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PARTY CONVENTIONS

Charles V. Stanton

Yesterday, in this column, I mentioned briefly my opinion that political parties should conduct conventions as supplements to our primary election system. I believe the subject to be worth further elaboration.

On several previous occasions I have expressed my dissatisfaction with our present system, which, I believe, has rendered political parties impotent. Present primary election laws open the door to self-starters, demagogues and incompetents. A political party must accept any candidate who can win nomination. The party has no discipline over the candidate. Party platforms aren't worth the paper they're written on, because no candidate owes other than moral allegiance to the party, and can follow any course which, at the moment, may be expedient.

Consequently our political parties have lost character and personality. They follow the line of expediency. They lack continuity of program and effort.

The breakdown of party lines is amply demonstrated by the growing army of independent voters. Although voters are registered with one or the other of the major political parties, election results show that only a minority have party allegiance. They vote for the man, rather than the party, because the party, under our present system, is a title rather than a force.

Could Regain Influence

It would not be difficult, I believe, for our political parties to regain their personalities and influence. To accomplish this result they must establish some system whereby they can adopt programs and platforms based on more than expediency. Voters would have something of a substantial nature on which to express opinions. Candidates who failed to measure up to party objectives could be disciplined through refusal by the parties to sanction their future appeals to voters.

This could be done, I believe, through a modified revival of the party convention system. Precinct committeemen and committeewomen would meet in county conventions at which candidates would be screened, policies considered, platforms recommended. State committeemen and committeewomen would go through the same process at the state level, leading up to national conventions.

It would not be necessary to eliminate competition on party tickets. The conventions, however, could submit to the voters names of candidates endorsed as worthy of the party label. There might be several aspirants for the same office. All candidates subscribing to party policies and considered capable for the offices sought could be recommended. Thus there would be no interference with the primary system.

Publicity Would Result

The self-starter would still have his opportunity. The maverick and the demagogue could get on the ballot.

But the voter would know that only those candidates able to win endorsement at local, state and national conventions were considered to be responsible to party organizations.

Publicity resulting from conventions would serve to eliminate many of the incompetents.

We frequently find screwballs and crackpots on our ballots. Because they may be only slightly known and, as a result of contests between several others for the same office, may get enough votes for nomination. Such situations would be much less apt to happen if conventions were held ahead of primaries, giving voters an opportunity to size up the candidates, read their publicity, and learn the recommendations of party leadership.

The modified convention system also would stimulate greater interest at the precinct level, where the most work is needed. It also could serve to promote a higher caliber among candidates by bringing out able men and women who would not voluntarily seek office.

It seems to me that unless something is done soon to restore party character and influence, our two-party system, which is the foundation of our type of government, will become a thing of the past.

Hal Boyle

NEW YORK (AP) — Typewriter tattle:

A minor leap year victory for the ladies this season has been the opening of what is claimed to be the first beauty parlor at an American racetrack.

It's at Hialeah, outside Miami. Men have been clipped — and spent a lot of money on close shaves — at racetracks for centuries. But the thought of a woman journeying to a bangtail circuit to get her bangs trimmed is, well, a bit on the odd side.

I asked a Florida informant to check up on the progress of the experiment. His report has just arrived, scribbled on the margins of several old racing forms.

It seems the idea for the beauty parlor originated with Vincent Pelegri, of the Philadelphia firm of Vincent and Joseph. He figured that such a shop might provide a refuge for wives bored with watching their husbands bet the family budget on the ponies.

The beauty parlor caught on at once. Vincent has a staff of four now.

But he quickly learned one thing. The little woman who accompanies hubby to the racetrack isn't bothered by boredom. She wants some action, too.

Vincent is kept busy running upstairs placing bets on the next race for the ladies sitting under the dryers. He has thrown away his stock of women's magazines. The girls prefer to study the Racing Form, the Green Sheet, the Horsemen's Journal. They don't gossip about clothes, men or babies. They swap tips on horses.

The beauty parlor staff is fascinated by the betting habits of the women. Some are inveterate students who wouldn't think of laying their money on a horse unless they know his ancestry for three generations — and what he ate for breakfast. Others depend on feminine intuition, dreams, or merely close their eyes and stick a hairpin through the racing program. The system works out about the same.

