

EDITORIAL PAGE

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This We Gotta See



The Public and Pearl Harbor

There has appeared, in the wake of the army and navy reports on Pearl Harbor, a tendency to hold the American people equally responsible with the officers directly involved in that disaster.

It must be admitted that, back in the thirties, the people and their representatives in congress were guilty of considerable shortsightedness and complacency in military matters. Nevertheless, this is a minority dissent from the prevalent opinion.

The general indictment of the people for bringing about the Pearl Harbor tragedy assumes that this government in all its ramifications is as truly a servant of the people in practice as it is in spirit. That assumption is not only incorrect but impossible.

We must leave the conduct of foreign affairs and the preparations for national defense to the elected head of government and to those specialists whom he chooses to assist him. International relations are traditionally and sometimes necessarily secret. So are some details of a nation's defense. It is the American custom to entrust such activities to appointed officials with long experience or professional training in those fields.

At a threat of emergency it is possible to draw the cloak of secrecy even more closely about diplomatic and military operations. Excellent excuses can always be found for doing this. But, in

1941, the American people could not be blamed for assuming that behind the cloak things were going smoothly, that if war threatened steps would be taken to meet the threat.

Obviously the steps were not taken. Since the commanders at Pearl Harbor were first apprised of the true seriousness of the situation by the Jap attack itself, it seems a little too simple to lay the direct and dire results of that attack to long-range public complacency.

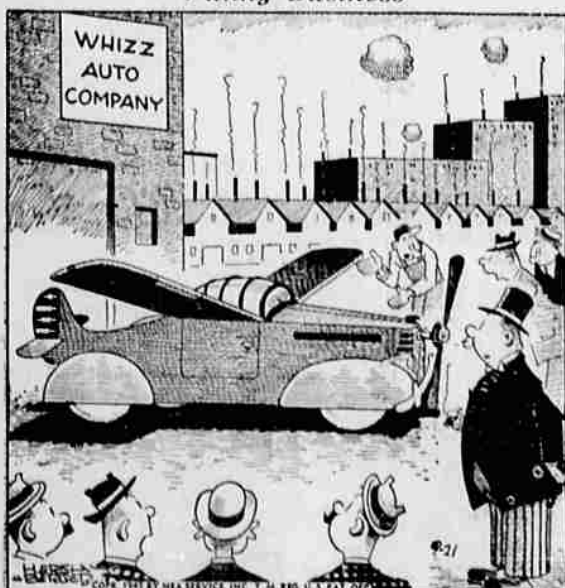
It should be remembered that both of the 140 candidates for president lulled the people with assurances of peace. It should also be remembered that it was no crime to hate war.

Many government and military leaders expended a good deal of breath throughout the war on chiding the public. It was berated for being complacent, for not working hard enough, for buying too few bonds, for giving too little blood, for this, that and the other.

Looking back on the war from this short distance, it seems to us the public did a pretty good job. Civilians did work, they did give blood, they are paying the bills. And there is no good reason for them to sit meekly by and take another kick in the slats for Pearl Harbor.

The fact still remains that this country lost men, ships and planes on Dec. 7, 1941, and very nearly lost a war. Thus far the explanations why have been general and confusing. What is still needed is a definite fixing of responsibility, not a dismissal of the matter with the most vague and general explanation of all—public guilt.

Funny Business



SO THEY SAY

Man has solved the problem of production, but has not yet solved the problems of distribution. That is a major postwar economic puzzle.

—LA—Gov. Gen. Hubertus Van Mook of the Netherlands East Indies.

We now realize more than ever the need for real international co-operation in health and we hope to march side by side with our comrades in the United Nations in securing it.

—Sir William Jameson, chief medical officer, British Ministry of Health.

We've got to "buckle down" if we expect to hold the prosperity that cost many an American his life.

—Fort Lauderdale, Fla., News.

The frightfully devastating war weapons of today are undoubtedly the world's most potent peace advocates.

—New Orleans, La., States.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

By DREW PEARSON

WASHINGTON—Tip-off on the navy's original discharge intention was dropped accidentally by retiring chief of personnel Adm. Randall Jacobs.

A smart young reporter for the Washington Star, Miram Ottenberg, asked navy press relations for an interview with Jacobs. She was told she could have one of he had no objections. Navy press relations promptly phoned Jacobs' office that the interview was not to be given, but somehow this message went haywire.

Miss Ottenberg got the interview. It was a pip. The admiral really expanded. Among other things, he dropped this nugget of truth regarding the navy's discharge system.

"We want the young men in the navy. That's why age was included. The younger ones are the ones the navy of the future has to be built around."

This is the tip-off to the fact a young man can have been in the navy four long years—since before Pearl Harbor—and if he isn't married, he still may not be able to get out.

