

# The News-Review

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## ROLLING THE GRAVY TRAIN

By Charles V. Stanton

Economists throughout the country are beginning to get quite vocal concerning economic conditions. Some tell us we're heading headlong into a depression. Others tell us we're simply going through a period of mild recession while we're readjusting inventories. Others say we've fouled the whole economy by tight money processes designed to halt inflation.

Far be it from me to pose as an expert economist. But readers of this column will recall that many months ago I said the slowdown in home construction eventually would affect the whole economy.

It was, and is, my opinion that when people build homes they also buy refrigerators, washing machines, radios, televisions, carpets, furniture, bedding, dishes, pots and pans. In other words, they spend money for THINGS. When people spend money for THINGS they keep the wheels of production rolling. When people are busy manufacturing THINGS, to sell to the people who are buying THINGS, the man working in the manufacturing plant has money so that he, too, can join the people buying THINGS.

When people spend money we have prosperity. When people don't spend money we have recession or depression. When people buy or build homes they spend money.

### Home Building Slow

Politicians opposing the present administration are screaming that administration policies are responsible for the present economic situation. Although the administration cautioned against the danger of what at the time appeared to be an inflationary rise, the tight money policy, against which everyone rails, was instituted by the Federal Reserve Board, composed principally of Democrats and controlled only by Congress, and not by the administration.

But, forgetting the political situation, (if we are permitted to do so) the fact still remains that the building of homes has been proven to be, more or less, the governor controlling the rate of our production machine. The tight money policy hit the home construction field—the building trades—first. For a long time our lumber economy and the building trades were castaways on the desert island of recession in a sea of prosperity. Now, however, the fact that people aren't buying the things they would have bought had they been building and buying homes is catching up with other areas of production, and the whole nation is feeling the economic pinch, and screaming with the pain that we've been experiencing for the past year and a half.

Economists, as I said earlier, are coming up with all kinds of explanations. But, if you want the real explanation, in my opinion, it is to be found in the slowdown in home construction. It isn't necessary to search far, I believe, to find the cause of mounting unemployment throughout the country.

### Better Times Ahead

Of course, no big-shot economist is going to believe that the economic disease from which we suffer can be so simply diagnosed. The economist must go into the status of inventories, credits, savings, national income, debt structure, taxes, and myriad other factors to arrive at a finding that gross production is down and that consequently a lot of people aren't working. No one with a degree to his name would ever admit that the whole blasted recession could be eased by such a thing as getting home construction back on the track. But I'll bet my last nickel that once home building gets back into high gear we won't have any trouble with prosperity. We may, however, have a lot of trouble with inflation.

And having said "I told you so" about the recession, I'd like to stick my neck out again and say that so far as we're concerned here in this area the worst of our troubles are over. We were the first to be hit by the economic slump. I think we'll be the first to recover.

Already there are favorable signs.

Our business firms are reporting a pickup in buying—a very marked improvement. Several of our small mills have resumed operation, some still on slow hell, but, nevertheless, back in a measure of production. There has been some strengthening of the market, even though prices haven't shown much advance. However, wholesale buyers have been hopping around over the area like fleas on a dog's back, indicating that they are probably looking into opportunities to "buy cheap and sell high."

Once the lumber price starts up, it should move upward rapidly, according to most observers. Indications are that, with better interest rates on housing, we'll see a lot more construction this year. That will bring quick recovery to our area. But the rest of the production field, which had a ball while we were tightening our belts, may have to eat the crumbs from our table until the people finish building their homes and start buying the things they need to furnish those homes.

The gravy train will soon start rolling again, I believe. How quickly it will gain speed is something we won't know until it gets underway. Personally, I think it will be in high gear before we realize it.

### Airways Modernization Board To Confer On Site

WASHINGTON — The Airways Modernization Board will confer here, probably next week, with Oregon science and education leaders, on the proposal to make Corvallis the site of an airways traffic control test center. In making the announcement

### DAFFODILS SOON OUT

An early harvest of daffodils and other bulb flowers, a big specialty in the area, is reported from the daffodil farms in the Scottsburg and Green Acres communities along the Umpqua River. Buds are being harvested now for the big markets in Portland, Seattle and eastern cities, where an early crop usually commands premium prices. The full blooming of the fields within a few weeks is expected to attract thousands of visitors again this year.

## "What Do You Hear From the Grass Roots?"



—Hal Boyle—

### By JACK RUTLEDGE For HAL BOYLE

MEXICO CITY, (AP) — Bullfighting is at a low ebb in Mexico. Tourists are about the only ones who get very excited about what's going on in the bull rings nowadays.

Experts blame the situation mainly on lack of real talent among the matadors, and the poor quality of the bulls themselves. But there are other factors; Mexico has some top-notch prize-fighters now who receive the adulation once reserved for the matadors; and it has baseball, soccer, American football, jai alai, and other sports.

