EDITORIAL PAGE

La Grande Evening Observer

Frank Schiro, Publisher

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Our Changing World

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Most men employ the first part of life to make the other part miserable.—La Bruyere.

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Farm Decrease Significant

Information recently released by the bureau of census and published by this newspaper indicated that although Union county in 1944 had 25,000 more acres of farm land under cultivation, 47 fewer farms were being operated than in 1940.

This information is of more than casual interest and indicates a trend, which, if it continues, augurs ill for the future of the Grande Ronde valley, its farmers, business men and residents.

Although railroading and lumbering loom large in the business scheme of this valley, the backbone of these and of the entire social structure is agricultural. Farming accounts for more than 50 percent of the income, employment and traffic of the area. Without the farm background, every other activity would be of less significance, create less payroll and traffic. Therefore, whatever happens to our farm structure is of vital importance to every citizen of the area.

Let's examine the statistics a little more closely: In 1940, there were 471,173 acres under tillage or cultivation of some sort. The latest survey indicated 496,169 acres being farmed.

In 1945 there exist 1,208 farms, but in 1940 there were 1,225.

What does this mean? Does it mean that while additional land has been developed, 47 farms are now lying idle and uncultivated?

Not at all. The significance of these figures lies in another angle of consideration. The 47 farms under question are now part of other, larger farms. The facts are that we have now in the valley 47 FEWER FARM FAMILIES THAN IN 1940.

In our farming population, we have 47 fewer owners or operators of farms; 47 fewer entrepreneurs, or farm business people; 47 fewer families to trade in our towns and communities; 47 fewer taxpayers.

The period from 1940 to 1945 has been the most prosperous farming period in the history of the valley. Yet despite the prosperity, 47 farmers have found reason to quit.

It can be said that had prices been at a less favorable level, the probabilities would have been that our loss in the number of farms would have been greater. The probabilities are high that at the conclusion of the war, this trend may be accelerated.

What are the reasons? Farming practice in the Grande Ronde valley at the present time is of the type conducive to large scale operation. Types and qualities and yields of crops are not conducive to profitable small scale operation. On the pre-war scale of farm prices only the larger operators, equipped for handling many acres at low cost per acre could hope to come out in the black. Even today it is difficult for some. After the war, conditions will certainly again narrow down.

What is the answer? Diversified farming of the type conducive to small scale operation. Irrigation will open up a tremendous field of farming now closed in this valley. Irrigation will double the farm population of the valley within ten years of its completion. Irrigation will increase the size and prosperity of every community. Without irrigation, the Grande Ronde valley will eventually be composed of a comparatively few very large farms. The city populations will shrink as correspondingly fewer merchants, businesses and their employes will be necessary to serve their needs.

Irrigation will reverse the trend and make this valley the productive paradise it should be.

Funny Business

"Hes going native!"

• SO THEY SAY

No matter what concessions are made minorities are never satisfied. We therefore propose the transfer of (German) populations.
—President Eduard Benes, of Czechoslovakia.

The job that the newspapers of the nation have done in support of the Seventh war loan drive represents an accomplishment for which every newspaperman should feel truly proud.
—Frank Tripp, chairman, Allied Newspaper Council of the Treasury.

It will be up to Poland to harmonize her foreign policy with that of Soviet Russia, without however sacrificing her political, economic and cultural independence.
—Prof. Oscar Lange, of the University of Chicago.

Care is a little four-letter word but it does a mighty job in preventing tragedy.
—Memphis, Tenn., Prass-Scimitar.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

By DREW PEARSON

WASHINGTON—It may take a long time to find out whether Hitler and Eva Braun escaped to Patagonia. The country is a series of vast Nazi-owned ranches, where German is spoken almost exclusively and where Hitler could be hidden easily and successfully for years.

The ranches in this southern part of Argentina cover thousands of acres and have been under German management for generations. Because of absolute German control, it would be impossible for any non-German to penetrate the area to make a thorough investigation as to Hitler's whereabouts.

Along the coast of Patagonia, many Germans own land which contains harbors deep enough for submarine landings. And if submarines could get to Argentine-Uruguayan waters from Germany, as they definitely did, there is no reason why they could not go a little farther south to Patagonia. Also there is no reason why Hitler couldn't have been on one of them.

Note—On Dec. 15, 1943, this column reported "Hitler's gang has been working to build up a place of exile in Argentina in case of defeat. After the fall of Stalingrad and then Tunisia, they began to see defeat staring them in the face. That was their cue to move in on Argentina." The same column also cited chapter and verse regarding German-trained officials who ruled the new Argentine dictatorship. At San Francisco, Nelson Rockefeller and Jimmy Dunn insisted that the U. S. A. recognize Argentina.

Note 2—If it ever comes to identifying Hitler, Dr. Robert Kermner, former German police official now living in Lansdowne, Pa., has the answers. Kempner, who was in charge of the investigation after Hitler's beer hall putsch, says that Hitler's right thumb is abnormally long, his right ear pointed on top, and his mouth is very receding. Kempner has turned over his data to U. S. authorities.

