EDITORIAL PAGE

La Grande Evening Observer
Frank Schiro, Publisher

'Gimme th Works!'

The Columbia Gorge-Oregon Trail Highway?

Recent announcement by the Oregon state highway commission of contemplated highway projects for the three-year period immediately after the conclusion of the war has perplexed some students of highway matters and of the highway needs of our state. Several important questions come to mind.

Primary question arises from the fact that of the 36 million dollars alloted for various state projects, 21 million 400 thousand will come from the federal government. Oregon will spend only 14 million, 600 thousand, or less than five million dollars annually. Is this all money that will be available to the state highway commission in the first three years after the war?

Tied up with this is the projected expenditure for the most important highway in the state — and the oldest and most obsolete — the Columbia river, Oregon Trail highway. For the three-year period only three million, 192 thousand has been alloted for construction on this highway. At this rate, it will take more than 15 years to complete modernization of the Columbia river route.

We, in eastern Oregon, are vitally interested in the completion of the Columbia river highway improvements. It is our connecting link with the rest of the state, and the state's link with us. However, we cannot be accused of sectionalism in our demands for its improvement. It is equally vital to the rest of the state, which should bear in mind that the Oregon Trail section is the primary westward channel for eastern traffic.

The section between The Dalles and Portland is the most obsolete in the state and should have ample and immediate improvement.

The highway was constructed 25 years ago, giving for the first time a water grade route through the Cascade range. It remains the only water grade route between Canada and Mexico, of great scenic value and has returned to the state far more than it cost.

The highway map of Oregon indicates 11 improved roads over the coast range to the Pacific and eight over the Cascades to eastern Oregon. All are more modern than the Columbia river section of the Old Oregon trail. None serve so great an area or an area as important to the development of Portland and the vast watershed of the Columbia river.

Estimates by the highway commission indicate that modernization of the highway will cost 12 million dollars. Of this about three million has been spent, but is of no value until it is completed. At the present suggested rate of expenditure on this highway it will be of little aid in the epected development of this state.

Discussion of the modernization and completion of the road has occupied priority in the commission's consideration for more than 10 years.

Yet now, when it seems possible to attack the project without recourse to some of the devious methods which have been contemplated, it gets slight consideration.

For example — and this is no criticism — nearly as much money has been allotted for The Dalles-California highway and more for the construction of the Front street section through Portland.

It may be well at this time for the commission to re-examine our highway needs.

Funny Business

"We only had one penny, so we're dividing the weight by four!"

• SO THEY SAY

I never could have got through this business if I had not had with me a powerful band of men representative of the nation and bound together by a loyalty which rose far above party politics.

—Winston Churchill.

It isn't a high tariff that makes a high standard of living. It's a large interchange of goods
—Assistant Secretary of State William Clayton.

The non-fraternizing regulation has been harder on doughboys than on the Germans. We get a kick out of giving food to starving kids, especially if they're beautiful blondes.
—Pfc William Schott of New York City, in Germany.

I am certain every German man, woman, and child within 100 miles (of Belsen) knew what was going on there.
—Maj.-Gen. W. P. Templar, AMG director, 21st Army Group.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

By DREW PEARSON

SAN FRANCISCO — A hot behind-the-scenes fight has developed in the surplus property board which effects the industry of the entire nation, especially on the west coast.

It involves the disposition of several billion dollars' worth of machine tools owned by the U. S. government and loaned to big war contractors. How these machine tools are sold is going to spell the different between concentration and diversification of industry for years to come.

For instance, Henry Kaiser, the big west coast boat builder, has ideas about going into the automobile business. He figures that if the west coast can operate some of the biggest airplane factories in the nation, it can also build automobiles. The west coast is dotted with airplane factories all the way from Seattle to San Diego and has skilled mechanics who will be out of jobs after the war. Therefore, Kaiser figures on taking up the slack by making automobiles.

However, the first requirement of the automobile industry, or for that matter any other large-scale manufacturing, is machine tools. Billions in machine tools soon will be disposed of as surplus war property, and the companies that get them will control the general peacetime production of the U.S.A. during the immediate years after the war.

If Henry Kaiser could lay his hands on a reasonable quota of the machine tools, for instance, he would have made an important step toward starting the auto industry on the west coast. If not, it would take him two or three years to get other machine tools. Meanwhile Detroit would have a head start which would be difficult for him to overtake.

Backstage Row

This is where the row inside the surplus property board comes in. Ex-Senator Guy Gillette of Iowa, chairman of the board, believes that independent businessmen, such as Kaiser, should have a chance to bid on these government-owned machine tools.

