

The News-Review

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ELECTION PEEVES

By Charles V. Stanton

The recent primary election affords me opportunity to comment again on a couple of my pet peeves.

For one thing, I believe that our primary system should be supplemented by party conventions.

For another, I think it is high time we were revising procedures to make our elections less complicated and confusing, and that we took advantage of automation to speed up tabulation of returns.

Fortunately, voters at the last election nominated candidates who may be expected to represent their respective parties faithfully. We might put a question mark after the name of Senator Morse, who has shown that he has little respect for party lines, but, otherwise, most of the candidates nominated for county, state and federal office are responsible party members.

There were, however, several candidates on the ballot who would not so qualify. Yet, had they been nominated, the parties in which they were registered would have had to accept them and work for their election.

Under our existing primary election system parties have no limitation on the use of their names by self-starters, nor do they have any measure of discipline. It is useless to set up party policies or platforms, or to outline party-supported issues, because no candidate is bound to the party's position.

Party Revival Need

It is pleasing to note that registration between the two major parties in Oregon is closely balanced. Oregon once was a preponderantly Republican state. That was not a desirable situation. It is far better, I believe, to have two parties of virtually equal power. Thus competition will assure more competent candidates for political office, and more responsible party action.

But even though we now have a much better balance between parties, both parties are impotent because they are unable to adopt and enforce platforms, control candidates, or exercise discipline. We have parties in name only. A popular candidate, registered as a Republican, for example, can win a Republican nomination, although he may be a Democrat in his political philosophies, and there is nothing the Republican Party can do about it. In fact, it would be entirely possible for each party to infiltrate the other, under our present system.

Parties in Oregon could regain their influence if they would caucus at county, district and state levels, setting up platforms, requiring commitments from candidates to support party policies, and recommending qualified and acceptable candidates to voters.

I realize there is no provision in existing law for party conventions, but neither is there a legal barrier. It would not be difficult to strengthen our two-party system if the two parties would adopt such procedure. Nor would the self-starter be eliminated, although his path might be more thorny.

Law Revisions Coming

Concerning my second peeve, something is being done about it. An interim committee, which has been making an exhaustive study of the state's existing election laws, will make many recommendations for changes to the next legislature. If those recommendations are adopted, election procedure will be materially simplified.

However, I have not yet heard of any proposal to change our method of tabulating the vote.

Here in Douglas County, using our antiquated methods, it took some of our election boards many hours to tally their precinct votes. Some of them did not conclude their work until well into the second day. The same situation prevailed over the entire state. The time consumed was expensive.

This delay could be eliminated through the use of ballots in which voters would punch holes instead of making their mark. Ballot boxes could be sealed in the presence of the board, and turned over to a deputy sheriff. The boxes then could be delivered to a canvassing board which would break the seals and feed the ballots into a machine which could count the whole precinct vote in a matter of minutes.

In this system only one election board would be needed instead of two in each precinct, as at present, thus cutting pay costs in half. The saving would buy the counting machine. Both time and money would be saved by adopting more modern methods.

Hal Boyle

ASHEVILLE, N. C. (AP) — Once upon a time there was a boy born here 100 years old at his birth. Or so he always felt.

He was the youngest of eight children, the "baby" in the family. He was a strange child, thin and pale-faced, and given to long brooding silences. He wore dresses until he was at least three. His mother didn't let him cut his shoulder-length curls until he was nearly nine.

His father, who carved and sold tombstones, could quote Shakespeare and the Bible endlessly. These things may have helped give the boy his early preoccupation with death and time and literature.

The boy, Tom Wolfe, grew into a raw-boned giant 6 feet 5 1/2. His mind matched his stature. In a lonely room in London he wrote a classic first novel, "Look Homeward, Angel," which told of his lost youth—and every man's heart hunger for a previous time gone by.

He was just 29, and the world acclaimed him as a new literary titan. But many folks here thought Tom had been too brutally frank in portraying both his family and his townpeople.

For years Tom felt himself an outcast, more lost and lonely than ever. But before his death in 1938 time softened the anger of citizens here, and today he is recognized as Asheville's most famous son.

The town has made a museum of the old rambling 22-room white clapboard house in which he dreamed as a boy, the "Old Kentucky Home" in which his mother, Julia, sometimes cooked for as many as 35 to 40 summer boarders.

Thousands of visitors make a pilgrimage here each year. They are people who loved Tom through his books, which still sell widely. They range from garage mechanics to college presidents, but many are young students.

"The younger generation thinks he's wonderful," said Wolfe's sister, Mrs. Mabel Wheaton, who showed me through the old home.