Army Politics Killed Chennault

Under Secretary of War Bob Patterson and air force Gen. Ira Eaker were put on a very hot spot during their secret session with the senate military affairs committee. Not a senator present was willing to believe the resignation of Maj. Gen. Claire Chennault was caused by anything but army politics.

Patterson tried to explain the selection of Lieut. Gen. George Stratemeyer as supreme air chief in China on the basis of seniority.

"That was known when Stratemeyer was sent out there," shot back hard-working Senator Happy Chandler of Kentucky, who spent several weeks watching Chennault's operation in the winter of 1943.

Aside from that explanation, Patterson insisted that Stratemeyer's appointment over Chennault was strictly a decision on the part of Gen. Albert Wedemeyer, theater commander.

Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana, not a member of the committee but sponsor of a resolutin calling for senatorial investigation of the incident, was at the secret committee session and questioned Patterson and Eaker about Chennault's military prowess. War department officials did not attempt to argue about the ability of the former "Flying Tiger."

General Eaker, who had been in command of U. S. air forces in England and was shunted off to Italy, was well received by the senators. His own experience, they thought, was part of the same army politics which resulted in Chennault's resignation. The Eaker incident, however, was not discussed.

"Chennault Got Bored"—Eaker

General Eaker attempted to explain the war in China has reached a new stage. The important thing now, he said, is not overland operations against the Jap armies and

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WE, THE WOMEN

By RUTH MILLETT

All the while her soldier husband was listed as missing in action and presumably dead a young wife in Atlanta, Ga., wrote him letters she couldn't mail but instead put away in a drawer.

Her faith that her husband would someday return was rewarded, and the picture of the two taken after the twice wounded soldier was released from a German prison camp showed them reading together the letters that were actual proof of the wife's continued love and faith.

It was a heart-warming story. How much happier for all concerned than the stories of the wives who have given up hope for their men when they have been reported "killd in action," and have gone ahead and married again only to discover that their husbands are still living.

Waiting Is Duty

Faith that results in a wife's waiting for a man month after month when he is believed to be dead won't bring him back, if the war department report is correct.

But with even the slight chance that the report might be wrong, it seems as though the wives who are told their husbands are officially dead shouldn't try to forget to the extent of letting themselves fall in love again—not, at least, until the war is over long enough for there to be no possibility of a mistake being made.

It is, perhaps, in some ways easier for a human being to make himself accept the indisputable fact that a loved-one is dead than to live on the forlorn hope that he might somehow, somewhere still be alive.

And yet, it seems—from the stories of mistaken death reports that have already come out of the war—wives should keep faith until after final victory.

For it would be better that a thousand wives wait within reason—than that one should mistakenly marry while her husband is still alive.

Waiting is the duty of women in wartime—even when it seems they are waiting without hope.

Behind Scenes in Washington

By PETER EDSON, La Grande Evening Observer Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON, July 24—Has the Tennessee valley authority "experiment" paid off? Or is it, as charged by the combined lobby of 31 land and water users' organizations, something which should not be repeated in other parts of the United States?

Only answer to that must come from TVA's own records. TVA's annual report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1945, is not yet completed. But taking the 1944 report and adding to it those figures which are available on recent operations, these facts stand out:

First, the cost. Congress has appropriated $868,000,000 bonds. The net income from power operations after payment of all current expense but before depreciation, is $75,000,000. In addition, TVA took over from the war department the old muscle Shoals and other World War I developments at a book value of $36,000,000. That makes the total cost of $844,000,000.

Where has this money gone? $560,000,000 has been spent on the completed plant, and another $188,000,000 has been spent on the construction work still in progress. Of these sums, approximately $460,000,000 is for power projects, the rest flood control and navigation. In addition, $47,000,000 has been spent for non-income producing development of the Tennessee valley. Two million dollars worth of bonds have been retired and there is $41,000,000 in the TVA treasury. Loans to municipal power companies are $3,000,000. Inventory is put at $7,000,000. Depreciation of $4,000,000 balances the books at the above mentioned $844,000,000. On the basis of operating experience up to the present, TVA estimates that its income from the sale of electric power, which is its only source of income, will be sufficient to retire the entire investment within 60 years, without interest.

For the past year, TVA's gross income from power sales has been $38,000,000. With operating expenses of $20,000,000, the net income has been $18,000,000. This is the equivalent of a little over 2 percent interest on the power, flood control and navigation investment. It is nearly 4 percent n the investment in power facilities alone.

The charge that TVA can make this return because it doesn't pay taxes does not bear up. In lieu of taxes TVA is currently paying $2,000,000 a year to state and local governments where it owns property and does business.

TVA's electric power generating system of 24 water and 11 steam plants has been greatly expanded for war production of aluminum and chemicals. Three-fourths of its present 2,200,000 kilowat capacity goes to war plants.