The ladies, especially the lunch players, are addicted to daily doubles. Vincent recalls one who won a $1,000 double after finding a 1955 penny on the way into the track. She bet on the No. 5 horses in the first two races.

The "dream" players don't depend merely on their own dreams. They'll bet on anybody's dreams, including those of their chambermaid at the hotel.

Vincent's unusual salon has succeeded so well he now plans to open another beauty parlor soon at one of the northern tracks. It seems he's been getting a lot of good tips himself.

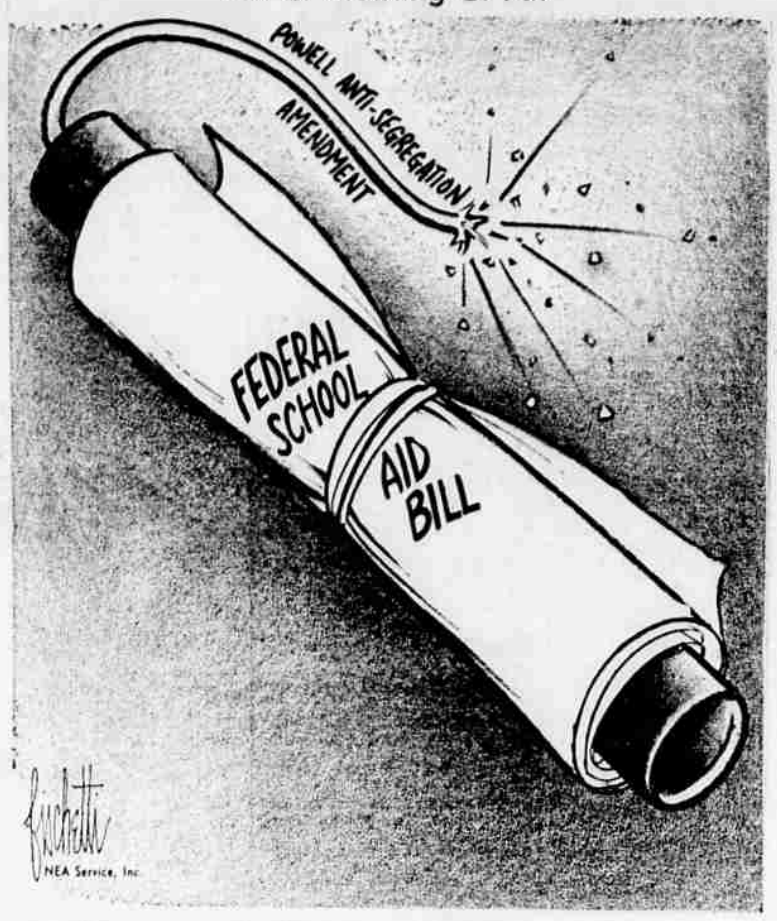
GOP Seeking Candidate To Oppose Rep. Green

PORTLAND (AP) — The Republicans still are searching for someone to oppose Democratic Rep. Edith Green in the Third District (Multnomah County).

Two prospective Republican candidates withdrew Tuesday. They are Claude M. Snow, Portland insecticide manufacturer, and Tom B. Purcell, Gresham publisher. Snow previously had said he would run, and Purcell had said he was thinking about it.

One new prospect was mentioned. He is Phillip J. Roth, Portland attorney and former state representative. Roth said he was available.

All or Nothing at All



LENTEN GUIDEPOSTS

ORDEAL BY WATER

By MARILYN Bell

The 16-year-old Canadian girl who conquered Lake Ontario. With comment by her coach, Gus Ryder

It was raining pitchforks. There was a flash of lightning, and I saw rain sweep across the pier in waves. Florence Chadwick was waiting for the storm to let up. Miss Chadwick was going to try swimming from Youngstown, New York, across Lake Ontario, to Toronto, Canada. I was going to try the swim, too.

"What time is it?" I asked my trainer, Gus Ryder.

Gus said it was already past the time for the swim to start; it was 11 p.m.

