

The News-Review

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Member of the Associated Press, Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, the Audit Bureau of Circulations

Represented by WEST-HOLLIDAY CO., INC., offices in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland, Denver

Published Daily Except Sunday by the News-Review Company, Inc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES—In Oregon—By Mail—Per Year, \$12.00; six months, \$6.50; three months, \$3.75. Outside Oregon—By Mail—Per Year, \$13.00; six months, \$7.00; three months, \$4.00.

By News-Review Carrier—Per Year, \$12.00 (in advance), less than one year, per month, \$1.25.

Entered as second class matter May 7, 1936, at the post office at Roseburg, Oregon, under act of March 3, 1879.

LIMITED BY TRADITION

By Charles V. Stanton

The many problems connected with school financing, now undergoing intense study by the Oregon legislature, are complicated, in my opinion, by our insistence upon a traditional district form of organization. Ordinarily I dislike to criticize unless I have something constructive to offer. In this case persons having much more knowledge of the educational problem than I also recognize the confinement caused by district organization and are equally at a loss for something better.

Various substitutes for the school district plan have been offered. A few even have been attempted. None has proven entirely satisfactory. But, perhaps, if more of our people would seek a totally new concept of school organization, forgetting tradition, the history of our public school system and avoiding the pitfalls of precedent, someone might come up with a needed idea.

Any change from the district system, however, will have hard sledding because of the entirely human opposition to change. Consequently any idea for altering the prevailing concept will have to be good before gaining acceptance.

Local Controls Demanded

The public school as it exists in this country is truly American. Early in the history of our Nation we decided that education was a function of government and that every person should have equal opportunity to gain education at public expense.

Prior to that time education was provided largely in private schools, or in schools subsidized only in part by government. As a result education was chiefly for the rich and contributed to maintenance of classes. The United States, adopting the unique principle of equality of creation, made the public school the foundation of its startling concept. It has since been exceedingly jealous of its public school system.

That jealousy is deeply rooted. It surrounds each and every individual school district. American citizens demand a voice in WHAT and HOW their children are taught and they voice those demands at the local level. They insist that controls be kept close at home.

The multiplicity of local districts, however, makes school administration difficult, particularly in financing. There is wide disparity between districts in valuations, attendance, standards, facilities, etc. One district may have plenty of valuation, fine buildings, high salaries and a comparatively low tax rate, while an adjoining district has poor facilities, low salaries and sub-standard equipment, at the same time levying confiscatory taxes.

Equalization Sought

So long as we operate our schools under a district system we will be dealing with a constantly changing situation. While a district may be poor today, a new industry may move in tomorrow and transform it into a rich district. Thus it is virtually impossible to obtain equalization by boundary changes, for equalization through boundary changes would necessitate annual adjustments. We have tried to obtain equalization by setting up county units. That gives a measure of equalization within the county, it is true, but, if utilized statewide would simply retain the district system on a bigger scale.

We are currently working on a program of equalization through state assistance. In appealing to the state, districts are admitting weakness in our existing system and are only running away from the problem by shifting responsibility. And the states, in turn, are seeking federal aid, putting the load on a broader pair of shoulders, but only increasing the number of hands digging for taxes.

Our concept of public school education calls for equal opportunity for all. We cannot maintain that objective so long as we lack equalization of taxes, facilities and standards. The direction in which we are now heading will lead to centralized controls in conflict with local authority.

We can, it is true, abandon local districts in favor of a statewide unit, whereupon we run into the necessity for equalization between states, which calls then, in the final phase, for putting everything under the administration of the federal government. Is this, then, the ultimate goal? Is it a desirable goal? Can we devise something better?

Hal Boyle

By SAUL PETT
For HAL BOYLE

NEW YORK (AP) — As the janitor in a small but exclusive sorority house, I am continually awed by the ability of young ladies to disagree.

If it were not that it came as a reflex action, one might say that the two young tax exemptions in our place have raised the business of consistent disagreement to a fine art.

Why they differ so frequently is a puzzle. Neither is favored or compared or made to feel competitive by their charming, understanding, intelligent parents. Still, it has been going on a long time, even back when Kathy was 3 and Amy 6.