Back in the 1920s bullfighting was the major sport. It was a week-long topic of conversation. It got so bad the government banned bullfight talk by employees while on the job.

But the great Rodolfo Gaona retired and interest sagged. With the master gone, bullfighting wasn't the same. A youngster named Arzulla came along and fans caught fire again. But during his period of popularity prizefighting gained in favor, football became a major sport, and there were more and more movies to lure the scarce pesos away from the bullring.

### Restored Interest

The ultimate great Manolete, a Spaniard, brought bullfighting back to its almost fanatic enthusiasm in the 1940s. He fought often in Mexico, where he was paid as much as 150,000 pesos (\$12,000) for a few hours work. But he was sore and died in Spain.

Carlos Arzulla was the next spark. He was a Mexican, and a great matador. He ranked in the minds of many, with Manolete. His peak overlapped Manolete and Luis Miguel Dominguez in world popularity. But Mexico was now baseball mad — and American style football was introduced, packing the stadiums. Then Arzulla retired and Dominguez was banned from Mexico for insulting officials after a controversial fight in the plaza.

There are few outstanding matadors today. The Plaza Mexico — largest bull ring in the world — has been closed for over a year.

### Jurors Deadlock In Damage Case

EUGENE — A \$50,000 suit against Cottage Grove Justice of Peace John Wells over a .22 caliber revolver will apparently be tried again. A deadlocked Lane County Circuit Court jury was dismissed Tuesday night after nine hours of deliberation.

Joe Garske, former Cottage Grove resident, alleged during the two-day trial that Wells unlawfully took his revolver in November, 1953, following Garske's conviction in Wells' court on a disorderly conduct charge.

Garske sought \$50,000 punitive damages, claiming Wells had a "malicious intent" in taking the weapon.

Earlier Tuesday, Judge Carl Wimberly of Roseburg ruled that the question of punitive damages could not go to the jury because Garske had failed to establish the contention of malice. The jury was hung on the issue of whether Wells had unlawfully taken Garske's gun. The most Garske could have collected in a favorable verdict would have been \$34—the market value of the weapon—plus court costs.

### TRAIN KILLS MAN

PORTLAND — A Union Pacific passenger train struck and killed a man walking along the tracks in Meeks Bottom, just south of the tunnel entrance Wednesday. The man was not immediately identified. Company officials said he climbed to the tracks near a small bridge and walked into the path of a Seattle-bound train, which was delayed 15 minutes.

### Thinking It Over

By Robert L. Dieffenbacher, D.D. (Written for NEA Service)

Children put most adults to shame with their freedom from complexity. They say what they think without covering up their thoughts with unnecessary words. They pray so openly and so sincerely when they have been taught about God and His power in the universe.

A child recently prayed "Thank God for erasers which make mistakes disappear." That thought is so honest and so real that every one should read it and pause. Many adults ought to utter the same prayer.

Most of us do not want to admit that we make mistakes. If we make errors we want to hide them. We even hesitate to confess our sins to God. Yet, a child expects to make mistakes. The child simply wants to erase the errors and correct them.

God alone can erase the mistakes and sins from our lives. "Thank God for erasers to make our sins disappear." Please give us clean pages on which to write!

### Veterans' Benefits Exempt From Taxation

SALEM — Veterans reminded this week that most of their benefits are exempt from state and federal taxation.

The state Veterans Department said taxes don't have to be paid on these benefits: State bonuses, all Veterans Administration benefits including educational subsistence, compensation and pensions, GI insurance dividends, insurance proceeds paid on death, mustering-out pay, jobless benefits, social security benefits, workmen's compensation and sickness benefits.

Taxes must be paid on interest earnings from GI insurance dividends left on deposit, and retirement pay for length of service.

—Peter Edson—

WASHINGTON — (NEA) — Economic policy discussion is today considered more confused than it has been since the depression 29 years ago.

The White House and Congress seem to be working at cross purposes on the subject. Private business does not endorse what either is trying to do. Management and labor spokesmen are at odds as usual, only more so.

On the one hand you have President Eisenhower's messages to Congress recommending cuts in public works and certain social welfare programs. The purpose is said to be providing more money for missiles and higher education, while still keeping the budget within a half billion dollars or so of a balance.

The fact that the administration has asked for a five billion dollar increase in the national debt, to 280 billion, raises real doubts about whether the budget can be balanced at all.

CONGRESS GOES along on increasing defense expenditures. It may appropriate even more than the administration asks. But pressure is building up to oppose the administration's proposed cuts in reclamation projects, public assistance grants to the states and all such measures intended to save government money.

Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson's proposals to cut farm price support levels so as to reduce surpluses and save the government more billions gets little support. In the light of these developments there are open charges that the Eisenhower budgets for this year and next are completely unrealistic if not actually misleading.

