

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"
From First Statesman, March 28, 1851

THE STATESMAN PUBLISHING COMPANY

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Member of the Associated Press

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Rules of Warfare

Our military forces sometimes make mistakes; and when those mistakes are in contravention of international law the authorities are usually prompt to admit responsibility and express regret. That was the case when some German prisoners suffered suffocation on a POW train in Europe. A new-type coach was in use, not properly ventilated for a warm day; and as a result there was loss of life among the prisoners. General Eisenhower admitted the facts and announced prompt steps had been taken to prevent a recurrence of the incident.

Another unfortunate accident occurred when the Japanese relief ship Awa Maru was sunk on its return voyage after it had taken relief supplies for allied internees at some of the Jap-held ports. The ship was travelling under safe-conduct. Our state department says that probably the ship was sunk by an allied submarine. It was not sailing with any lights visible and was sunk about midnight on April 1. The ship should have sailed with full illumination; but even so it is regrettable that it was sunk. The supplies it had delivered were held up in Vladivostok for about a year; and now the Japs may refuse to deliver any more supplies for allied prisoners or internees.

In general there has been more criticism of the generosity of our treatment of war prisoners than the reverse. But our policy is defended as being in compliance with the Geneva convention. Prisoners are entitled to the same fare as soldiers of the capturing country, according to their rank. Since we feed our soldiers very well, this means that the prisoners fare well too. In fact the French complained because the German prisoners were getting better food and more of it than they were.

The United States has a good reputation and wants to keep it. Accordingly it endeavors to live up to the rules of war. When errors occur as they will in big operations, our officers move promptly to correct blunders or to prevent their recurrence. We will not have to apologize for many incidents when this war is over.

Cushions for Kneeling Benches?

Just before the war the rail and stage lines were installing in new equipment seats whose cushions and headrests were so soft the passenger might think he was sitting on a feather-bed with his head resting on a down pillow. The material was neither feathers nor down, but sponge rubber which consists simply of rubber latex and air. It is not a new product—we have had rubber sponges for years and years; but a new application of an old product. The result was something adding greatly to the comfort of travelers, and when used for mattresses of those reclining on beds or davenport.

The enterprising rubber concerns see visions of a greatly broadened market for this product in cushions and arm rests on furniture. Also, they think they can sell sponge rubber to cushion kneeling benches. Heretofore kneeling benches have been plain board, which grows no softer with time or with the lengthening of devotions. But selling the churches sponge rubber cushions for prayer benches may pose something of a problem. The churches will have to decide whether cushioning the kneeling boards will encourage more people to pray or whether there is a spiritual value in the discomfort of kneeling on a hard bench, a sort of penance, as it were. The salesman's effort to sell comfort may run into opposition from those who think that worship needs some measure of discomfort as discipline for the soul.

There will be a big market for the goods without the kneeling bench trade, for the millions of men who have slept on hard ground, or in foxholes or in ship's hammocks or on army cots will relish soft beds, the softer the more welcome; and certainly their relatives will be happy to indulge them. So sponge rubber and all the materials and devices for human comfort will be in great demand when the end of the war makes them again available for civilian purchase.

A captured German general, name undisclosed, says that the invasion of England in 1940 was vetoed by Corporal Hitler himself. Mebbe so, mebbe so; but from here on out it will be easy for the generals to blame Hitler for the mistakes, especially when they are out of his grasp.

Editorial Comment

CRITICAL TRANSPORTATION

Passenger car transportation has reached a state of alarming depletion, according to the executive committee of the American Automobile association. Only a miracle can keep millions of vehicles from going off the roads by the middle of the year. The committee finds that the nation's stockpile of new cars has disappeared; that the average car is eight years old; that the mileage remaining in the rubber now on cars is less than one-third of that at the time of Pearl Harbor; and that the tire production program has been pared down to fewer than 800,000 a month as contrasted with a minimum requirement of 2,000,000 a month. In addition, it finds that there is an acute shortage of batteries, while their production schedule is inadequate, and that overwhelming maintenance difficulties are accelerating the rate of motor car depletion. Millions of the nation's cars are about ready to fall apart, according to the studies which have been made. The association urges that the war production board speed up plans for the release of steel, machine tools, and the clearance of manufacturing channels to make possible resumption of passenger-car production at the earliest possible moment after victory in Europe.

