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HANDCUFFED CHILDREN

Charles V. Stanton

We are asked by the Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Divisions of the U. S. Department of Labor to inform you that if you are an employer, and you hire any young people who may be graduated from our high school this year, you better watch your step.

The Department of Labor, of course, doesn't word its warning quite so bluntly, but it puts a good deal of stress on the fact that you may be subjected to heavy fines and possible prison sentences should you be careless while giving some young boy or girl a break in getting started on training for a skilled job.

The Department of Labor has furnished us with a "news release" pointing out that that Fair Labor Standards Act (Federal Wage-Hour Law) bans employment of children under 16 years old in (1) manufacturing and processing occupations, (2) public messenger service and (3) in occupations in workrooms or work places where goods are manufactured or processed.

The Act, it is stated also prohibits employment of children under 18 in certain occupations in logging and sawmills, in mines, as motor vehicle driver or helper, operation of power-driven woodworking or metal punching machines, in or about plants making or storing explosives, operating elevators and power-driven hoisting apparatus, jobs on or about certain power-driven machinery in bakery plants, slaughtering, meat packing or rendering plants.

Wage Scales Regulated

Employment of boys under 16 and girls under 18 to work on goods or materials covered by a government contract in excess of \$10,000 is prohibited by the Public Contracts Act.

The law requires payment of at least 75 cents an hour, with time-and-one-half for all overtime after 40 hours, or the minimum scale, if in excess of 75 cents, in organized occupations.

Any violation can draw a fine up to \$10,000 or imprisonment for six months. Damages of \$10 per day can be assessed if a boy or girl is employed on government contract work in violation of the regulations.

So now you've been warned. We've complied with the request from the Department. And while conveying this information we've been doing a slow burn.

Rules and regulations pertaining to employment of young people provide us with one of our pet peeves.

We have no quarrel with provisions for safety of workers of any and all ages, nor rules and regulations pertaining to protection of health. But, while these factors theoretically form the basis for the employment limitations reported by the Department of Labor, the real motive is founded on fear.

Would Reduce Labor Supply

Fear was created (and with good reason) during the Great Depression. Organized labor conceived the idea then of reducing the labor supply. Make-work, featherbedding and other tactics were employed to stretch out employment. Chief competition for jobs, however, comes annually from the thousands of young people graduating from high schools and colleges. By limiting the work available to these young graduates, competition is reduced.

Other restrictive measures include work permits and apprentice controls and supervision designed to discourage employers from using the labor of youngsters. The nuisance created by red tape stops most employers from utilizing youngsters on the many odd jobs at which they could be usefully and gainfully employed.

So, instead of encouraging our youngsters and young people to earn their own money while building habits of industry, we put every possible obstacle in their way.

We live in a state in which the lumber industry is the chief support of our economy. But we so restrict employment of young people in that industry that a man can't start learning a skilled occupation until his whiskers turn grey. And, while we restrict the field in which young people may find gainful employment we wait about the tide of juvenile delinquency.

If we would free ourselves from needless fears, giving youngsters and young people the opportunities they deserve in employment, the delinquency problem would take care of itself.

Hal Boyle

NEW YORK (AP)—You think you have problems, dear reader?

Listen to a man with a real problem: After 20 years of reporting wars, club meetings and other small brush fires, I went to a national furniture display this week. I came back with a story about a new furniture item of interest to millions of young Americans. Frankly, it's about a new kind of baby potty.

With this preamble, let me take you behind the scenes of a giant industry and show you a newspaperman's problem they don't prepare you for in journalism school—or portray in Hollywood. Let's do it in dialog:

Editor: "And where have you been all day—if I'm not too bold?"

Boyle: "Down at the furniture mart in the armory."

Editor: "Find any comfortable sofas to loaf on?"

Boyle (saluting): "Please, Sir, I found a story. It is a story that has everything—adventure, money, a struggle against odds, money and success, motherhood and millions upon millions of little children."

Editor (yawning): "What, no dogs in it? I like human interest stories about dogs—particularly small dogs."

Boyle: "Yes, sir, I know that. I looked for a small dog, but you know how touchy the furniture display people are about admitting animals. But this story has a lot of baby psychology in it."

Editor (cautiously impressed): "Hmm m. What's this big front page story all about?"

Boyle (drawing deep breath): "Sir, it is the heart-warming drama of a former high school

coach who yearned to find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow and the... here's the switcheroo... he did find it—in a baby potty."

Editor: "Come here." Let me smell your breath."

Boyle: "I'm not kidding. Baby potties have stood still for decades. This guy came up with a new revolutionary baby potty."

Editor: "Oh, no, a baby potty story?... Oh, No, No!"

Boyle: "This guy's name is Paul La Hue, aged, 40, of Indianapolis. He used to coach basketball and baseball and teach science at a high school in Union City, Ohio. Then he went into the Navy. Then he went to work for a drug firm. He got the idea for this new baby potty while sitting in pediatricians' offices listening to mothers complain about the problems of housebreaking their babies."

Editor: "And so?"

Boyle: "So he worked four years to perfect the better potty. It cost \$50,000 to get three patents and tool up and produce his first potty. Now he is selling them all over the world, and expects to overturn the whole baby potty in-

dustry with it."

Editor: "Not that I'm at all interested, but what is new about this product?"

