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TELEVISION PROBLEMS

Charles V. Stanton

Widespread local interest in television is evidenced by the forest of antennae growing rapidly on rooftops. While viewers in some localities are having good success in activating their screens directly by signals from distant stations, others are subscribing for the coaxial service recently made available.

Because of the demonstrated interest in television within the county, an article appearing in the current issue of *Oregon Voter* is particularly appropos:

The promoters of television stations and those solicited to invest in them need to observe caution. The Federal Communications Commission has issued a report which shows that a preponderant majority of TV stations are not making a profit. For example, only 16 of 83 stations established since April 1952 were found to be making a profit. Thirty-two reported having sustained financial loss in every month of operation, while 15 believed they were nearing the break-even point.

However, these stations established since the lifting of the three-and-one-half year freeze precluding new stations, had operated an average of only five months. Of the 83 covered in this portion of the report, 69 are affiliated with networks and get an average of 13 per cent of their total revenue from the networks. Losses of the non-profitable stations ranged from \$2,100 to \$14,700 a month. Average profit for the 16 more successful stations slightly topped \$6,000 a month.

The FCC report also covered the 108 stations which operated prior to the freeze. Profits were reported by 94 of these. Patently, these earlier stations were generally located in large population centers. Thus, the report notes that it is the stations of smaller communities which do not fare well. The *Voter* is of the opinion that some of the TV stations being established in secondary cities of Oregon will find the going tough, both as to winning viewers and profits with the programs they can present. To round out comment on the FCC report, it is of interest that since the lifting of the new station ban about 21 months ago, more than 500 outlets have been licensed but only 101 of these had begun operation by August 1953.

Private Capital Willing To Gamble

The last paragraph of the quotation is particularly interesting. It could reasonably be assumed that with a record of unprofitable operation TV would have a hard time finding money for expansion. Yet, despite the fact that the majority of stations are losing money, there is no lack of applications for license. Private capital usually is available for a gamble, provided prospects are for an eventual win.

Television undoubtedly will find its way out of its present unfavorable financial status. Many problems remain to be solved, but solutions will be forthcoming in time.

Small stations probably will be linked into the nationwide networks to provide blanket coast-to-coast coverage, just as has been radio's experience. Networks very probably will furnish a major part of the revenue to small stations, for costs of TV advertising are at present out of the range of the majority of local advertisers. It also is to be expected that TV will find ways and means of reducing its costs to the advertiser.

Another obstacle presents itself, however, demanding additional study. That is the matter of maintaining an audience.

An advertising dollar is wasted if it doesn't reach potential consumers. Studies have shown that the adult audience soon tires of television, except programs dealing with sports and special events. A few TV shows command fair adult audiences, but the number of such shows is limited. TV, however, never lacks an appreciative audience of youngsters. But youngsters are not immediate potential customers.

Until TV can offer programming of a nature to hold adult audiences after the novelty wears off—usually within six months or a year—it will have a hard time holding its advertisers. Already many firms which went into TV advertising on a big scale have either dropped out entirely or have reduced budgets. New firms experimenting with the entertainment and advertising medium, however, have furnished growing revenue to TV annually.

We have no doubt that television will find profitable ground eventually. Many others have the same opinion or not so many millions of dollars would be ready for investment, as indicated by the hundreds of license applications.

Hal Boyle

WASHINGTON (AP)—Senators in the days of the old Romans used to talk over problems of state in their marble baths.

It was a privilege of office and a luxury that set them apart from their constituents, perhaps leading the Roman man in the streets to mutter enviously:

"Why should Senator J. Quintus and his pals get steamcleaned at the taxpayer's expense when I have to patronize a public bath with the riffraff?"

This may be the origin of the saying that "a politician is always in hot water."

Be that as it may, the senators of practically every country since Rome have managed to have their private baths where they can quietly discuss public issues while their tissues are being pummeled by attendants. Senators are a traditional breed, linked by a brotherhood of dignity and position that defies differences of time, language, and politics.

They still do as the Roman senators did, who set the pattern long ago. The U.S. Senate has its private marble baths, too. But it doesn't brag about it. Indeed the senators are downright bashful about mentioning this special plumbing privilege—and the fact they have their own swimming pool.

I discovered the existence of this marble-walled senatorial retreat when I asked how the elder statesmen managed to keep physically fit for their arduous task. Talking over a hot desk all day can be pretty wearing.