Even while he was speaking, there was a little clapping from the crowd. Miss Chadwick went quickly down to the black water and slipped in. There was another clapping at the sight of her long, beautiful strokes. 80 to the minute. Shortly afterwards I plunged in, too.

Slows Down

(Gus Ryder speaking: An hour out, Chadwick slowed down. She began to pace herself, and Marilyn passed her.

(Marilyn's own team was strung out in a column in front of her. I was nearest, in a lifeboat. With me were 13-year-old Pete Willinsky, whose father owned our power boat; Jack Russell, who manned the life boat; and a reporter from the Toronto Star. Lightning flashes lit the pilot yacht up ahead. In it were Marilyn's parents; a doctor; more reporters, with two-way radios; and some observers.

(And in back of us, out in the water, came little Marilyn.

(She seemed just a child. She was so small, all alone there in the blackness, dreading the night and the cold and the eels. She hated the eels.

32 Miles

(I remembered the statement I'd made to the press before the swim: that Marilyn could outlast Chadwick and would conquer the tricky currents and winds, the cold, the sheer size of the lake. From Youngstown, New York, to Toronto is 32 miles. The English Channel swim is only 22 miles.)

Marilyn speaking: About 2:00 a.m., I think it was, I looked up from the water. To the west, and behind me, I could see the tiny green light of Florence Chadwick's boat. For a moment I thought it had stopped. Ahead I could see the light from Gus' boat. But it seemed far away, and I suddenly felt alone and sort of sorry for myself. Gus had warned me about this.

"It isn't the lake; it's your own mind that will be your real enemy," he had said.

(Gus Ryder speaking: I looked at my watch. It was after four. Marilyn had been swimming for more than five hours. The reporter came over to me with word that Florence Chadwick was in trouble. She was sick, exhausted. She had been pulled out.

(I decided not to say anything about Chadwick yet.)

Feels an Eel

Marilyn again: Just before dawn I felt the first eel. For a minute I thought I was going to panic. Then for some strange reason, a scene popped into my mind. It was just before the swim, and my music teacher at school had taken me aside and said, "Now when you're out there alone on the lake, don't pray to make the shore, just pray to swim for one more hour."

I said aloud to the eel, "Well, I can't swim for one more hour with you latched to me," and with loathing I reached down and squeezed his mouth until the suction broke, and I flung him away from me.

(Gus Ryder: By early morning all of Canada knew who Marilyn Bell was. Broadcasts told how she was 16, weighed 119 pounds, was blonde, stood only 5' 2" high, went to high school and sang in the choir at the United Church on Sundays. They told how she had already beaten Chadwick, but they said that she was tiring.)

Felt Stronger

Marilyn: For a little while after I learned that Florence Chadwick had given up, I felt stronger. I looked up and I could see Toronto in the distance. I was so sleepy.

At five in the afternoon I hit a low ebb. I began swimming mechanically. I didn't really know what I was doing.

For a while I was sure I would have to quit. I couldn't feel anything from the waist down.

(Gus Ryder: I looked closely at Marilyn. She didn't look well. She had only two miles to go. I drew very close. She was just barely dragging one arm after the other. I saw her rest between strokes. Toronto was so close. "Marilyn! Marilyn!" I called. And I held up a sign.)

Unconscious

Marilyn: I opened my eyes. And I realized that I had been swimming, unconscious. I just had to stop.

From the distance I heard Gus again, and I looked up and saw his sign: "For the crippled kids!"

• Poor Gus. Poor kids at the pool. Gus and I teach crippled children to swim. I put my head down and started out again. I wasn't praying for an hour; I was praying for just 15 minutes. I said over and over to myself . . . If you stop. . . one more time. . . you. . .will. . . never. . .never. . .start. . .again.

(Gus Ryder: Marilyn wasn't swimming in a straight line now. She was responding to my calls as if she were a robot. There were hundreds of small craft circling about.

(Marilyn was almost to the breakwater. She was swimming jerkily, automatically. Now we could hear the conversations of the people as they crowded down.

(Then rockets began to burst, and a great cheer broke like thunder from the shore. Marilyn touched the breakwater.)