Mrs. Wheaton, who is 10 years older than Tom and was the closest member of the family to him in life, resembles him physically. She is tall and shares his tremendous energy, his gusto for living. She was a singer in her youth.

"Tom always said he was 100 years old when he was born," she said, "and I think he really was."

She guided me into the parlor past two fading hallway mottoes that said, "Do Right And Fear Not" and "Peace Be Unto This House."

She sat down at an ancient up-right piano and played a few bars

No Man's Land



Reader Opinions

Community Uninformed On Fluoridation Issue

ROSEBURG — It is unfortunate that a community the size of Roseburg is so ill informed regarding fluoridation. I think of La Grande, Oregon, when I make that statement — a community wide awake enough to know that they knew too little on the subject to vote. I know of only one public meeting being held specifically to present the pros and cons of fluoridation — I'm referring to the Chamber of Commerce meeting. Unfortunately, our "free press" did not see fit to print the real "meat" of Dr. Jeppeson's remarks in opposition. It is true, the Mayor's Committee on Fluoridation made a recommendation to the Mayor. In going over the names of the members of this committee, one finds that the committee is made up of individuals in favor of fluoridation long before the committee was formed.

On a country-wide basis, 80 per cent of the communities voting on fluoridation reject it. In Oregon that percentage might even be higher — considering that 10 communities out of 12 voting recently rejected the measure. Too, the fact that many communities, such as San Diego, Sacramento and Redding, California, which had a fluoridation and have now discontinued it, can not be taken lightly. If fluoridation is so wonderful, why are communities discontinuing it after having gone to the expense of installing the system and using it for a few years? Why do communities reject it?

I wonder how many people voting in favor of fluoridation actually found out how many dentists or doctors in favor of the program are actually giving it to their own children? And why, in view of the fact that they are in favor of the program aren't they giving it to their children? Did these voters ask why the dentists aren't sending their patients to the drug store for sodium fluoride solution to be administered in controlled

from Stephen Foster's "Beautiful Dreamer."

"The whole family used to like to sing that," she remarked. "Tom liked all the tunes." The old-fashioned furniture was marked with the signs of much usage. Everything in the house bore the signature of vigorous past life.

Upstairs Mabel showed me the bed on which her father had died lingeringly of cancer, another bed in which all eight Wolfe children had been born.

Then she led me to the room in which had been Tom's furniture from his New York apartment and his two typewriters. His worn leather briefcase leaned against a table leg on the floor, as if he had left it there only a moment before and would soon be back. The furniture was old and worn.

"Tom really never had anything fine in his life," said his sister, and I felt sad. Back downstairs, we went into the kitchen. A strange memorial to Mrs. Wolfe stood on one shelf — more than 20 jars of preserves she had put up before death stilled her busy hands 11 years ago.

"I just couldn't eat them," said Mabel. "They're just as she left them."

After leaving Mrs. Wheaton I went out to Riverside Cemetery where Tom, who always felt lost, now can be found by any stranger. He is buried in a woodland setting by his father and mother, and on his tombstone is this apt quotation from one of his own books:

"Death bent to touch his chosen son with mercy, love and pity, and put the seal of honor on him when he died."

Tom, who once in his loneliness wrote "You can't go home again," did, in fact, after "the tumult, the fever, and the fret," come back to the only home he ever knew, the temple of the past in which time stands still forever.

In The Day's News

(Continued From Page One)

authorities on dogs. Four of them are William E. Buckley, president of the American Kennel Club; George Foley, publisher of Popular Dogs Magazine; William Rockefeller, Jr., president of the SPCA and Kerns Wright, board chairman of the American Humane Association.

The fifth is C. R. Harbison of New York, who describes himself as a dog psychologist.

These skilled experts, I'd guess, will divide the problem into two general classifications:

1. What makes dogs want to bite mailmen.

2. What can the mailmen do to make dogs NOT want to bite mailmen.

Once those basic questions have been satisfactorily answered, the rest will be duck soup. The mailmen will thereafter make their daily rounds unhampered by dog bites and the doctors who have been treating the 6,000 bitten mailmen will have just that much more time free for taking care of other patients.

Isn't our modern conference system wonderful?

I'd like to offer just two pious hopes:

1. That these trained and able experts will be able to REACH AGREEMENT on what makes dogs want to bite mailmen and what the mailmen must do to make dogs NOT want to bite mailmen.

2. That after the conclusions have been agreed upon the dogs and the mailmen will cooperate freely and fully in carrying out the recommendations of the experts.