"They go to the bath and relax," said a veteran correspondent here. When I expressed an interest in seeing them, he looked shocked and replied:

"Why, you couldn't get in there. That is one place where senators want to be alone, and they are

very jealous of this privilege."

Well, that piqued me as a taxpayer. If Mr. and Mrs. Eisenhower permit people to wander through the White House, why couldn't I at least take a peek at the senatorial bath, particularly if I promised to bring my own soap and not leave the hot water tap dripping?

Easier said than done. But I finally made it after going through four channels, three roadblocks and piercing two iron curtains of verbal objection. I pushed open a swinging door in the Senate office building that said "for senators only" and stood at last within the sanctum sanctorum.

Frankly, I was disappointed. The mysterious baths consisted only of some old-fashioned marble-walled bathing chambers, a small steam room, a tiny gym with a rowing machine and a mechanical horse. There also was a handball court and a swimming pool hardly big enough to accommodate a pair of medium sized Great Dane dogs.

Two unadorned senators were idly toweeling themselves dry. I didn't recognize them. Senators without their spectacles on look pretty much alike.

I started to ask an attendant what kind of exercises the senators favored, but he was reluctant to talk. I couldn't even find out whether they had a special ladies' day for Sen. Margaret Chase Smith of Maine.

Later an old hand around the



Bruce Blossat

There can be no hiding the gravity of the political situation in Italy. Some of the same timidity which afflicts French politicians seems to hold Italian statesmen in its grip.

The recent fall of Premier Pella's government was an unhappy symbol of this affliction. Pella's regime was intended to be temporary, with him serving only until a stronger leader could be found. But he was unable to hang on even that long.

Pella had succeeded Premier De Gasperi, who was weakened by last summer's general elections, and whose government finally collapsed.

Throughout the postwar period De Gasperi, staunch friend of the West, had kept Italy's center parties threaded together in reasonably effective coalition. Anticipating trouble in maintaining a working majority in the Italian parliament, De Gasperi had jammed

through an election reform under which the center would get 65 per cent of the seats if it got 51 per cent of the vote.

In the summer balloting, De Gasperi's Christian Democrats and other center groups appeared, however, to have garnered only 49 per cent of the total. Without the big extra bulge hoped for in parliament, De Gasperi could put together only the most fragile coalition. Not long afterward he gave up.

The irony of this is that it need not have been. For special election commission has been recounting 1,300,000 ballots challenged by the communists. And on the basis of 700,000 recounts so far, it is reported that the De Gasperi government and its allies actually won the election with 52 or 53 per cent majority—more than enough to gain 65 per cent of parliament's seats.

De Gasperi did not push the recount at the start, partly because it was feared the Communists would be the only gainers. Had he been a little less cautious, he would still be presiding today over a fairly strong Italian government.

Now the great fear is that a new election will be necessary and that, again, the Communists will be the only real beneficiaries. Both the left and the right gained at the expense of the center in the June voting.

So Italy's moderate leaders find themselves in a French-style dilemma. They are afraid to face a new voting test, and evidently they are afraid as well to insist that the real results of last year's election be carried over.

This latter fear is most puzzling of all to outsiders. If a recount had shown greater Communist strength, we can be sure a great stir would have followed, with demands for more seats. But the center leaders have not even told the Italian people of the recount tabulations.

They ought to broadcast the revised results far and wide, and demand for themselves the parliamentary seats of some 70 Communist deputies now sitting illegally. Any other course of action should not be necessary. Indeed, any other does not make sense.

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In The Day's News

(Continued from Page One)

appeared before the senate agriculture committee and disclosed that the administration will soon ask congress for authority to use up to a billion dollars worth of surplus farm products to bolster the economies of friendly countries.

This proposed use of government surpluses would be in addition to some 2½ billion dollars worth of surpluses to be kept off the regular markets. These would be used for disaster relief, the federal school lunch program and for emergency stockpiling.

Juggling the surplus, you say? Well, isn't that more intelligent than DESTROYING IT—or letting it rot or be ruined by the rats?

Why all this market stuff? That, I'm sure, is more important than what the crystal ballers are saying, and I think it's more important than what the government proposes to do. Whether or not we have a depression will depend chiefly on what the PEOPLE of our country think and do. If they think hopefully and act hopefully I'm pretty certain we'll come safely through the necessary period of readjustment from a dozen years of continuous war boom.

Off-ag-in-on-ag-in-note: The Indian command in Korea now is siding with the communists in stating that release of the unrepatriated war prisoners would violate the Korean truce terms.