TOMORROW — Harold R. Medina, widely known judge, tells how, during the famed trial of Communists at which he presided, prayer brought him a renewal of strength and helped him conquer an old fear.

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In The Day's News

(Continued From Page One)

day I noted an indistinct mass approaching down the camino. It turned out to be a burro and his load. His load happened to be sugar cane. Two huge bundles of it — one on each side — had been piled on him. I wouldn't even attempt a guess as to the weight of this cargo, but it must have amounted to at least 100 kilos. (Down here, you don't speak in terms of pounds; you speak of kilos. A kilo is about 2.2 pounds.) So the sturdy little rascal must have been carrying around 200 pounds of sugarcane.

His owner was perched on top of the pile. Mexicans of the peon class tend to be slight in weight — perhaps because it takes food to produce avoirdupois, and food is never too plentiful in the lower echelons of the Mexican population. But this one was an exception. He was plump, to say the least.

But the burro was trotting along as unconcernedly as if he had no load at all. The burro's business is to take whatever comes in stride.

He isn't lacking, however, in personality.

An American friend — down here the roads are full of Americans, all of them traveling about the same route and encountering each other at some place more or less every day, so one makes friends readily — was telling me about one of these little characters he had seen the day before.

The burro he said, was standing beside the pavement. No load. Not nibbling at the sparse grass that grows along the asphalt. Just standing there. Presumably thinking.

As the American's car approached, the burro whirled so that its rear, or offensive, end faced the intruder. Its tail was switching. Its ears were laid back. It looked over its shoulder with an expression that said as plainly as speech could have done: "You and your smelly go-carts, coming down here and upsetting our peaceful world! If you dare to touch one hair of me, I'll kick the stuffing out of you!"

To that, I'll add one of my own. In the mountains of the state of Jalisco the other day a procession of glittering American cars was winding down a curving road. From a barranca at the side, down a steep and rocky trail, a pack train was emerging. The burros were heavily loaded. At the rear end was an old and gray one, wise with the wisdom of his years and steeped in the traditions of Old Mother Mexico.

He paused. For several minutes he stood there surveying this column of Americano monsters that derived their sustenance from an evil-smelling liquid called gasoline instead of from the grass and the leaves and the weeds and the whatnot provided by nature for her children.

Then he raised his head, twisted his ears and brayed. It was a derisive bray, with a note of contempt in it. Having thus given vent to his feelings, the old burro took up again the burden of his job and moved on after his fellows down the winding trail.

I'm sure I could read his mind. He was saying to himself:

"These snorting, honking Americano diablos! They can go roaring along on the pavimento, covering more kilometres in a minute than I can make in una hora. But what could they do out in the hills?

"No! No! Mi viejo! There will always be burros in Mexico."

Congress Chat

By HARRIS ELLSWORTH, M. C. 4th Oregon District

Every year, Congress must enact 13 regular annual appropriation bills plus two or three supplemental appropriation bills. There is usually at least one measure called an urgent deficiency appropriation bill.

While this session of Congress has not handled much other legislation, thus far, it has made an all time record for speed in getting out the first of the regular money bills. The House has passed two and sent them to the Senate. Before this letter appears in print, another will have been acted upon. Already passed are the "Treasury-Post Office" bill, and the one for the "Department of Interior and Related Agencies." Next will be a catch-all bill called "General Government Matters" which will be followed in a few days by bills for Health Education and Welfare Department and for the so-called "Independent Offices" which bill includes money for the numerous government commissions such as the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Federal Communications Commission.

Several items in the bill for the Department of Interior and related agencies are of particular interest to us. That bill provides money for the Forest Service and for the Bureau of Land Management (O & C Administration). Some substantial increases were given the Forest Service. An additional $1,600,000 is provided for preparing timber sales; $470,000 more will step up care of camp grounds and $465,250 more will provide improvements on the Forests. The bill included the full authorization of $24,000,000 for Forest Service access roads, and $4,460,000 for access roads on O & C lands. It should be noted, however, that the access road money for the O & C lands is really not a Federal appropriation at all. It is money which the counties are entitled to receive under the O & C law but which they have agreed should be spent for access roads so that the proper level of timber harvest on the lands can be maintained.