In addition TVA furnished power to over half a million consumers through 130 locally owned municipal and co-op distribution systems. More than 20 percent of the consumers are rural. One of the big brags of TVA is that its average non-industrial consumer uses twice as much electricity as the U. S. average. The TVA yardstick has been used in many communities to force down rates. The consumption figures are cited by TVA supporters to show that the standard of living in the Tennessee valley is higher, measured in terms of consumption of electricity. This, however, is not the only thing which TVA claims to have done for the people of its region.

TVA is charged with flood control. It has 19 water storage dams in operation. It flatly denies charges its flood control operations have not benefited flood conditions on the lower Ohio and Mississippi. On the Tennessee river itself, TVA claims to have lowered flooderest levels at Chattanooga by six feet In dry weather these dams opened to release water at a rate that will maintain a nine-foot channel depth for navigation on the river's lower 650 miles. Ton-biles of traffic on the river have been increased seven times over 1933, with 18 barg lines now carrying grain, coal, petroleum and war materials.

TVA's chemical plant at Muscle Shoals has turned out a quarter of a million tons of fertilizer shipped to 31,000 farms in 28 states.

TVA has promoted forestry, planting 152,000 seedlings to sustain yield on timber lands which cover half the valley. It has done research on minerals in this area, turning up a firebrick clay that formerly had to be imported from India. It has experimented with new uses of electricity on farms, new farm machinery, new methods of food processing. It has worked for the control of steam pollution and malaria. In all this research, TVA goes after the development of all resources in their relationships to each other rather than in segments, divided along the sharp lines which separate government departments from each other.

The whole list adds up to an imposing record which the TVA enemies—who are out to stop the spread of the "authority" idea to other parts of the country—will have a hard time shouting down.

Side Glances

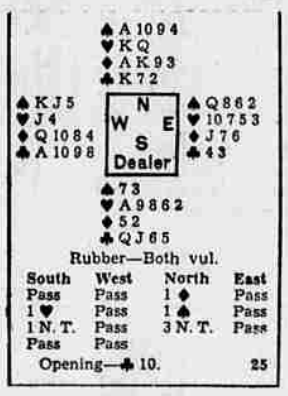
"Of course he doesn't like you—he's a wolfhound!"

• McKENNEY ON BRIDGE

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

MOST IMPORTANT? COUNT YOUR TRICKS!

I have been running this bridge column now for more than 15 years, and if you were to ask me today what was the most important lesson to learn about bridge, the answer would be: "Learn to count your tricks." People spend weeks studying squeezes, end plays and coups, and you know those plays are just natural, if you count your tricks.



I was kibitzing one of the rubber bridge games at the Mayfair the other night and I saw declairer blow this nice hand.

He won the first trick in dummy with the king of clubs and, without hesitation, cashed the king and queen of hearts. Now his contract was lost. If he had counted his tricks, he would have overtaken the queen of hearts with the ace, thus conserving a club entry so that even though he had to give up a heart trick, he would still make one spade, four hearts, two diamonds and two clubs.

Questions & Answers

Q—In what two cities does nearly half of all Missouri's population live?

A—St. Louis and Kansas City, whose metropolitan areas wtihin the state contain some 1,500,000 or over 40 percent of Missouri's 3,800,000 people.

Q—When did Hawaii come into the possession of the United States?

A—On July 7, 1898, when President McKinley signed the Congressional resolution of annexation. Ceremony transferring sovereignty took place Aug. 12, 1898.

Q—Who is Sean T. O'Kelley?

A—New president of Ireland.

Q—Where is the Wright Brothers first airplane exhibited?

A—It is displayed in the Science museum, South Kensington, England.

Q—What duly elected Congress never met in plenary session?

A—The Congress of the Philippines, elected in November, 1941. Japs attacked before they ever had a full meeting.

• IN FORMER YEARS

30 Years Ago, July 24

The huckleberry crop will be extremely light this year. In some sections there will be about one-third of a crop, but it is the late variety, the early kinds being entirely destroyed.

L. M. Epling left yesterday for Kentucky points.

Celebration of the day when the Mormon immigrants landed in Utah was observed in this city today with a big picnic and program at Riverside park. Members of the LDS church from over the entire state assembled to combine a Sunday school program with a fitting observance of the day set apart each year to honor the advent of Mormonism in the west.

15 Years Ago, July 24

F. L. Meyers, who recently attended the International Rotary convention in Chicago, gave a detailed report of the meeting at the La Grande Rotary club luncheon today at the La Grande hotel.

The club also enjoyed two flute solos played by Dolph Siegrist, accompanied at the piano by Mrs. J. Donald Meyers.

A set of chimes, purchased recently for the pipe organ of the First Presbyterian church, are now in the building and will be installed soon.

10 Years Ago, July 24

Hildegarde Rettig has gone to Portland where she will remain until school opens here this fall.

Robert Kingsley left yesterday for Vancouver to spend a week visiting his grandmother, Mrs. O. L. Kingsley.

Rev. and Mrs. Edwin W. Bracher and family were leaving today for Bingner's cabin at the foot of Mt. Emily where they will spend two or three days vacation.

This Curious World

NEXT: Why is the Dead Sea so salty?