

Misnomer



EDITORIAL PAGE

LA GRANDE OBSERVER

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"Without or with friend or foe, we print your daily world as it goes"—Byron.

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Comes The 'Hot Stove' Season

At least two entirely different topics in public opinion, discussion and debate will tend to generate interest in the coming wintry weather in La Grande when people move indoors for the "hot stove" season.

The one topic is based on the juvenile problem, local discussion derived from the national level through the Parent Teachers Association.

The other is political in nature and is under sponsorship of the La Grande Chamber of Commerce.

Both are excellent types of entertainment for adults; the former comprising a listening and participating audience of parents of school age children; the latter for the more politically-minded person.

At least 100 persons attended a recent session at the local Junior High School under auspices of the school's PTA, and

took up one phase of parent-juvenile discussion. The meeting was highly interesting and enlightening and was so because of intelligent panel selection.

The select body was composed of a judge, an insurance man, a teacher, a mother and four students. Main body of discussion centered around "teen-age drivers." Future meetings contemplated by the PTA will delve into additional young people's problems, a comparison on the national and local level.

Buck Hermann, president of the Junior High School PTA, and his committee are to be congratulated on their efforts to present current topics that are bound to interest all parents of school-age children. These meetings are well worth the attendance of all parents from throughout the La Grande area.

Man Is Judged By The Company He Keeps

The producer of a major TV quiz show says he is stunned. His network is dropping all quiz shows on the grounds that the public has lost confidence in them. He has done nothing wrong. His show is on the up-and-up. Yet he has to go off the air.

This producer suffers from what is implied in the phrase, "guilt by association." Dishonesty has been exposed in some quiz shows. Therefore all similar shows are suspected.

This is unfair, but it happens all the time. A small percentage of the teenagers are delinquents. Yet other teenagers find themselves often treated as if they are at least potential delinquents. Some movies are unbelievably bad.

The whole movie industry suffers as a result. An honest wrestler could claim he had never thrown a match, but who would believe him? Men in public office sometimes find it difficult to cope with the old conception that politicians as a group are just in it for what they can graft or steal.

Sen. McCarthy became adept at seeing guilt in those who merely associated with those known to be guilty. This took a queer twist when the senator's tactics became so discredited that some who were outspoken against the Red menace were accused of McCarthyism.

Guilt by association is a bad thing but it is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid.

Gunnar's Move A Smart One

Pete Gunnar, Republican State Chairman who has come under fire from this and other quarters in recent months, has quit lobbying. Henceforth, while serving in his present non-paid job, Gunnar will not represent clients before the legislature or state boards or commissions.

This is a wise move on Gunnar's part.

The widespread knowledge that he was engaged in such activities made his own pronouncements suspect. He has removed this possible stigma.

Now, if he'll just start going after someone he has a chance to get, and drop some of his unfounded criticisms against Senator Neuberger . . .

This Area Not The Only One

There are several areas of Oregon in which the phony mutual benefit societies have been operating.

These outfits have been attempting to sell insurance in this and other areas of the state, even though they are operating in violation of an order issued by the state of Oregon.

Pendleton residents, including a number of persons in the over-60 age group, have been bilked too, if a story in a recent edition of the East Oregonian is

any indication. Trouble is, with outfits like this, no sooner do you flatten them out a little than they come back with some new gimmick, and it takes the law a while to catch up with them.

Barbs

There's really more happiness in having something to look forward to than in having everything you want.

DREW PEARSON

Wyoming Senator Blameless

WASHINGTON — Talking to Rev. Charles R. Jackson in Tullahoma, Tenn., the other day, I was told by him that the trouble with TV quiz programs is the temptation of program directors to play God. They can make or break a contestant on the air, build up his ego or destroy it.

The temptation to play God is not confined to TV producers. It sometimes influences judges, bureaucrats, newspapermen. As a member of the latter profession, I sometimes make that mistake myself.

Some time ago, I reported that Sen. Frank Barrett of Wyoming had got his fellow Republican, Sen. E. V. Robertson of Wyoming, out of a tax case without even going to court. This I now find was in error.

I have criticized tax-fines and tax-pressures in the past. So have the Republicans. They even prosecuted Truman's assistant attorney general, Lamar Caudle, and Truman's White House secretary, Matt Connelly, for allegedly going easy on a St. Louis shoe manufacturer, Irving Sachs, even though Sachs was sent before a U. S. district judge who gave him a \$40,000 fine and a suspended sentence.

Robertson, former GOP senator from Wyoming, purchased a big Cody, Wyo., cattle ranch from his cousin for a relatively cheap price and then sold it to the Hunt Oil Co., owned by H. L. Hunt, famous Texas oilman. The sale was made by a complicated lease arrangement. Internal revenue agents investigating the transaction came up with the charge that Senator Robertson owed the treasury a considerable amount of money in penalties and back taxes. It was no ordinary tax case. However, it was compromised.

Ex-Senator Robertson had appeared on the Senate floor to ask his former Republican colleagues to help settle his case. It was my earlier information that he had asked Senator Barrett to help him and that the senator had done so. However, I now find that I was wrong. And, in fairness to Senator Barrett, I take this opportunity of setting the record straight and offering in sincere apologies.

Note—Senator Barrett has had a long career as a public servant—as State Senator, governor, trustee of the University of Wyoming, and U. S. senator. He has now taken the tough job of counsel for the Department of Agriculture where he will have to deal with the problem of ever-mounting surpluses. Good luck to him in his new assignment.

Alabama Tax Fixing
On Jan. 12 and 13, 1959, this column reported "a strange income tax case in Alabama indirectly involving the brother of Gen. Wilton Persons, who has replaced Sherman Adams in the White House, which has been killed by the Justice Department. The case," I reported last January, "involved payoffs by northern liquor companies to two Alabama politicians, Jimmy Thrower and Emory Solomon, close political cronies of Gordon Persons, former governor of Alabama."

"Most significant fact in the scandal is that the Treasury Department officially recommended criminal prosecution. However, someone near the top intervened . . . Internal Revenue submitted the case to the Justice Department on Dec. 15, 1957. For several weeks backstage conferences ensued in Washington. Then on March 19, 1958, Joseph M. Howard, chief of the Justice Department tax division's criminal section, wrote a two-page letter to Internal Revenue refusing to prosecute the case."

"The regional office of Internal Revenue in Atlanta promptly protested. This made no difference. No prosecution was the final word of the Justice Department."

The columns of Jan. 12 and 13 then proceeded to outline the facts in the Alabama scandal. They reported that during Governor Persons regime \$200,000 in cash and \$500,000 in free liquor was collected from the liquor companies by the governor's cohorts." Part of this was handled through Jimmy Thrower, ex-mayor of Dothan, Ala., whom Governor Persons had appointed to the ABC liquor board; also through Emory Solomon, a leader of the Persons forces in the Alabama legislature.

"Since the ABC liquor board can ban arbitrarily any brand of liquor from the state," I reported, "the big liquor distributors not only flooded them (Persons' henchmen) with free liquor, but in this case paid political tribute through front men."

Jimmy Thrower, working with Governor Persons political henchmen, proceeded to set up a network of friends and relatives as "company representatives." For the most part their salaries were paid over to Thrower and Solomon. Some checks were mailed direct to P.O. Box 236 in Dothan, the ex-mayor's post office box.



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