I remember a week day at a deserted stretch of ocean beach. Nothing but clean, white sand in either direction for miles, no people except the four of us. And yet, after a tranquil three minutes, suddenly the piercing cry: "Hey, she's on my sand!"

This dispute over territorial rights and spheres of influence flourished, of course, while they shared a bedroom but continued even when they got separate rooms. It also prevailed on the road, especially after we had been driving for a long time, like 12 minutes.

Suddenly, from the back of the car, came the shrill scream: "She's on my sand!" I glanced back and saw Kathy, who was sitting in the back seat, pointing her finger at Amy.

dangling a full quarter-inch over the invisible frontier. Or perhaps Amy was merely breathing over the border. In such tense moments, a hand merely brushing a sister's ankle could be the opening round of all-out war.

Kathy is now 11 and Amy 14, and while the form of their disagreement has changed, the degree hasn't. Thus, it was inevitable that if Kathy chose to worship Elvis Presley, Amy felt at the feet of Perry Como. Each maintains her own shrine to her singer and neither is allowed to cross the corridor on pain of death.

It was also inevitable that when Amy found Stevenson banners hanging on her door during the last campaign, Kathy came up with Eisenhower signs on her door.

It really is a remarkable performance. About the only thing the ladies agree on is that their parents don't understand them. Which, of course, is entirely true.



Checkerboard Gasoline Price Hit By Norblad

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rep. Norblad (R-Ore) this week wrote Atty. Gen. Brownell he believes the "strange checkerboard pricing of gasoline" throughout the United States presents a situation warranting Justice Department investigation.

"I particularly refer to the recent increases 'at the pump' of gasoline in Oregon and along the West Coast which seem entirely unwarranted," he said in a letter to the attorney general.

"At the same time we find very material reductions in the price of this same product in such diverse areas as Denver, Dallas, and in parts of New England. It is my understanding that gasoline is retailed in those places at seven to ten cents a gallon less than in Oregon."

Norblad said he could understand a possible price increase along the West Coast if gasoline stocks were being materially reduced as a result of shipments to Europe but "that is not the case."

Domestic gasoline stocks now are 17 million barrels above this time a year ago and are rising rapidly, he declared. He said that "reliable people in the industry have estimated that by March the stocks will surpass the all time record."

Representatives of service station operator groups in certain parts of the nation have been quoted as saying that such surpluses could set off disastrous nationwide price wars by spring, he wrote, while at the same time "we are having to pay higher prices in the area I represent here in Congress."

"Certainly no one advocates the economically unsound practice of price warfare in the industry," he said, "but at the same time one cannot justify the price increases to which I refer. It seems evident to me that a thorough investigation by your department should be undertaken."

Bill Would Protect Purchaser Of Autos

SALEM (AP) — Sponsors said this week they would introduce a bill in the House to regulate automobile finance charges by placing a 3 per cent limit on a dealer's credit service charge for guaranteeing a bank loan.

Rep. Richard Groener (D), Milwaukie, co-sponsor with Sen. Rudie Wilhelm (R), Portland, said there had been complaints of excessive charges by some dealers. "I know of one dealer who charges not less than 25 per cent," Groener said.

He said banks generally use a formula benefitting a car purchaser if he pays off his loan in less than contract time. But dealers generally make no such refund of interest, Groener added.

The bill would also limit to 10 per cent a year interest that could be charged in financing an automobile purchase. Groener said it sought to discourage dealers from going into the small loan business.

TV Quiz Winner To Get \$100 Week For 15 Years

HOLLYWOOD (AP) — No matter what else happens to them in the next 15 years, tall, handsome Erik Guide and his pretty wife Helena are assured of this:

Every Saturday morning during all that time the mailman will drop into their mailbox a check for \$100.

The 6-foot-4 civil engineer and Annapolis graduate again won the top weekly quiz on Edgar Bergen's Do You Trust Your Wife? CBS television show last night.

In the allotted 20 seconds he listed nine of the Big Ten colleges to seven by his opponent, Dick Smith of nearby Claremont.

It was the 13th consecutive week in which Guide and his Colombian-born wife have won \$100 a week for a year. It broke the show's previous record, 14 weeks, set by the Steve Rowlands of Los Angeles. The program is filmed at 11:30 p.m. each week.

