

Editorial & Opinion

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Drive for new street decorations needed now

Sandy's street decorations are so tattered and frayed that they are not safe to light. Consequently, the decorations went up this year without electrical connection.

The spirit is there without the tingle of seeing brightly colored lights...Sort of like getting kissed with your eyes closed.

This condition enters its second year without proper attention from the Sandy-area Chamber of Commerce, owner of the decorations. Last year local firemen inspected the wiring of the

ornaments and decided that they were beyond repair electrically. So last season, and this year, the decorations went up around town without being lighted.

Christmas street lights are costly, perhaps \$25,000 for a full set. Surely, however, the chamber could launch a fund-raising effort to purchase new decorations for next year. A long-range campaign may be required to afford the city the seasonal dressing it deserves. (VB)

Mailroom mixup is uncovered and corrected

A newspaper in Clinton, Iowa, was picketed recently by youthful carriers who were concerned with plant mechanical problems that made the boys and girls look bad when they delivered the papers late. Lead by one 11-year-old boy, the Clinton Herald carriers organized to demand that the newspaper be printed on time so they could deliver it at a decent hour.

The Sandy Post, of course, has no core of carriers to carry the local paper to your doorstep, because we

rely on the post office for mail delivery. And while The Post recently has improved its production by shortening press time by two hours, we did experience recent late delivery problems that we'd like to correct before anyone tries to picket us.

Some bundles of newspapers for Sandy routes Thanksgiving week were sent to Boring by mistake. We've corrected our mailroom mixup, however, and wish to assure our subscribers that it shouldn't happen again. (VB)

Industry's cry of short gas is unbelievable

We read with an incredulous eye recent stories about gasoline shortages, about quotas being established for Shell and Amoco dealers, about long lines at service stations, about the imminence of gasoline rationing.

Why incredulous? Because we also had read about the vast amounts of oil coming from Alaska's north slope, about the glut of oil in West Coast ports, about discoveries in Mexico which apparently will dwarf those in Saudi Arabia.

Mexico is said to be sitting astride a virtual sea of oil. Recently announced discoveries have postponed for at least a dozen years any worldwide shortage. By

1990, Mexico will be as important a producer as Saudi Arabia. The whole table of world energy reserves will have to be recomputed.

If there is such an abundance of oil, then, why the sudden return to virtual rationing by at least Shell and Amoco? Politics, perhaps.

The oil companies say there actually is no shortage, merely a maldistribution of available supplies because of government controls. Any "shortage" soon will be over.

No wonder the average consumer doesn't understand. We seem to have shortages pouring forth from a horn of plenty.

Business skirting Carter's wage-price controls

Some very large chinks have begun to appear in President Carter's voluntary wage-price guidelines. The 7 percent benchmark already is being breached.

The matter of wage-price controls make most unions bilious, none more so than the 20,000-member Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers. The AWPPW, small potatoes as unions go, has challenged the legal authority of the President's Council on Wage and Price Stability.

Whether this "mouse that roared" will upset the guidelines is problematical. The government isn't likely to lose this one, even though there are some inconsistencies in the wage-price

panel's position. Much more serious in the administration's strategy are Teamster negotiations early next year. If the giant Teamsters union won't play along, the whole program may vanish.

Thus it is that word quietly has been passed that higher pension and welfare costs will be excluded from the 7 percent ceiling. That way more can go into wages. It now seems entirely likely that new settlements will be heavy on fringe items, still remaining within the 7 percent as far as wages are concerned.

As someone has said, "There's more than one way to skin a cat." Or skirt wage-price controls as well.

Anti-abortion faction begins casting stones

The Right-to-Life (anti-abortion) forces were credited with upsetting a couple of incumbent Democratic senators during the recent elections.

Now they have ambitious plans for 1980, and one of their chief targets is Bob Packwood, junior senator from Oregon. Packwood has been an outspoken supporter of abortion and, as such, rates very high on the Right-to-Life hit list.

However, if Portland Mayor Neil

Goldschmidt, as expected, is Packwood's Democratic opposition, the Right-to-Life people might as well save their ammunition. From all indications, Goldschmidt would be as unacceptable to the anti-abortion people as would Packwood.

If, indeed, there is a Packwood-Goldschmidt race, it'll be decided on other grounds, not pro or con on abortion.

Blind contentment halts rail

The dilemma of rail passenger service — from the troubles of Amtrak to the difficulties of establishing light rail in commuter service in many localities — was put cogently and briefly in an editorial in the Oregon Statesman in Salem the other day. It said:

"It is impossible to develop a widespread grid of rail passenger service when there is no immediate gasoline shortage. And it will

be impossible to activate such a system immediately should an energy shortage, such as the one which occurred four years ago, strike again."

