

The News-Review

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RELAXING RULES

By Charles V. Stanton

Indications are that Douglas County's ordinances regulating building and building inspection will be revised in the near future.

At the recent election Douglas County voters swamped a proposal to authorize the County Planning Commission to set up zoning regulations. The election brought forth an expression of widespread resentment against building inspection, alleged misuse of authority under sanitary laws, etc.

Although the zoning proposal was an issue separate and apart from building inspection and enforcement of the state's sanitary laws, voters obviously placed blame for all regulation upon the Planning Commission and voiced a hearty and robust disapproval.

It seems from the evidence at hand that the building inspection phase of the argument—if it may be called an argument, as one-sided as it has been in expression—has not had the attention it perhaps should have been given. I am not attempting to place any blame, nor to offer any criticism. However, it would appear that a code was adopted, a building inspector appointed, and the department left to rug itself to the best of its ability, without top level supervision.

Code Too Strict

It would also appear that too little study was given the details of the building code as it applied outside municipalities and their fringes. In other words, while the code might be desirable in congested areas, some of its regulations are out of place in isolated regions. Persons charged with enforcement, however, apparently were guided, in some cases, by the letter of the law rather than by local circumstances.

Allegations of arbitrary rulings have been numerous. But there also have been cases in which inspectors and inspectors have been praised; where buildings have had economies pointed out to them and have saved money thereby, and where costly repairs have been avoided through help given by inspectors. Thus the service doesn't seem all bad as some persons would have us believe.

Voters have indicated that they are dissatisfied with existing conditions. This has caused inquiry by responsible officials who are, I am informed, convinced that the foregoing view is not probably in the line of alteration.

A new county court is to take over the first of the year, and the building procedure and planning commission set-up probably will be one of the first orders of business.

Organization of a citizens' committee to protest existing regulations has been announced. This committee, I am advised, is preparing to submit proposals to the new county court.

Tolerance Needed

It is to be hoped that the county will be blessed with tolerance.

A great deal of heat was generated during the election campaign. In the stress of such a battle we are prone to go to extremes. It is quite evident that some modifications and adjustments are needed in regulations and in methods of enforcement. At the same time, I believe, it would be a grave mistake to eliminate all controls over building, sanitation and other services set up to protect health and property.

The planning commission has far more than justified its existence and has earned continuance. I believe, by its studies of resources and highways. Its last report "Major Thoroughfares for Douglas County" a study of the county's road system, will doubtless be of immense aid in planning future road extension and will save thousands of dollars, far more than the commission will ever cost.

We should make every effort to bring our building codes, ordinances and regulations into line with minimum, not maximum, needs, and to avoid any unnecessary imposition upon the public, in my opinion. At the same time we should not permit our dislike for regulation to destroy activities and services needed to protect property values and to prevent accidents and disease.

BRUCE BARNETT

Americans will not take lightly the recent crash of an Italian airliner and another in Venezuela simply because they happened on foreign soil thousands of miles from us.

Airline safety is a matter of universal consequence. What takes a plane to destruction over Orly Field, Paris, may bring down another some time over Denver.

This accident may prove more than ordinarily mysterious. The aircraft, an American DC-4, was almost new. Its pilot was a veteran Italian flier with many Atlantic crossings to his account. He sent no distress signals. There was nothing on the ground or in the air to indicate impending trouble, until that moment when tragedy struck.

There must be special regret, too, that among the victims—which included more than a dozen Americans—was the gifted young Italian orchestra conductor, Guido Castellani. At 36 he had a lifetime of great work ahead of him.

Less mysterious perhaps, yet no less distressing, was the disaster which struck a Constellation less than two miles from the safety of the Caracas airport in Venezuela. This airliner plunged into a mountain during a rainstorm. Ten Americans were among the 25 victims aboard.

But planes must safely navigate poor weather conditions and with present equipment and techniques it is a rare occasion when they do not.

For the good of aviation, for the sake of the steadily swelling millions who fly, we must hope for causes of these tragedies as unearched.

TO BE CUT

PORTLAND — Some 1½ million Christmas trees will be cut on 31 Western Oregon tree farms in the next week or so.

Most will be shipped to California or sold on local markets. Dealers, who are beginning their final contracting for the holidays, reported the demand for quality trees holding up well.

Hal Boyle

NEW YORK — The girl who wears the pants at the Metropolitan Opera is Mildred Miller, a young singer with a double attraction.

She not only is gifted with a fine mezzo-soprano voice. Nature also has endowed her with a pair of trim limbs as graceful as those on most Hollywood cheesecake stars.

Because she has "the most beautiful legs at the Met," pretty Miss Miller—who happens to be married to an Air Force major and is the mother of two children—gets most of the young boy roles in opera here.

"I enjoy singing them," she said. "But at least once a year I like to sing a woman's part, and I tell the management, 'Please, let me show my versatility.'"

It is supposed to be a matter of complete indifference to opera fans whether singers move on feet or wheels. They are supposed to be above any lowbrow interest in leg art.

But the truth is that "cheesecake"—the display of a well-turned feminine leg—has had a prominent place in opera for more than two centuries.

There are numerous "boy" roles in opera—such as Cherubino in "Marriage of Figaro," Octavian in "Der Rosenkavalier," the page in "Salome" and Orlofsky in "Fledermaus."

As the voices of boys usually are changing at the age at which they would play these roles, they are usually sung by young women.