Peter Edson

WASHINGTON (NEA) — Fifty-year-old Hugh Meade Alcorn of Hartford, Conn., takes over the toughest political job in the country Feb. 1. That's when he becomes chairman of the Republican National Committee, succeeding Leonard A. Hall of New York.

Alcorn's new job will be to elect a Republican-controlled Congress in 1958. Even the staunchest Republicans admit that isn't easy.

If Mr. Alcorn can't pass that miracle, he can, of course, step down. But if he succeeds, his next job will be to elect Richard Milhouse Nixon as president in 1960.

Incidentally, Vice President Nixon took little part in the selection of Alcorn as GOP national chairman, although Nixon has more interest in who holds this job than any man in town.

Nixon was kept informed of the various moves to make Alcorn head of the party when Hall stepped down.

Nixon's acquaintance with Alcorn was slight, since the two men come from opposite ends of the country — Connecticut and California.

But Nixon had no candidate of his own to oppose Mr. Alcorn.

MEADE ALORN is actually Len Hall's personal choice for the chairmanship. It was Hall's recommendation which really influenced President Eisenhower's suggestion to the national committee, meeting in Washington after the inauguration, that he "would be very happy" to have Alcorn as chairman.

The wisdom of selecting an easterner as national chairman at this particular time is questioned by many political observers. The Republicans did all right in electing congressmen and senators in the east last November. Where they fell down was in the west. A western national chairman, familiar with farm belt conditions, might therefore have been a more logical choice.

WHAT WON THE NOMINATION

and election for Alcorn was the job he did under Len Hall as vice chairman in active charge of the committee on arrangements for the Republican national convention in San Francisco last year. That show went off so smoothly that the whole party gave him acclaim.

Behind this national showmanship, however, Alcorn has a real 20-year grounding in practical politics. He was assistant state attorney for Hartford County, Conn., for seven years and state attorney for six years more. He was Republican chairman of the town of Suffield, Conn., for five years and ran a successful organization. He became state chairman of the Eisenhower - for - President movement in 1952 and became the state's national committeeman the next year.

Last year he was chairman of his state's delegation at San Francisco. And in the campaign he is given a large part of the credit for electing E. H. May Jr., as GOP congressman from Connecticut's first district, defeating Democrat Thomas J. Dodd.

HE IS STOCKY and of medium height. He is literally a fair-haired boy. He wears horn-rim glasses.

At Dartmouth he was New England low-hurdle champion and a Phi Beta Kappa. Then he went to Yale law school.

Today he is rated a crackjack lawyer, and fairly well to do. He is

Navy Seabees To Set Up New Antarctic Base

MCMURDO SOUND, Antarctica (AP) — Navy Seabees are disembarking onto the ice on the opposite side of this frozen continent to build another U.S. science station.

The new outpost will be built on a 15-foot-thick ice shelf over the Weddell Sea. The site is about 2,000 miles across Antarctica from McMurdo Sound.

Scientists plan to live and work at the station during the International Geophysical Year that begins in July.

Secy. Wilson Forsees No Cut In Defense Costs

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary Wilson told Congress this week he can not foresee any reduction in the current level of military spending, now more than half the total cost of the government.

Reviewing the military program before the House Armed Services Committee, the secretary of defense said "we are still struggling in every way to save money" but that "the situation is such we can't forecast any big reductions."

Wilson testified he was satisfied the nation's defenses are adequate on the basis of budget spending estimates of 38 billion dollars.

And he said he feels the U.S. defenses strong has been tested and proved sound by the Middle East and Hungarian crises.

Wilson was asked whether the President's request for congressional authority to use troops there in case of any Communist aggression, foreshadowed any increase in military manpower or the defense budget.

Radford Cautious

Wilson said none is anticipated. He also referred the question to Adm. Arthur W. Radford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at his side.

Radford said he concurred with Wilson's reply, and added that the idea behind the President's proposals "is to stabilize conditions there."

But Radford added that all possibilities cannot be foreseen and "we have to recognize that if there is a serious change in the situation, we might have to come back to you."

Wilson defended the present military manpower strength of 2,800,000 men as adequate.

Wilson said that a reduction by 800,000, which reportedly was under discussion for a time, "would require important changes in overseas deployments, and in the absence of sound disarmament agreements would have an impact abroad which the free world could ill afford at this time."