That's about as good a thumbnail description of the problem as we've seen. Americans are prone to stick with what they have, rather than invest in the future, so long as their immediate lifestyle does not seem immediately threatened. And

when it is, it could be too late.

Even the limited support provided the limited service of the Rogue Rapids Transit system, given grudgingly, is only a step in the right direction, and no long-range solution.

We rise to face crises but have trouble seeing them coming and preparing adequately to cope with them.

— The Medford Mail Tribune

IN AGRICULTURE THE CHALLENGE OF REORGANIZATION IS

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Salem scene:

Oregon's legislature faces showdowns

Ed's note: Salem Scene is a legislative report prepared for weekly newspapers by Jack Zimmerman of Associated Oregon Industries.

A certain amount of confusion is normal when lawmakers prepare for a regular biennial session of the Oregon Legislature.

But in some circles, the current frustration quotient appears to be nearing record proportions as Salem anticipates the 60th Assembly's meeting due to convene Jan. 8.

And there are those who fear the situation will leave an indelible stamp on deliberations to come.

Amly housed in an expanded building and abetted by experienced staff, one might expect this Legislature to have little problem cranking up for the work ahead. The interim period since last session has seen at least a score of task forces studying problems and issues to be addressed.

The bill-drafting arm of the Legislature has received a record number of requests for measures well in advance of the upcoming session.

The staffs of both Gov. Bob Straub and Gov.-elect Victor Atiyeh are cooperating commendably in the process

of effecting a smooth transition from one administration to the next.

Even voters appeared to cooperate during last month's general election by turning out only an average number of experienced incumbents and seating un-

tried freshmen in their places.

What then, is causing the abnormal confusion and who's to blame?

That organization was fairly simple. The 23 Senate Democrats acted unanimously and the

remaining seven Republicans in that 30-member chamber had no chance to threaten their superiority.

House organization this session is something else. Of its 60 members, 26 are GOPs and 34 are Democrats. But

eight of the apparent majority Democrats have formed ranks of their own and split away from their peers. The move is a continuation of frustration by that particular group that led to the overthrow of former Speaker Phil Lang during the 59th session two years ago.

That left majority Democrats and minority Republicans with 26 members each — something of a standoff when you consider it takes 31 votes to elect a presiding officer.

Failure of the House to organize so far has delayed a number of preparatory activities — some minor, others of significant magnitude. Unless watered down by new rules, the speaker has considerable powers and authority. The presiding officer traditionally selects chairmen of the various committees that conduct the bulk of legislative business. His is the last word when it comes to assigning members to those committees. He also assigns bills to committees and through this process alone can shape the ultimate legislative product.

Most of the confusion is in the House of Representatives. And voters must accept much of the responsibility for its existence. In the process of electing their individual lawmakers, they unwittingly created a collective conglomeration of partisan and philosophical entities that may not be able to settle their differences.

And then there are other details over which he presides; such as the assignment of seats on the House floor, office space and even the spaces in the Capitol basement where lawmakers park their cars.

When it comes time to convene, the speaker opens the joint session of both House and Senate and is required to canvass the gubernatorial vote. Although he then turns the gavel over to the Senate president for the balance of the inaugural, he serves as host in his own chamber for the swearing of the state's new chief executive.

While waiting for the House to organize, legislative staff has been doing all in its power to prepare for the coming session. But that power has limits and much is yet undone. Failure to elect a permanent speaker prior to Jan. 8 won't delay the session's official opening nor the inaugural of Victor Atiyeh. A temporary speaker could emerge to take care of certain preliminaries. A temporary speaker also could be named to preside during the session's first day.

Then again, the dissident eight House Democrats might fracture sufficiently to join with others to make all this conjecture an exercise in futility. But most of those closest to the scene doubt such an harmonious conclusion.

They believe the differences will remain no matter who ultimately presides over the House. Furthermore, those differences just might dog the 60th Assembly and much of the legislation it considers.

Letters to the editor

Holiday spirit

To the Editor:

The Holiday season was launched with the arrival of Thanksgiving, and I have perhaps spent more such holidays than I care to remember. Thanksgiving may have no special significance for the young. But as one grows older this special day takes on a new meaning if shared with those one loves.

There is companionship, laughter and often the company of young children whose presence restores faith and hope for the future among those whose philosophy sometimes lingers in the shadows. It was my privilege to enjoy all these blessings on this day.