At long last, the necessity for a good construction program for forest timber access roads is becoming recognized both by the members of the Appropriations committee and by the Committee on Highways. The first big "break through" was in the Highway Act of 1954 when the authorization for such roads was increased to $24,000,000 and made on a three year basis. That sum has actually been appropriated each of the three years. The 1954 authorization has run out. It will be necessary to have an access roads authorizing section in the big highway construction bill which will be up for final consideration soon.

I have discussed the timber access road problem with the Chairman of the Highways sub-committee and have written all members of that Committee setting forth my views. I guess I am not much of a politician because in attempting to work this problem out with the Committee, I have used sound reasonable figures as worked out by the Forest Service. In other words, a careful survey reveals that $25,000,000 a year for five years will provide roads enough to bring the forest cut up to the sustained yield capacity. That is about the amount of money that can be efficiently expended. So that is my recommendation. But access roads provide jobs which makes this a pretty potent political subject. The Oregon Senators went before the Committee and asked for $50,000,000 a year! Could be things like that which caused our Federal budget to get out of balance in years past.

Peter Edson

WASHINGTON — (NEA)— Immediately after the President sustained his heart attack last September, the concensus was that almost any Democrat could win in a walk. The succeeding five months have changed this estimate considerably, for many reasons.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, the Republicans are better off financially. Their $100-a-plate "Salute to Eisenhower" dinners Jan. 20 raised over five million dollars net. They are finding other money flowing more freely. In contrast, the Democrats have had no such windfall and are hard put for money.

In 1952 the Republicans outcollected and outspent the Democrats in the ratio of about $3 to $2. The difference may be even greater this year.

So if presidential elections "can be bought"—in the sense that the party which spends the most on publicity, advertising, broadcasts and travel wins the election—why then the GOP will go into the campaign with an advantage.

In addition, President Eisenhower's 1956 program has now been laid on the line for Congress. It offers marked changes from the Eisenhower program of 1953-56. Few people realize how great these changes are. Every change has been made for a shrewd political appeal to voters.

THE BILLION-DOLLAR soil bank plan has the potential of giving the average commercial farmer between $300 and $1500 a year in cashable subsidy—first money payable before election. The President also recommends a rural development program. It would mean more money for low-income farmers.

On federal school aid, the President has raised his sights from 66 million dollars a year for three years to 250 million a year for five years. This would be in grants.

In the health field, it is proposed that federal grants for medical care of public assistance recipients be raised to an equal dollar-for-dollar of state funds.

An "area assistance program" is proposed to help distressed communities experiencing excessive, chronic unemployment.

New housing aids are proposed for people in these depressed areas and for people displaced by slum clearance. Older people would be given preference in an expanded public housing program.

INCREASED SOCIAL SECURITY benefit payments are proposed.

Credit terms have already been liberalized for small business concerns and disaster victims.

The special message on the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act was designed to appeal to minority groups.

All these proposals have a definite political appeal to people suffering from some hardship. They are the gripers. They are the ones, in American politics, that tend to vote against the administration in power, whether the administration is responsible for their hard luck or not.

Copco Big Bend Dam Licensed

WASHINGTON (AP)— The Power Commission has been issued an amended license to California-Oregon Power Co. (Copco) for the proposed Big Bend No. 2 hydroelectric development on the Klamath River in Oregon.

The amendments to the nine million dollar project's 50-year license, first issued in January 1914, provide:

1. A change in date, to make it effective March 1, 1916. This was done because the company complied with a condition that it enter an agreement with the Interior Department concerning use of surplus water from the federal Link River Dam.

2. Inclusion of a stipulation by the company with the Klamath River commissions of California and Oregon to provide "further protection of the water users."

At the time the original license was issued, Copco also was directed by the commission to file applications within six months for continued operation of five existing hydro electric developments on the Klamath in California and Oregon.

Thus far Copco has not accepted the license for the Big Bend project, though the commission did not link that with its order concerning the five existing projects.

Copco asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia to review the commission's action and the court remanded the case to the commission and raised several questions.

Tuesday's supplemental opinion and order said the commission answered those questions. In effect, it affirmed its previous position.