He analyzed his own position as the new GOP chairman with a favorite story about a farmer watching a golfer for the first time. The golfer drove into the rough, then got stymied by a tree and caught in a sand trap before he finally got the ball on the green and sank it in the hole.

"My, my, my!" observed the farmer. "Ain't he in an awful fix now."

SALEM (AP) — A five-member state Board of Recreation would be created by a bill introduced this week by Sens. Ward Cook and Jean Lewis, both Portland Democrats.

The board, appointed by the governor, would study all forms of recreation, and give advice to county, city and other local governments.

Reader Opinions

Planning Critic Offers Apologies For Demand

I hereby apologize to the Douglas County Court for interrupting the program being presented for their benefit by O. J. Fett as chairman of the Douglas County Planning Commission.

I realized as I listened to Mr. Fett and our 560-day consultant, Mr. J. Haslett Bell, that in nearly two years of work maps on the wall were the only things shown in the way of accomplishment.

I had heard of various pictures taken by the planning commission and felt the county court should see them also as a part of the good work accomplished by the planning commission. I asked that they be shown and, upon refusal by Mr. Fett, I demanded as a taxpayer that they be shown, but Mr. Fett still refused.

It made me all wonder if Mr. Fett might have been afraid someone would recognize the place called home, even though it wasn't a millionaire's mansion.

According to a statement made there, the pictures were unidentified, so why waste taxpayers' money. Anything so vague would be useless for study purposes.

It is a far cry from the Constitution of the United States or State of Oregon when a few dictatorially minded men can prescribe when, where and how to build a home and how much it must cost, regardless of one's personal financial circumstances.

Alice Hopper
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Roseburg, Ore.

Pendleton Man Elected Implement Assn. Head

SPOKANE (AP) — The Pacific Northwest Hardware and Implement Assn. this week elected Howard Hagen, Pendleton, Ore., to succeed Fred L. Hecker of Spokane as president.

Named vice president was John F. Streiff of Lewiston, Idaho.

Board members include: Ray Bock, Puyallup, Wash.; Keith Daniels, Fairfield, Wash.; Lloyd McKinnel, Chehalis, Wash.; Walter Fry, Sunnyside, Wash.; L. H. Mott, Moses Lake, Wash.; Harold Fisher, Albany, Ore.; and William Kabrich, Yakima, Wash.

Taxes May Rise Still Higher, Says Gov. Holmes

SALEM (AP) — Gov. Robert D. Holmes indicated this week that taxes might go higher than they are now.

He told a press conference that he "hopes they won't have to be materially higher. But they might have to be some higher if we are going to do the things we ought to do."

He added, however, that he hasn't made a close study of the budget, which was prepared by the administration of his predecessor, Gov. Elmo Smith.

He also couple of weeks with Gov. Rosellini of Washington to discuss power and other items of interest between the two states.

"We want to make plans to get the power show on the road," he said.

Referring to a statement by Sen. Warren Gill (R), Lebanon, that the Holmes administration is "wired from Washington, D. C.," Holmes replied:

"That is sheer nonsense. Gill is given to outbursts for the sake of the outburst itself, and he should know his statement is not true."

Asked if he favors a regional corporation to handle the Northwest's power development, the governor replied that he would, provided "we can't get the federal government to get back to its comprehensive power development program."

"If he is being besieged with applications by job seekers, Holmes said there have been 'surprisingly few applications for many of the jobs, particularly those of commissioners in various departments.'"

Appointments Of Hyde Agreeable Surprise

PORTLAND (AP) — Appointment of Clarence F. Hyde of Eugene as state real state commissioner is viewed here as an "agreeable surprise," A. A. Horsfield, president of the Portland Realty Board, said here.

Gov. Robert D. Holmes, who asked the resignation of Ragnor Johnson, replaced him with Hyde Tuesday.

Real estate interests had opposed Johnson's removal, but Horsfield said Hyde's appointment "came as an agreeable surprise to the industry because of his vast and capable knowledge of all real estate matters, including appraisal techniques. As long as a replacement had to be made for political expediency, this board concurs that a better selection for the good of the general public could not have been made by the governor."

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