doing more business than ever before — more advertisers, more readers, more income — but they also are more in the red than ever before.

Like the railroads, they have had to replace obsolete equipment. Because they were not allowed to build up financial reserves for replacement purposes, they have had to borrow money for capital investment. They must pay more for newsprint, ink, metal and all other supplies. Wages have been boosted time and again; every production cost has doubled or more than doubled. Consequently, even with more business and more income, profits are down.

But newspapers aren't continually complaining about it. Instead, they are trying to improve their product and their service and make increased volume keep them ahead of creditors.

It's our opinion that if the railroads did less crying about their short profits and did more to improve their service and build public good will, they soon would have less to complain about.

But one theme upon which they harp continually really burns us up. That is the matter of "subsidy." Railroads are forever whining that their truck competition operates on publicly-built highways and roads, while the railroads had to build their own lines.

What is the truth of that statement? It may be true in certain cases but not in all.

The railroad through Oregon and California was built by grants of land—public land—alternate sections for 30 miles on each side of the right of way. Thus the public built the railroads, just as it built the highways.

Maybe we're a trifle prejudiced because of the kind of railroad service—or lack thereof—given this area, but, personally we can't see that the railroads have any more right to complain than has any other type of business or industry.

The way to beat the rap is through the good, old, free enterprise policy of outsmarting, outworking, and out-serving the competition.

If the old railroad barons, who fought each other hammer and tongs, fair and foul, were to hear the present-day whiners they would turn over in their graves.

Editorial Comment

From The Oregon Press

OLD AGE PENSIONERS SHOULD NOT BE MISLED

Governor McKay having signed the old age pension law passed by the Legislature to give the state a workable piece of legislation based on the voters' action in approving the Dunne old age pension legislation last November, the measure is on the way to becoming law. At the same time a move is announced to get some

16,000 names to a petition to refer the legislature-enacted measure to the people and in so doing provide a more generous program. It seems likely that such a petition can be executed and that the measure will go to a referendum. Old age pensioners and those prospective, or others interested in old age assistance provisions would do well to study the law and the lengthy statement made by the Governor when he ap-

Government Game Preserve



Scraps from the MENDING BASKET

By Viachett S. Martin

One morning, my first spring

In Oregon, I was standing near a mud puddle, watching beautiful cloud-pictures reflected in its depth as "galleons" were driven across a blue sky by a wind, when suddenly I was surrounded by a "cloud" of the most exquisite, tiny, blue butterflies. I never shall forget the first sight of them; and I watch each spring for their first appearance. They are of a species called "the Blues".

Thanks to Mr. Vincent D. Roth of the O. S. C. Entomology Department, I have to share with you his first quotes from William Wright's "Butterflies of the West Coast":

"All Lycaenas have the peculiar habit when at rest or when feeding on flowers, of rubbing their wings up and down with a gentle motion, which reminds us of the way flies have of rubbing their feet together: the wings do not touch together, nor do they rub against anything else, and it is unknown what the object of the motion may be. If from any cause the butterfly is disturbed, it at once stops the motion until the distrust is re-

moved."

Mr. Roth then adds: "Butterflies can be told from moths in that they are diurnal, fold their wings together above the back in a vertical position when at rest, and the antennae are thread-like, with a more or less evident 'club' at the end."

"The moths, for the most part, are nocturnal; at rest they either wrap their wings around their body, spread them horizontally, or fold them roof-like but only in rare cases do they have 'clubs' at the ends."

Thank you, Mr. Roth. I looked up Lycaenidae (the family name) in the dictionary; for younger readers may I add the accent is on the "sen" and one butterfly is a Lycaenid—"ly-sen-id." Aren't these lovely little things deserving of being known by their names? I think so!

I'd like a dress in the lovely blue and gray of their wing colors, wouldn't you?

It occurred to me to look in my treasured Boy Scout Handbook: what the compilers packed in three pages about butterflies and moths! Good reading, too!

New Methodist Church Building To Rise At Drain

DRAIN.—Construction of a new Methodist Church here will be under the direction of a church-appointed superintendent, and bids from subcontractors are being entertained.