Admiral King Forgot

Since then, Admiral Jacobs has been relieved as chief of personnel, not because of this, but because he had finished his tour of duty. Commander of the fleet Adm. Ernest King balked like a steer at having him go, however, and submitted a three-page memo to Secretary Forrestal giving reasons why Adm. Lou Denfeld, assistant to Jacobs, was not the man to take his place. Forrestal called Denfeld in, showed him the memo.

"What have you to say about that?" Forrestal asked with a grin.

"Nothing," replied Admiral Denfeld. Whereupon Forrestal immediately appointed Denfeld chief of the bureau of personnel. This, incidentally, is not the first time Forrestal has overridden Admiral King recently.

Admiral Denfeld, however, will have a hard time changing the navy's discharge system materially as long as Admiral King's and other Annapolis policies prevail.

Inside fact is the Japanese surrender caught Admiral King with four different discharge plans in his desk. He had done nothing about any of them. One plan would not have discharged any man from the navy

until six months after V-J day. It was rejected by Secretary Forrestal as completely inadequate.

Big Peacetime Navy

While the navy's original discharge system has now been modified to give one-fourth of a point per month for sea duty, thousands of men still consider it inadequate, still feel it is designed to force men to remain in a big peacetime navy.

They also point out the revised plan still has plenty of jokers.

For instance, a commander can keep any man for 120 days if he says he needs him, so that six months can easily pass by the time he gets through the separation center. Also combat men generally are aged 17 to 28. And they get no credit for the grueling punishment they took off Iwo Jima or Okinawa. These are the young men Admiral Jacobs accidentally admitted the admirals wanted kept in the navy—apparently regardless of length of combat duty. His excuse for not giving combat credit was that the records were lost.

How the system works was illustrated the other day on a certain battleship, now on the west coast. The navy recently issued an "allpac" (all Pacific) directive authorizing all ships to reduce their complement by 10 percent. This was to give shore duty to deserving personnel who had served a long tour of duty on board and were close to a discharge.

But the order did not have that effect. The majority of those transferred were not men who had been overseas, but those who had not been attached to the ship long enough to become "necessary" to its operation. Two of the officers had been on board less than three months, but had accumulated points as a result of college training and recent marriage. They had never been in combat zone on any ship, yet they are receiving discharges ahead of men who made the mistake of becoming "valuable" to the navy and showing interest and efficiency in carrying out their duties.

Thus the very men who should have been kept on board and trained to relieve experienced officers, left the ship.

WE, THE WOMEN

By RUTH MILLETT

When a midwestern newspaper recently asked a group of men and women "How do you think the public could cut down on automobile accidents?" half of the men interviewed took the opportunity to make cracks at women drivers.

The remarks went like this: "Watch the woman driver. A woman always seems to think she has got the right of way." And "Women cause a lot of accidents because they can't seem to keep their minds on driving."

So with the return of gasoline we've given a certain type of man a chance to air his views once again on one of his pet subjects—women drivers.

How come such men take so much pleasure in making absurd and statistically groundless remarks about the capability of women drivers—even after women during the war years jumped into the driver's seats of taxis, buses, trucks, and even generals' jeeps?

It is probably because such men resent the freedom that driving a car gives to a woman. Turn a woman loose with a car and you don't keep her chained to the kitchen.

And where the shoe pinches worse is where it affects the individual man himself. If mama knows how to drive the family car, then papa doesn't have it for his own all the time.

He gets taken to work and picked up afterward—so the little woman can have the car for marketing, getting the kids to and from school, etc.

And that produces a deep-rooted antagonism toward the woman driver, which—since men can't do anything else about the matter—results in ridicule.

"Might have known it was a woman driving that car," says the unhappy, frustrated man, whose own little woman drives "his car all day long."

Behind Scenes in Washington

By PETER EDSON, La Grande Evening Observer Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON—Having received seven army-navy E's for excellence in producing over 90 percent of aluminum used in the war against the axis the Aluminum Company of America has in the past week or so received as a further tribute from a grateful government, four socks in the jaw. Only three have been actually delivered, but the fourth punch has been telegraphed ahead and is now in the making, starting its swing from the floor.

1. The Reconstruction Finance corporation cancelled the leases under Alcoa which had been operating five government plants.

2. A senate small business subcommittee headed by Senator Tom Stewart of Tennessee issued a report with an 18-point program for disposal of light metals plants, emphasizing that the government should foster competition to Alcoa.

3. Attorney General Tom Clark sent a report to congress recommending that Alcoa be busted up into a number of competing companies.

4. Still to come is a report to congress from the surplus property board, which is expected to recommend the creation of private competition to Alcoa or, if that cannot be done, continued government operation of plants in competition to Alcoa.

Anyone speaking a kind word for a big corporation is subject to suspicion in new deal Washington, but an unbiased conclusion on this four-way attack on Alcoa is that the government may have outsmarted itself.