The reason behind these charges is the lack of willingness to tighten belts in Congress. Bigger deficit spending is in sight. In spite of this National Association of Manufacturers and U. S. Chamber of Commerce recommend more tax cuts.

## Health Hazards Possible From Mice Infestation, Oregon Experts Warned

PORTLAND — Fleas, ticks, domestic cats and even dust wafted on the breezes of next spring may pose a tularemia threat to Oregon residents, health experts warned Wednesday.

The heavy mouse infestation in Central and Southern Oregon rises to the threat, they said. On the other hand Oregon might escape the threat, said Frank Prince, chief of the San Francisco field station of the U.S. Public Health Service.

"I can't understand why we haven't had human cases of tularemia at all. We just don't know," Prince said after a conference with two other Public Health Service experts and Dr. Harold M. Erickson, state health officer.

### Definite Hazard

"Although we cannot predict the future of this problem, there appears to be a definite hazard to humans, and it seems vital to maintain our surveillance," Erickson said, adding that the state will seek to have a federal control specialist assigned to maintain a firm watch on the mouse infestation.

He said future studies will be limited to Klamath County, where the infestation is the heaviest.

Erickson said the federal experts reported these findings: Severe outbreaks of tularemia sometime next spring, as rabbit fever, and other diseases among the mice, plus low winter birth rates and a shortage of food, may reduce last fall record-breaking infestation as much as 75 per cent by next spring.

### Mice May Increase

The mouse population may increase rapidly again during the spring and summer months, when the mice resume breeding and the food supply improves. Ground water, including swiftly flowing streams, shows evidence of contamination with tularemia in some areas, posing a potential threat to human and animal health.

Two mice have been found infected with bubonic plague, although this is not currently considered a likely health hazard.

An unknown virus of rickettsial disease has been found in some mice, and is now under study at

### Portland Council Considers Taking Over Bus Lines

PORTLAND — The City Council meets here Thursday and may consider a ballot measure that could put Portland in the mass transportation business.

Support for a municipally operated transit system apparently has swelled since the council recently granted a five-cent fare boost to the Rose City Transit Co. The increase was granted after the company said it would pull its buses off the streets unless permitted to boost fares 5 cents to 25 cents for a single ride.

The fare increase went into effect Sunday. The council, by a simple majority vote, could put on the May election ballot a measure calling for creation of a City Transit Commission.

In addition, such a measure under plans discussed recently also would carry a seven million dollar bond issue to purchase equipment and a 10-year levy to help finance the municipal system. It has been proposed that if a municipal transit system is created, a 20-cent adult fare be put into effect for at least two years.

### Below Normal Citrus Crop Expected In Florida

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — A below normal citrus crop can be expected for Florida for the next three seasons because of severe cold, damage to trees, the governor's freeze damage task force committee reports.

The mid-December wave of freezing temperatures seriously damaged wood and foliage on about one-eighth of Florida's bearing orange trees. Only 30 per cent of the trees escaped with no apparent damage, the committee said Thursday.

The December freeze trimmed the 1958-59 citrus crop estimate to 135 million boxes, 27 1/2 million boxes less than the pre-cold wave estimate and more than 20 million boxes less than the 1956-57 crop. "As a result of the January freeze this forecast may be further reduced," the committee said.

### Return Visit Promised By Tree Light Snatcher

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Carl L. Whitman is looking for a thoughtful thief with a light touch. Last December somebody stole a \$7.90 string of Christmas tree lights from his front yard.

Whitman found the lights on his front porch here this week along with this penciled note:

"Dear friends: We are so indeed grateful of the fact that you were kind enough to let us borrow your tree lights this Christmas. Our tree sure sparkled. Sorry we are so late returning your lights, but just be thankful that you got them back!" signed "Grateful"

Whitman welcomed return of the lights. But not this postscript: "P.S. See you again next year."

### Wholesale Food Prices Move Higher This Week

NEW YORK — Wholesale food prices, as measured by the Dun & Bradstreet Food Index, moved higher again this week.

At \$6.32 the index compared with \$6.47 a week ago and was based on the 1957-58 high first established in the week ending Jan. 21. The figure is the highest since April 1955. This week's index is 6 1/2 per cent above the \$6.13 for a similar week a year ago.

### East German Air Force Has 400 MIG Fighters

BONN, Germany — The Russian-trained air force of communist East Germany has 400 Soviet MIG jet fighters, a political party press service said here.

Western air force officials declined to comment in detail on the report from Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic Party. But informed officers said the figures "appeared to be too high."

The press service said the Red air force has 11,000 men and a total of 800 planes. Observers said any MIGs involved probably would be MIG-15s, an obsolete version of the Korean War fighter which Russia has disposed of in Egypt, Syria and other countries.

The East German peoples' army of 90,000 men contains two army corps, each of two motorized and one armored division, plus one reserve armored division. The report said.



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