It was a real thrill for gaffers of the 18th and 19th Century to go to the opera and see a girl wearing knee-breeches and long golden hose. Those happened to be good centuries for bosom watchers, but poor ones for leg men. The only way some men all their lives ever could view feminine underpinnings was to attend an opera.

That oldtime sense of daring, of course, is long gone, but because of the voice demands girls still often must be boy leg opera.

"When it comes to trousers, by the end of the season I've had it," said Miss Miller, who is dark-haired and has green eyes. "I throw every pair of slacks, shorts, pedal pushers and lounge pants out of my wardrobe."

Eight years after she left high school Miss Miller was singing at "the Met." In addition to 15 to 25 opera appearances, she gives 10 to 40 concerts and sings half a dozen or more times a year on radio and TV programs.

Editorial

Comment

Feds To Be Led

The "International Geophysical Year" is the rather imposing title selected for an intensive, international, cooperative period of study of the earth and its immediate surroundings.

Barring a war, it will get under way next year, although much of the preliminary work has long been under way.

Some 3,000 scientists and technicians will participate in a massive effort to find out more about the earth, specifically in the fields of the aurora and afterglow, cosmic rays, geomagnetism, glaciology, gravity measurements, ionospheric physics, meteorology, oceanography, seismology, solar activity, longitude and latitude determination, and exploration of the upper atmosphere, through rockets, and earth satellite orbits.

What is it all for? Why this big, concerted effort? Basically, we suppose, it boils down to the eternal curiosity of the human animal. We are always here curious, and it is that curiosity which has led him to technological mastery of many things.

Curiosity, however, is not the only motive. It is the thirst for knowledge. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is enough for him.

But what about the rest of us, who may, true enough, be mildly curious to know what goes on around us and why, but who like to see some solid and material rewards for the outlay of funds required for such an effort?

While no scientist knows where his researches into "pure" science will lead, it is also true that this type of research, the exploration of the frontiers of knowledge, is an absolutely essential precursor to technical advancement.

Name almost any of today's amazing technical achievements, and somewhere in its history you will find a scientist who discovered the principles or which it is based in the course of his explorations into the unknown. The particular discoveries might even have been incidental to the course of inquiry he was following—but his basic discoveries were necessary, incidental or not.

Some thoughtful scientists are concerned over the fact that much of today's scientific effort is in technical application of existing principles, and not, perhaps, enough in the pioneering field of pure science—what we now know just what will happen.

However, that may be, the International Geophysical Year, which actually will cover a period longer than a calendar year, is a combination of pure scientific exploration, and technical advancement and application.

There are some mighty practical questions which attempts will be made to solve, including weather forecasting, updating of geographical information, improved communications, and so on.

But much of it will be on the frontiers of knowledge, particularly in the upper reaches of the atmosphere and beyond.

One might think that a lot is already known about the tiny speck which we call the world, and there is. But far more remains to be learned. Every advance in the physical sciences only serves to reveal how much more is still unknown.—E.A.

Britain Appeals To U. S., Canada To Waive Interest On Loans To Bolster Dollar

LONDON — A sharp slump in gold and dollar reserves jeopardizing the value of the pound was disclosed Tuesday in a British appeal to the United States and Canada to waive interest on post-war dollar loans due this month.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Harold Macmillan told the House of Commons the reserves—shared by all sterling area countries—fell 279 million dollars last month.

The slump brought reserves to \$1,965,000,000—well below the two billion dollar mark which most economists consider the essential minimum for the safety of the pound.

Macmillan announced a series of emergency actions designed to "maintain the rate for the pound sterling at its present parity" of \$2.80.

Capping the measures was a formal request to the United States to waive the interest now due on its postwar loan to Britain.

Parliament was told President Eisenhower is putting the British request for waiver of payment before Congress.

A Canadian decision to grant a parallel waiver will follow automatically if the United States agrees, Macmillan said.

The two waivers, if granted, would mean a saving to Britain of 104 million dollars.

However, payments will be made on redemption on the loans, \$6 million dollars to the United States, and 15½ million dollars to Canada.

Interest is due in the amounts of \$81,900,000 to the United States and \$22,200,000 to Canada.

The November drive was the greatest single monthly loss for more than a year in the gold-dollar reserves, which represent backing for the trade of Britain and other sterling area countries with the rest of the world.

The reserves stood at \$2,344,000,000 at the end of October. Then came the month of the British-French attack on Egypt.

Macmillan directly attributed the adjustments of the British economy to Egyptian President Nasser's "seizure of the Suez Canal."

Other measures in the battle to

STRIKE CLOSES MILL

BEND — The Brooks Scanlon Lumber Co. near here closed its Bend plant at the end of Tuesday's night shift because of the SPAS railroad strike. Company officials said that all available cars have been filled with lumber. Some 400 workers were idled. A smaller Bend lumber company, Leico, Inc., laid off its 20 man crew at the end of Monday night's shift.

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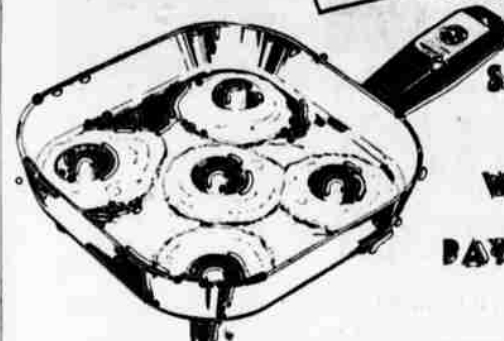
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