It says this morning they can't be released before their fate is decided by a peace conference or by agreement between the allies and the communists.

What's happening? India's Nehru is basically a head-in-the-clouds do-gooder. India's General Thimayya is an able, clear-headed, straight-thinking realist.

Nehru OUTRANKS Thimayya.

In Berlin the Big Four reach their first compromise and settle WHERE they'll hold their foreign ministers' conference. The first session will be in the Western zone for a week. The second session will be held in the Russian zone for a week and then they'll move back into the Western zone for a week. And so on.

It isn't as complicated as it sounds. All this here-today-and-there-tomorrow business can be accomplished merely by picking up their briefcases and WALKING ACROSS THE STREET.

And—Silly as it sounds — IT'S BETTER THAN SHOOTING.

Senate's Organizational Procedure Blocks Morse's Try For Committee Seats

By A. ROBERT SMITH

WASHINGTON—Sen. Wayne Morse has lost another bid to be returned to the Armed Services and the Labor committees on which he served when he sat as a Republican. The reason for the outcome has less to do with Morse being "disciplined" by his ex-party than with the less understandable matter of organizational procedure in the U. S. Senate.

The nub of the dispute, which began a year ago, is that Morse refused to receive his committee assignments in the fashion that has long been the custom of the Senate and the Senate in turn refused to change its ways to accommodate Morse.

The result is that Morse has to serve now on the relatively minor Public Works and the District of Columbia committees. He continues to have all the privileges he previously enjoyed on the Senate floor where final debates and votes are conducted.

The critical point in the whole protracted affair is that while Morse bolted his party, as did Senators George W. Norris, Robert M. LaFollette Sr., Henrik Shipstead and Ernest Lundeen before him, Morse was not willing—as were they—to tie in with one party or the other to obtain committee assignments.

Norris, a Republican turned Independent, continued willingly to receive his committee assignments from the GOP. So did LaFollette, the Progressive, and Shipstead, the Farmer-Labor party senator. Lundeen, a Republican turned Farmer-Labor, accepted committee assignments from the Democrats.

Invitation Spurned

But not Morse. When Congress organized last January a few months after Morse had turned Independent, the GOP invited him to indicate the committees on which he preferred to serve. This is customary preliminary to making assignments. Morse spurned the invitation.

Nevertheless, Senate Republicans put Morse on their list to continue serving on the Armed Services committee—but they dropped him from Labor—and the list went to the Senate for approval.

Morse would have none of it. He told the Senate he would accept no assignments from either party, but would demand them from the Senate as a whole as Senate rules provide. This meant each senator would vote by ballot, a system no one could recall ever having been employed. But the method for expediting the vote worked disastrously against Morse. The "ballot" used was a list of all the Republicans and Democrats already assigned to committees. To vote against Morse, one simply turned in an unmarked list. To vote in favor of Morse on his old committees, a senator had to scratch out the name of a colleague previously assigned and substitute Morse's name—not by secret ballot, but for the record. Morse was snubbed under.

The late Sen. Robert A. Taft opposed this procedure, rule book or not, arguing that it would allow the majority party in the Senate to control the assignment of each member of the minority party, therefore stacking the committees as they chose.

Cordon Opposes Morse's Plan

By the customary procedure each party decides which of its own members shall sit on which committee, and then each party agrees to the other's list. This is rigidly a two-party procedure.

Morse's failure to win his old committee seats was essentially a failure to change the Senate procedure from a strict two-party formula to a multi-party pattern. Senators from both sides of the aisle feared the implication of a change.

Sen. Walter George (D-Ga.), dean of the Senate, last year dur-

Ruse Tricks Tot Into Opening Bathroom Door

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (AP)—How do you get a 2-year-old boy to open the bathroom door after he has locked himself in?

Mrs. Donald E. Martin, wife of the county attorney, and five of their seven children pleaded with little Donald B. Martin for half an hour Saturday.

"Hub," was Donald's only response as he splashed water on the floor.

Finally 8-year-old Mike had an idea. "Oops," exclaimed Mike. "I spilled my jelly beans."

The bathroom door flew open immediately.

Strike Of Electricians Hits British Operations

LONDON (AP)—One-day strike by members of Britain's Communist-dominated electrical trades union Monday hit atomic projects, airports, power stations and other strategic sites. Union leaders said the first reports indicate that nearly all of the 30,000 electricians ordered out would obey the strike for higher pay.

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