Boyle: "It is a lightweight, rubberized plastic job, but the main thing about it is that it is a dual purpose trainer, suitable for both little men and little women."

Editor (belligerently): "Why the regular old-fashioned potty is, too. What's so new about that?"

Boyle: "I'm glad you asked that question, Sir. Little boys are sometimes harder to train than little girls. Mr. La Hue has a theory that this is because they regard the standard, or sit-down potty, as not altogether satisfactory. He says they regard it as sissy and may even be psychology scarred if the situation isn't corrected. His solution is a small vertical plastic shield which can be attached to the back of the potty and provide a more... uh... masculine atmosphere."

Editor: "Are you making this all up?"

Boyle: "Sir, this has been looked into by the American Medical Assn., and not found wanting. It has been commended by Parents' Magazine. Mr. La Hue has sold \$100,000 worth of them in a few months, and—"

Editor: "But potties... potties. Won't people find a story about potties... uh... uh... objectionable?"

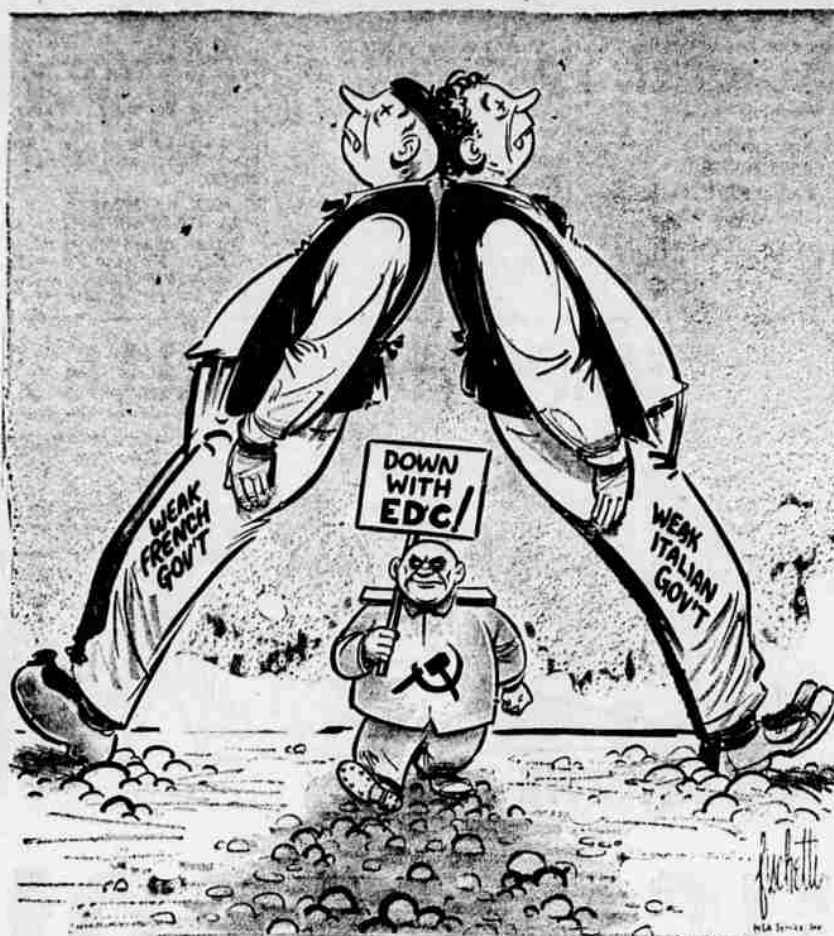
Boyle: "What people, sir? A baby potty isn't un-American. It is as much a fact of life as babies are. Both are found in the happiest homes. I know one sentimental couple who, after their children were raised, painted the baby potty red and grew flowers in it."

Editor (crossly): "Cut the nonsense, and go write your story. But do me a favor, will you? The next time I send you down to the furniture mart, just stick to the sofa department and take a nice long nap."

Well, dear reader, that's my problem. If you read this story, and write a letter to the editor saying you don't like this story—well, his old ulcer will erupt like Vesuvius.

And you know what will happen to me? I'll be sent to Alaska and have to spend the rest of the winter wading through wilderness snowdrifts hunting up human interest stories about small lost sled dogs, abandoned infant polar bears, and wee baby walrus that can't find their way home.

Arch of Triumph



Bruce Biassat

Veterans Questioned On Effects Of Smoking

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government is questioning 300,000 World War I veterans to try to

determine whether smoking has any connection with cancer or other ailments to health.

The U.S. Public Health Service and Veterans Administration said Friday questionnaires were being sent to the veterans, all holders of government life insurance.

They are being asked to cooperate by supplying information on their use of tobacco. The data will be filed and studied when death benefits are claimed on their policies.

Dr. Harold Dorn of the National Institutes of Health said some conclusions probably will be possible in about two years and a detailed analysis in four or five years.



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Five Flood Control Projects In Northwest

WASHINGTON (AP)—Five of the 45 flood control and navigation projects the Army Engineers expect to plan in line with the President's budget are in the Northwest. The five and planning costs are: Multi-purpose dams: Ice Harbor \$20,000, Washington; Hills Creek Reservoir, \$125,000, Oregon. Flood control: Colfax, \$25,000, and Eagle Gorge reservoir, \$170,000, Washington; Columbia River system, \$75,000, Idaho.

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