When RFC cancelled Alcoa's contract to operate five government plants, it was anticipated Alcoa would protest. Alcoa had made offers to buy two of the plants at Jones Mill and Hurricane Creek, Ark.; these are the only offers to buy RFC has received. But, RFC decided it could not sell or lease to Alcoa because that would contribute to Alcoa's dominant position in the industry. When Alcoa said, OK, the RFC and surplus property boys were thrown on their haunches. They are now stuck with two more plants which might have been disposed of.

Attorney General Clark's report recommending that Alcoa be dissolved as Standard Oil was dissolved some years ago, is

truly sensational. What is significant, however, is that in recommending the reorganization of Alcoa into a group of competing companies, the attorney general came to the conclusion that any government subsidies, profit guarantees or favorable leases to competition of Alcoa would never solve the problem. "Competition will never become healthy enough to stand on its own legs," writes the attorney general, "if it is dependent on so much nursing and propping by government."

The question may be raised as to what right the attorney general has to recommend that any corporation be dissolved. Not even congress can order a corporation dissolved. That is something for the courts, and in Alcoa's case, it cannot be decided until the government-owned plants are disposed of, and the post-war degree of Alcoa's dominance in the aluminum business can be determined. Clark's gratuitous opinion may, therefore, be considered prejudicial to the case. And if the government can't dispose of the surplus plants, the case drags on forever.

There is a further ball-up in that Clark's report to congress knocks out the props to the RFC, small business committee and surplus property board ideas for setting up and backing other competitors to Alcoa.

Reynolds Metals, Henry Kaiser, Columbia Metals and the Olin corporation are reported to have made tentative offers to operate surplus aluminum plants on a lease basis, the government guaranteeing the profits and assuming the losses, if any. From the taxpayer's point of view, this is an expensive way to create competition. But with a billion or more pounds of surplus aluminum hanging over the market in airplanes waiting to be scrapped, any company going into the aluminum business on any other basis would be a chump.

The net result of this battle royal in which four departments of government have ganged up on Alcoa is to create confusion instead of stability in the aluminum industry. That is how the government has outsmarted itself.

Side Glances



"I'm glad we've got the OPA, madam—if I set these prices myself you'd quit trading with me every other day!"

McKENNEY ON BRIDGE

By WILLIAM E. MCKENNEY

America's Card Authority

THINK AGAIN BEFORE DOUBLING THIS ONE

Winners of the Masters Pair Championship this year were M.

Appleyard			
None	Q 9 7 3	K 10 9 8 2	10 9 8
A J 9 8	8 4	W	K 10
A 8	K 2	N	J 10 8 5
5	A 6	S	A 6 3
K Q 3 2	Q 7 5 3 2	E	J 7 6
Lightman			
Q 7 5 3 2	K 2	Q 7 4	A 5 4
Duplicate—E-W. vul.			
South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Double	Redouble	2 ♥
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	2 N. T.
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Opening—♠ 10			
21			

A. Lightman, Memphis, Tenn., and Pte. Robert Appleyard of Randolph Field, Texas. They

BARBS

We're now getting about the last of the corn-on-the-cob. That's tough!

The heavy question soon will be, to wear them or not to wear them.

Will the counties please note that all limits have been removed from road building—and get us out of the rut.

The success of the party is often judged by the number of cars that stand out in front—and block driveways.

Tire-markers rationing can end by Jan. 1. Meaning, warily we roll along.

We cannot teach democracy or the American way of life to a people who have empty stomachs, and expect them to understand. —Rep. Frank L. Chelf of Kentucky.

Reports from our mission in Greece have given shocking details of wanton destruction perpetrated by the Germans. A total of 1691 small villages were wiped out... 414,056 Greeks are homeless. —Roy F. Hendrickson, deputy director general, UNRRA.

IN FORMER YEARS

Thirty Years Ago—Yesterday was anti-saloon league day in La Grande churches and several big audiences were out to hear the speakers.

A contract has been let for the extension of the balcony in Zuber hall completely around the interior. The dressing rooms will be changed about and installation of a steam heating plant has been decided upon.

Fifteen Years Ago—The \$500 for La Grande's share in the work this fall on the Mt. Emily scenic highway, in which the government, county and city are cooperating, has been pledged, according to Charles Reynolds, chairman of the chamber of commerce committee handling the matter.

Consolidation of U. P. trains No. 6 and 24, eastbound, and No. 23 westbound, was announced today.

Ten Years Ago—The La Grande city planning board last night voted formal approval of the school district's application to PWA for a loan and grant of \$72,000 to construct a gymnasium - auditorium - class room annex to the L. H. S. high school building.

This Curious World



AN ARMY WORM HAS BEEN KNOWN TO CROSS AN 80-ACRE FIELD... A TRIP OF THE 80-ACRE FIELD... IN JULY 24 HOURS. U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT.

NEXT: When autumn comes.