We've been having all kinds of conferences of experts. On all kinds of problems—including how to stop war and bring on peace and whether or not to put stuff in the city water to keep children from having cavities in their teeth.

Two troubles have plagued these conferences:

1. The experts end up in a fight over whether the proposed solutions will work or not.

2. The public winds up in a fight over whether or not to accept the solutions proposed by the experts.

Senate Committee Votes Expanded Social Security

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate Finance Committee here has approved a bill expanding social security coverage, but stripped of House-backed provisions for payments to the disabled and for payments to some women at age 62.

Sen. Long (D-La.) pledged a fight to put the provisions back in when the Senate considers the bill. It is not expected to come up in the Senate before the week starting June 4.

As approved by the Finance Committee, the bill contains two main provisions—extension of social security coverage to more than 200,000 additional persons including lawyers and dentists and lowering of the retirement age for widows from 65 to 62.

More than 70 lumbermen, representing about 30 logging companies were guests of the Douglas Forest Protective Assn. at the annual banquet of the Southern Douglas County section at the Canyonville Masonic Temple.

Talking on the conditions and mechanics of slash burning were Dick Willey of Multnomah Plywood, Ross Bowles of Harbor Plywood, and Fred Miller of the Robert Dollar Company. Fred Southwick of Roseburg, DEPA head, was chairman of the banquet.

The dinner was served by the Beta Epsilon chapter of Epsilon Sigma Alpha with proceeds to go to the aid of the crippled children's hospital.

Bruce Blossat

From time to time we hear it said that those who want to reduce our huge farm surpluses have the wrong approach. The critics would instead distribute them to needy folk both at home and abroad.

They are speaking, of course, from admirable humanitarian motives. But their proposals nevertheless betray a sad lack of real thought.

On the foreign front, for example, they commonly point out that there are millions of poverty-stricken people who cannot maintain even a minimum diet for good health.

There is no doubt of it. Yet the records will show that this country again and again has made loans or grants of money and food to people of other lands in distress. We are not in the habit of sitting idly by while famine and starvation stalk the earth.

IT IS QUITE ANOTHER matter, however, to suggest that we use our rich food reserves in an effort to close permanently the gap between poverty and minimum healthy living for these peoples.

For the most part we could only accomplish that by outright gift, since the needy foreign nations seldom are able to undertake loan arrangements.

Thus we would be engaged in a vast project to subsidize minimum good living standards in many parts of the globe. Much as we want to see those standards raised, in fairness, it cannot be asked that America, for all its resources, undertake so colossal and burdensome an enterprise.

By the same token, we could not dole out our extra wheat and corn and dairy products to Americans whose living standards fall below a certain "optimum" level.

Under present law no one need starve in this country. Relief, unemployment compensation, aid to the indigent and other benefits cushion our people against the worst economic calamities.

BUT, ONCE MORE, it is something entirely different to suggest that beyond this the nation should distribute surplus foodstuffs to the lower economic groups to bring them closer to average levels.

Everybody with a heart wants all Americans to be able to manage a decent, healthful living. But we can't just hand it to those who aren't yet managing it.

We can—and do—build a protective floor to prevent people from falling into the pit of distress. But we cannot erect ladders for them to climb higher. They have to build their own ladders.

This country has made astounding strides in lifting living standards. With continued development of new materials, new skills and new techniques, we will raise them further.

That is the only route to the humanitarian goals we seek. It is not a path lined with baskets of fruit already picked, ready for the taking. But it is the path which any self-respecting, resourceful people must follow.

Eisenhower replied "yes" at a news conference Wednesday when asked whether he would be willing to see Cain.

A reporter asked the question because Cain, in a recent speech in Denver, said he had been unable to see the President and indicated he does not expect to be reappointed as a member of the SCAB. His term expires in August.

ECC Will Authorize Translator TV Stations

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Communications Commission has announced here that effective July 2, it will authorize operation of low-cost "translator" television stations as a further means of bringing TV service to isolated communities outside the range of existing outlets.

The "translators" will be limited to the use of the 14 highest-numbered UHF channels—70 through 83, but will be capable of picking up either UHF or VHF programs for rebroadcast in their immediate areas, provided prior consent has been obtained from the originator.

FCC estimated "translator" equipment could be obtained for as little as \$1,000.

In authorizing such relays, the commission dismissed objections by operators of community TV antennas that the "translators" would adversely affect existing antenna systems.

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OPEN HOUSE SET

Open house will be held at the Elktion High School Tuesday, May 29 at 7:30 p.m. After an hour of visiting the various class rooms and teachers, there will be a film shown in the gym. Refreshments will be served after the show.



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