Construction will be of reinforced concrete piers with pumice block curtain wall. The roof will be open wood trusses over the nave and trussed rafters over the remainder of the building. Plans for the church were drawn by Architect Robert A. Miller, Portland. Miller said the nave will have a seating capacity of 150, with an additional 50 on the balcony over the narthex. The building will also feature a sound-proof mothers' room, and a family room.

Educational facilities will consist of six classrooms so arranged that they may be opened up into two larger rooms. Also included will be a modern kitchen and a social room with fireplace and stage.

First Sub Test

The first modern submarine made its test dive in Staten Island Sound in 1888.

The old people have something real in the measure just signed by the governor. The law does not authorize the state to place a lien against the property of an applicant; it does set up \$50 a person monthly as the present accepted goal within the state's ability to pay it and to strive with in the federal social security regulations; it does in addition provide hospitalization and sick care out of available state funds; it does not require an applicant to sign away or release his home, and it does give the welfare commission authority to waive in cases of need of surviving children or relatives the state's recovery right to the extent of state funds used to aid an old person who dies leaving a material estate.

These other things the Governor plainly brought out in his statement in approving the measure. The Dunne initiative measure having set the old age pension policy of the state and the legislature having provided legisla-

In the Day's News

(Continued from Page One)

skeptical of any promise or proposal the Russians might make." It sounds like it's in the bag, doesn't it?

In fact, it sounds EXACTLY like the Republican talk before election day on the 2nd of last November.

You'd better keep your fingers crossed.

LAST week was Helldorado Week in Las Vegas, and as a part of the big parade the Jemez Indians of New Mexico were invited to do their last resort, to be used - when - everything - else - falls rain dance ritual.

They came and did their stuff. It worked, and rain has fallen every day since in sunny Las Vegas.

I'd like to risk a cynical guess that nobody was more surprised than the Indians themselves.

It takes all kinds of people to make a world note:

The other day in Los Angeles William G. Whately, a movie extra, wearing a goatee as a part of his job, walked past a rooming house on his way to the grocery store.

Suddenly a pistol barked. Whately dropped to the sidewalk with a bullet through his stomach. Police rushed into the rooming house and found one Sylvester Eaton with his head in his hands and a gun on the dresser in front of him.

He told the cops: "Yes, I shot him. I don't know why. I never saw that man before. I don't know why I shot him except that I didn't like his chin whiskers."

How are you going to build a perfect world when you have



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Green District Invites Bids For Modern School

Bids have been invited for the construction of a new school for the Green School District No. 3, Douglas County, Bessie Hurley, clerk, announced. Bids will be received at the existing school building until 7:45 p. m., June 7.

Architect Cleo H. Jenkins, Corvallis, is issuing plans for the work.

The school is to be located on a new site about four miles south of Roseburg. It is to contain nine classrooms, cafeteria, and either offices or a temporary storage room which will be converted into offices later.

All work, including general construction, electrical and mechanical work, will be covered in one contract. The invitation allows alternates for either pumice blocks or concrete blocks to be used for exterior walls.

The building will have a concrete floor covered with asphalt tile, and a composition roof. The interior walls will be finished with plaster, and ceilings with acoustical treatment. Each classroom will have a plastic skylight, designed to admit light but eliminate glare. Pipes for radiant heat will be laid in the floors.

The site will require some grading. A septic tank and sewage disposal field will be required.

Bonds have been voted and sold to finance the project.

Triplet Calves

A Hays, Kansas cow produced triplets, one of which is still living.

to work with material as faulty as that?

A COMMUNIST party leader (name of Arnold Johnson) tells the Senate Judiciary Committee that the party will "go underground" if Congress passes Communist-control legislation.

Well, it's underground anyway, so far as this writer can see. When it is your party policy to do anything—lie, cheat, steal—that will help to achieve your objectives, you're about as far underground as you can get.

The main thing, it seems to me, is to keep Communists out of key departments (such as the military establishment, the State Department, etc.) in our government.

How can we manage that? Here are two good ways:

1. By not appointing them in the first place.
2. By firing them whenever it appears that they are developing Communist leanings.

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