Obviously, continued unlimited supply of war needs is the first requirement. Everything else must take second place to that. But if we dip below the 20,000,000 units which the office of defense transportation and other government agencies themselves agree is the minimum which must be kept rolling on the home front—not for pleasure but for purposes of essential transportation—production for war will be retarded. The picture drawn by the AAA report calls for study and appropriate action. —New York Times.

Princess Drives a Truck

We have seen pictures of the king of Sweden (perhaps it was of Norway) buying his ticket at the box office of a cinema like any other person. But the report that Princess Elizabeth, heir apparent to the throne of Great Britain, was found recently by her parents, the king and queen, wearing overalls while in training for the ATS (auxiliary territorial service), goes farther in the direction of democracy than a king buying a ticket to a movie. The princess, so her commandant says, has learned to drive a truck and is doing very well at it, even in heavy traffic. He says she is not rash and drives "with thought for others on the road," which certainly is commendable in a truck driver.

Perhaps being in the ATS she doesn't have to have a union card. But over here, unless she was in a uniformed service she'd have to have a card, or Dave Beck would run her truck into the ditch.

Let's see, Elizabeth is the great-great granddaughter of Queen Victoria, whose name is identified with social correctness. Her grandmother, Queen Mary was also a model of propriety. What a shock it would be for these worthy matrons to see their descendant, who is already being trained to become queen of England, wearing overalls and driving a truck. The very fact that she can do this is a tribute to her good sense and that of her parents. Also it gives one explanation of why the English royal house continues to hold its job while most of the other monarchs of Europe are "unemployed."

Snow in Cascades

Santiam pass must be a beautiful sight now, with some nine and a half feet of snow piled there. It has been many years since there was any such snowpile there. It will provide water for forests and streams well along into the summer. On the east side the heavy snows will provide an abundance of water for irrigation.

Snowfall in the Cascades is very irregular. In mild winters little snow accumulates. And as a general rule the accumulation of snow seems to come in the late winter. We shouldn't be getting snow in April for example, but we are. This spring's "winter" which has delayed planting may help crops to mature by supplying moisture in late summer where irrigation is required. This gives some compensation for the cold spring.

The German V-bombs ran up a bad score of casualties in England before they were stopped, as now it seems they have been. The dead numbered 8436 and the injured 25,101. If Hitler had been ready to launch these robombs immediately after Dunkirk he might well have reduced all of London to a shambles. He was planning on shooting 10,000 bombs a day when the allies seized the Calais robot roost last summer. It's something to think about in contemplating a third world war; and gives another reason for making the second world war the last.

Tankmen captured a train loaded with V-2 bombs somewhere in Germany. This gave allied scientists the opportunity to study the mechanism by which the rockets were driven. Man's ingenuity was surely used to evil purpose in devising these lethal weapons.

Interpreting The War News

By KIRKE L. SIMPSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WAR ANALYST

American tank columns have not only swiftly punctured the Elbe river defense line, last water hazard on the road to Berlin, but flowed to or beyond the Saale in the south to menace Leipzig and even Dresden across the broad open central plain of the German heartland.

At least three major units of General Eisenhower's multi-army command, are running virtually abreast in an assault pattern designed apparently to rip a 100-mile-wide corridor of conquest from west to east to a junction with Russian allies still poised on the Oder-Neisse line. And only now are the Eisenhower forces reaching on the central German plain the best terrain for mechanized maneuver they have met since they crossed the Rhine.

It cuts the time potential before north and south Germany can be split wide apart for mopping-up to a matter not of days but possibly hours. Nor is there any conclusive evidence that the Nazi high command rally the force anywhere to halt the allied advance without stripping its eastern front so thin that Russian hordes would come pouring in for the kill.

The crossing of the Elbe at Magdurg came so suddenly that pending lifting of the news blackout it seems probable a bridge was taken intact in the area.

Events seem clearly to justify published suspicion in Russia that the Nazis are virtually inviting allied occupation of all central Germany while massing troops eastward to bar similar Russian advances except at highest casualty cost.