But Colonel Edward Heller and ex-Governor Robert A. Farley of Connecticut, the two other board members, oppose. They believe the companies now using the machine tools, though not owning them, should have first lien on buying them. This would mean that General Motors, one of the biggest war contractors, would get a chance to buy a tremendous amount of machine tools and would get a head start on smaller companies.

Other big auto companies and other big contractors likewise would get a head start on peacetime production if permitted to buy the tools they are now using.

Behind this 2 to 1 split inside the surplus property board are also the army, navy and war production board, all of whom strongly favor the big companies when it comes to machine tools.

However, Gillette has the support of the justice department which has just completed a survey showing that the government controls 75 per cent of the best machine tools in the country and that the business firms owning them will dominate industry.

Gillette also argues that after the last war the big war contractors were permitted to buy in the government's machine tools which they were using, so that they got a tremendous monopolistic head start on reconversion, while small business was left out in the cold.

Note — Interesting fact is that Col. Edward Heller, who has taken a position which would hinder diversification of industry to the west coast, comes from the west coast.

Jap Prisoners

While the U. S. army permits nazi prisoners in U. S. prison camps to maintain their fascist ways, the Chinese northern guerrillas have just won over 400 captured Jap soldiers and persuaded them to join the Chinese army.

Out of a total of 2,500 Jap prisoners captured, 400 were converted and the other 2,100 were allowed to return to the Jap lines.

They were permitted to return as living proof that the Chinese do not torture their prisoners, but that they were well-fed and healthy. U. S. observers believe this demonstration may help to reduce the ferocity of Jap resistance and the do-or-die policy of Jap soldiers.

The 400 Jap soldiers, who remained to work with the Chinese, supplied a list of Jap soldiers' gripes — what food the Jap soldier disliked most. What equipment was bad. What he disliked about his officers. From this, propaganda leaflets are being prepared to play up these grievances in pamphlets dropped over the Jap lines.

WE, THE WOMEN

By RUTH MILLETT

GIs at a camp in France who heard a visiting general say that powdered eggs, if properly prepared, compared favorably with fresh eggs were skeptical. The general, however, whipped off his blouse, put on an apron and proved his point by preparing a tasty dish from the despised powdered eggs.

This is a hint for us women at home that in the future our solemn verdicts, about what can and what can't be done in running a house, are likely to meet with some challenges from men who know what they are talking about.

It certainly won't be safe to say to a GI husband who complains of the way his bed is made, "Well, I'd like to see you do a better job." He probably can and will—to prove his point.

The wail that this or that can't be done because the proper household equipment is lacking isn't likely to impress the service man, who has made satisfactory furniture out of crates.

The announcement that "We'll have to eat dinner out, as the butcher forgot to send the roast," will probably just send a returned serviceman to the pantry and back with the challenge: "Why you've got enough stuff out there to feed an army."

So wives of men, who have made out under all kinds of challenging circumstances, will have to be sure of their ground before they set themselves up as the final authority on what can and can't be done around a house.

If they aren't, they are likely to come in for a few lessons in how to rise to an emergency and how to do a job the way it should be done.

Behind Scenes in Washington

By PETER EDSON, La Grande Evening Observer Washington Correspondent

SAN FRANCISCO—Nerve center of interest for this United Nations conference on International Organization isn't the opera house or the veterans' building where the formal sessions are held, but the Fairmont hotel up on Nob Hill, overlooking the bay and the city. The show is down in the civic center, but the work is done at the Fairmont where the American delegation has its headquarters.

Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius lined up his San Francisco "team" for its first public exhibition and a press preview at the Fairmont 24 hours before the conference got under way. They said the presentation would be in the Red room. But somebody around here is either color blind, or viewing this conference through rose-colored glasses, because the room had green walls with gold trimmings.

At all conventions there is at least one hotel where the important things seem to happen, and as far as the U.S. delegation and American interest is concerned, the Fairmont is in San Francisco. The Saudi Arabians in their flowing robes are also quartered here, but don't attach too much significance to this because it doesn't necessarily mean that they'll come under a U.S. trusteeship.

It's a wonder somebody hasn't made an issue of this, however, because every other person you meet in San Francisco seems to be hipped on the subject of trusteeships. All the other every other persons are hipped on Poland.

Most amazing aspect of this situation is that while everyone tries to talk learnedly and deeply about these two issues, nobody ever says anything.

When Secretary Stettinius submitted to questioning, he didn't say anything on these subjects, too. On Poland the secretary said he had nothing to add. On trusteeships he said the U.S. positions had been established and was prepared to discuss it. But he didn't.

Somebody asked how this position had been established and the secretary said, "In consultation." It got a big laugh, but doesn't seem very funny now.

Funniest thing you see around the Fairmont are some of the people you wouldn't expect to see there. You wonder why they're there. Maybe they wonder that, too.