The true message of

Thanksgiving is perhaps to reflect upon a meaningful life. Many of our hopes and dreams may appear to have vanished somewhere along the dim corridors of time, but while we still have the precious gift of life and may recognize "a face we loved when all the world was young," there is cause to give thanks.

In contrast to other holidays, Thanksgiving is a solemn time for many faces may be missing about the table — and fleeting memories are recalled.

As the day comes to a close and the guests have departed, a thoughtful soul may toss another log into the hearth and linger awhile as flickering flames cast shadows around the room, and thoughts drift down

memory lane. But when at last the fire has died away to coals, it is time to put away the scrap book of memories until another year.

Mrs. Harry Hoffman
Box 527
Boring

German greetings

To the Editor:
I would like to wish you all in Sandy a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. I would like to wish the new mayor of Sandy luck. Even if I did not vote, I will be happy for I know she will get the backing from everybody.

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Washington report:

Carter risks Interior expansion

WASHINGTON — One of the oldest reorganization schemes in the federal government is being talked up again as the Carter administration considers a proposal to realign natural resources agencies into an expanded Department of the Interior.

With major issues such as the SALT treaty and the economy at Congress' door and a re-election campaign but two years away, it's hard to imagine that President Carter would spend his administration's energy and political capital on a proposal that is guaranteed to endanger the opposition of key Democratic senators and congressmen.

That the administration is even considering the proposal demonstrates Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus' high standing at the White House. The former Idaho sawmill operator is the most outspoken administration advocate for moving the Forest Service into his Interior Department.

The concept of putting the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other land-and-water-related agencies under one roof dates back to President Franklin Roosevelt's interior secretary, Harold Ickes. "When Ickes proposed bringing the Forest Service into Interior, FDR let him go ahead with it but gave him no encouragement," reports a Library of Congress researcher.

The Hoover Commission on Government Reorganization presented the idea to President Eisenhower, who did not propose it to Congress.

Putting the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management into one department could have large implications for the Northwest, where a good of the federally owned natural resources reside.

Oregon contains 15.6 million acres of national forest and 15.7 million acres of BLM land. Idaho contains 20.3 million acres of Forest Service land.

Oregon contains 15.6 million acres of national forest and 15.7 million acres of BLM land. Idaho contains 20.3 million acres of national forest and 11.9 million acres of BLM land. Washington state contains 9 million acres of Forest Service land.

Combining the natural resources agencies is attractive in its logic but, as an issue, it quickly becomes a territorial fight that exposes the linkages between congressional committee power and federal agency power. It also reveals the proprietary interest which several organized national constituencies have in various federal agencies.

The barons of Congress, the committee chairmen who consider the Agriculture Department part of their domain, are loathe to give up their purview of the Forest Service.

"If you ask me, 'Do I want to see the Forest Service transferred to Interior?' the answer is no," says Rep. Tom Foley, who is chairman of the House Agriculture Committee.

When the Carter administration floated a similar

trial balloon last year, Sen. Herman Talmadge, D-Ga., promised Carter would "have a fight on his hands." Talmadge said, "We do not intend to stand by and allow the Agriculture Department to be carved up and handed over, piece by piece."

Talmadge is chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Conversely, lawmakers whose jurisdictions would be enhanced by this reorganization favor it. Sen. Henry Jackson, D-Wash., and Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., long have favored the idea for the obvious reason that their Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee would gain jurisdiction over the Forest Service.

Carter might even have a problem with the issue within his cabinet. Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland has said, "I want to make it clear that I favor retention of the Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture."

Beyond Congress and the administration, various



By STEVE
FORESTER

national constituencies line up either side of the reorganization issue.

"There's a hell of a lot of actors in this scene, each with his own axe," comments the Library of Congress researcher. "The older, more traditional conservation groups have generally sided with the Forest Service remaining in Agriculture, while the Sierra Club has been against it. The timber industry has been opposed to putting the Forest Service into the Interior Department because it would be more regulation-minded. The Forest Service, as presently constituted, is more independent."

Southwest Oregon counties which contain the lucrative O and C timberlands that are administered by the BLM would no doubt be drawn into the fray over reorganization, seeking to protect their financial interest.

Part of the art of politics is knowing how to pick your fights — for minimum bloodshed and maximum gain. There can be little doubt that the natural resources agencies reorganization would be costly for the president and of unascertained benefit at a time when Carter needs all the friends he can get.

Steve Forester is a Washington D.C. based columnist who writes for the Sandy Post.