EXAMINER NAMED

SALEM (AP)—Dr. John D. Crump, Ontario, was appointed to the State Board of Dental Examiners Wednesday by Gov. Elmo Smith.

He succeeds Dr. T. M. Birkbeck, Milton-Freewater, who is retiring after 15 years on the board.

English-Style Alphabet Adopted By Red China

LONDON (AP) — Communist China has decided to scrap the ancient Chinese character language of 250,000 ideographs — dating back thousands of years — for an easy-to-learn, English-style alphabet of 30 letters.

The Communists thus are embarking on a monumental gamble to modernize their nation and seize the minds of its 600 million people.

A simplified phonetic alphabet would help wipe out illiteracy, grease the grinding gears of Red indoctrination and simplify the education of technical experts needed to turn China into a modern industrial state.

It has all the letters of the English alphabet except "V" and five other letters "corresponding to sounds common in the Chinese spoken language."

The five added letters are mainly for sibilant Chinese pronunciations such as "zh" and "sh." Pronunciation of some consonants has been changed to accommodate the Chinese tongue. "Y" has been added as a sixth vowel with a different pronunciation than the English.

Coos County Chamber To Go After Ammo Depot

COQUILLE (AP) — The Coos County Chamber of Commerce Wednesday decided to seek the naval ammunition depot if it is to be moved from Port Chicago, Calif.

Port Chicago officials, wanting land for industrial expansion, are urging the Navy to move the depot.

Manager Howard Maple of the Chamber of Commerce is to go to Washington, where the House Armed Services Committee is hearing Port Chicago arguments for moving the depot. Maple will advise the committee Coos County would welcome the depot and its 960 civilian employes.

Reader Opinions

Norblad Plans To Push For Limiting Of Speed

WASHINGTON, D. C. — (To The Editor) — I today received from the clipping bureau your editorial of February 7th, regarding my speed proposal. In there you indicate that many drivers feel that they could have reserve power and speed in the car as a safety factor. I certainly agree with you regarding this. However, I set the limitation at seventy miles an hour as the speed limits throughout the United States are generally sixty miles and lower with only three states (Oklahoma, Wisconsin, and one other) having a sixty-five mile an hour speed limit. That was the reason why I added the extra five mile allowance. It's of course very difficult to judge the public pulse and feeling from mail which comes across your desk, but it's interesting to note that I received approximately three hundred and fifty letters on the subject, and all but four were very highly commendatory. Of the four, three were from boys who indicated that they were eighteen years of age and living in the Kansas City area. I have forgotten the home address of the fourth. Included in this mail were several letters from Europe and one in Spanish from Cuba.

Frankly, I'm not satisfied that that is the answer to "death on the highway" but I do feel that it's very definitely something for the nation to consider. I appreciate that there are many other factors such as physical handicaps, alcohol, mechanical failures, etc. that do cause our tragic accidents, but at least I am attempting to offer one proposal to the American people that might be of some assistance.

Without regards to the merits of my proposal, I fully intend to put tremendous emphasis on highway safety should I become elected Governor. I think Arthur Langley has done a very good job of it in the State of Washington.

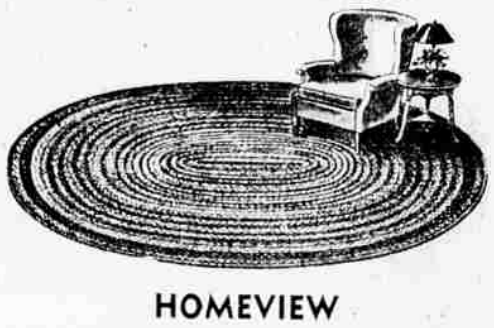
WALTER NORBLAD
Washington, D. C.

Cancellation Of City Library Tax Proposed

ROSEBURG — I note that the city has permitted the city library to consolidate with the county library in the courthouse. Why not cancel the city tax for the library? We taxpayers have to pay both the city and county tax, if our property is inside the city limits. This is a sort of double taxation—and, I assure you, with the city bond issues, school bond issues, new sewer assessments (to come) that some of us home owners are just about doubled in two.

Sallie Myers
Roseburg, Ore.

many have asked and now we have them in stock



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