Ely Culbertson, the bridge expert who now has a system of bidding, take out and play of a hand in a book he calls, "Total Peace or What Makes War." Clarence Streit, complete without hat and with brief case full of his own plans for "union now."

Phil Murray and Jim Carey of the CIO. Dave Beck of the Teamsters and Bob Watt of the AF of L.

An American Indian in full war paint and feathers, but without peace pipe, handing out statements that something should be done about trusteeship—that word again—for the American Indians. British, Dutch and French will probably get a big belt out of this because Americans have said so many nasty things about the way those countries treated their dependent peoples.

If the U.S. delegation has to listen to all such outsiders as these who have bills of patented goods to sell, it's hard to see how they can get much else done in six weeks, but they'll try.

Secretary of State Stettinius lives in a swell penthouse on the Fairmont roof. Under-Secretaries Jimmy Dunn and Nelson Rockefeller and Archie MacLeish, the other six men and one woman delegate, the advisors and a staff of over 100 technicians and secretaries from the state department have offices and adjoining bedrooms on the floors below. This system ensures that if the help goes to sleep on the job, they don't have to go far to wake 'em up.

Snappy MP's in pairs patrol the corridors, looking slightly bored about it, while gobs rustle baggage for the important people, looking positively disgusted.

The bellhops think things will quiet down now that all the delegates are here and assigned to rooms, but that's just what they think. Wait till the delegates start bombarding room service with calls for aspirin.

Side Glances

"It wasn't his fault he broke his arm! He wouldn't have tried to do a trapeze act in the old tree if that silly girl down the street hadn't been egging him on!"

• McKENNEY ON BRIDGE

By WM. E. McKENNEY, America's Card Authority

SIX CLUBS IS COLD, BUT TOUGH TO BID

Our league business meetings at the New York athletic club every few weeks always produce a couple of hands. Here is a bidding problem given to us by Lee Hazen. His brother Fred, a lieutenant in England, and Lieut. William Ford, formerly associated with the Birmingham Post, wanted to know the correct bidding.

North: ♠ A Q 7 4 ♥ K J 3 ♦ Q J 7 2 ♣ J 5

South: ♠ K J 6 ♥ A 8 3 ♦ 6 ♣ A K Q 8 4 3

Rubber—Neither vul.

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♦	2 N.T.	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 N.T.	Pass
4 N.T.	Pass	Pass	Pass

5

Hazen showed us only the North hand and told us South had opened the bidding with a club and West had bid a diamond.

Well, we all agreed that North ought to bid two no trump. He then stated that South bid three clubs and we all agreed that North ought to bid three no trump; then, if South went to four no trump, North should pass. Of course, the hand is cold for six clubs.

When the boys failed to get to six clubs over in England, asked Hazen's brother, Fred, "How should the hand be bid?"

Looking at both hands, I believe that all of the experts sitting around the table could have bid it to six, but looking at only the one hand, the best any of them got to was four no trump. So I guess they are playing just as good bridge in England as they are here.

Questions & Answers

Q—What are two political distinctions of Weimar, Germany?

A—The republic was set up there in 1919; the Versailles treaty was ratified there that same year. Prewar population numbered 46,000.

Q—What is the newest idea for a gasoline substitute?

A—Water. A Baltimore man has patented a process for cracking water into oxygen and hydrogen and converting the escaping gases into power.

Q—What is a lycanthropist?

A—A person who thinks he is a wolf. It's a form of insanity.

Q—What does BUAER mean in navy code?

A—Bureau of Aeronautics.

Q—How much of the airplane's flying noise is made by the propeller?

A—About 70 per cent.

Q—Where is the largest windowless building in the nation?

A—At Fort Worth, Texas, the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft factory, 3,000,000 square feet.

• IN FORMER YEARS

30 Years Ago, May 4

One of the greatest cleanups of horses experienced was underway at the Grande Ronde valley. Practically half of a 22-car train of horses billed to Kansas City left La Grande and buying continued at a high rate, accentuated by the presence of French war horse inspectors who located and investigated the animals.

15 Years Ago, May 4

In observance of her eighth birthday anniversary, Mary Joan Bouvy was honored at a party at the home of her parents, Dr. and Mrs. Lee Bouvy. Ten guests were present and games were played.

Forest Supervisor Erwin of Pendleton was in La Grande making arrangements with the county and the chamber of commerce for a survey of the proposed Mt. Emily scenic highway.

10 Years Ago, May 4

A $100,000 undergrade crossing on Spruce between Adams avenue and the Island City highway was planned by the state highway.

In honor of her birthday anniversary, Avis Ferris was given a birthday surprise by a group of her friends.

This Curious World

ANSWER: A disease, chiefly of India and Ceylon.

NEXT: They didn't think man could take it.