Behind that may still lie some faint Nazi hope of an ultimate Russian-Allied quarrel over occupation spoils or policy and zones of control. It seems an impossible and fantastic conception even for Hitler's henchmen, but no other explanation has yet been offered for German failure to regroup along any of numerous natural defense lines once the Rhine had been breached unless it is due to sheer lack of men and means.

Best available estimates figure at least three score and perhaps 80 German divisions concentrated on the east front against the Russians. Frontal assault against the defense-in-depth system the foe has had ample time to create must be a bloody business.

Yet allied spearheads already beyond the Elbe are even now beating at rear supply and communications hubs of German armies in the east. They are immediately threatened with being squeezed to death on a broad front between the allied hammer blows and the Russian Oder-Neisse anvil block yet have made no clearly indicated move toward a two-front realignment to meet that peril.



Distributed by King Features Syndicate by arrangement with The Washington Star

No Doubt About First Choice

The Literary Guidepost

By W. G. Rogers

"COCKS AND BULLS IN CARACAS," by Olga Briceno (Houghton Mifflin, \$2.75).

Caracas, which has some of the crackling sound of a swear word, is a place lush and fruitful in many things, but rich principally in book material. Some years ago we had Ybarra's "Young Man in C—" and now we have "Cocks and Bulls in C—" If we get many more books like these, we'll all be flying off to Venezuela. Olga Briceno, though she has traveled widely, remains faithful to her country. She writes a hymn of praise.

It is true that she hated Gomez the Tyrant, as she calls him; that she deplores the poverty, favors "rational and gradual racial mingling," and thinks "his majesty, man," possesses some traditional advantages over women in the Venezuelan social scheme.

But on the other hand, the poor and the servants often enjoy the benefit, as she regards it, of being taken into the midst of such kindly families as her own and treated like relatives; to a certain degree she defends the touching dependence of the ignorance on saints and saints alone for the cure of "every human ill" and every misfortune; and she believes there's nothing quite the equal of an ardent Venezuelan suitor.

Though I confess I can't believe North American girls would enjoy such examples of their eloquent compliments as she quotes. Venezuelans keep no track of time or money; they don't tip; they go to movies, a native theater, cock and bull fights; they send their girls to convent schools but let their boys run wild; their men fish and hunt, and their women still stay pretty much at home and run the household.

While this is, I suppose, a volume of no staggering importance, I find it very pleasant. The author makes you relish, somewhat as she does, customs which date back to Columbus. She doesn't approve of them, and she is herself a "modern" woman; but she has a reverence for them which, in a book written in New York, is agreeably quaint.

"THE YOUNG IDEA" By Mossler



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News Behind the News

By PAUL MALLON

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WASHINGTON, April 12. — The sub-surface tentacles which are somewhat confusedly directing events leading up to the San Francisco conference, seem to me discernible as follows:

The Russians are determined to get a big nation's world order. Stalin is irrevocably committed to empire building. He does not want small nations interference.

Everything he has done of importance has been a blow in this direction — his claim for exemption of the big powers from punitive action as aggressors, his demand for 16 votes in the assembly of small nations, his hegemony in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and other small nations.

The United States is pledged with equal determination to the cause of the smaller powers as the basic guarantee of the Atlantic charter, the four freedoms and the whole Roosevelt theory of the war.

Our government initiated the pledge against territorial aggrandizement. It is carrying the policy to such extremes that it will not even take the defense bases our navy wants for post-war, bases we conquered, but proposes that these be held in an international trusteeship by the new league of nations. As a consequence of this policy, the Philippines already are asking their independence for next year, instead of the year following.

So we are gathering the small nations into the fold of the new world order at San Francisco, largely on our own leading initiative, while both the British and Russians display their lack of enthusiasm for the importance of our effort by sending ambassadors of lower rank than the other delegates.

Frankly, the British appear in all ways to lean toward the Russian side of this basic world proposition. They are an empire already. Early in this war Churchill made plain that he did not take leadership in the dismemberment of the British empire. The British believe in empire as a way of life.

The French and Dutch also

have empires, intend to take them back, firmly believe in them.

This we are entering into a new world in which we alone (unless we include China) among the major powers really believe in the Atlantic charter doctrine and insist upon practicing it.

The question is how this cleavage will work out? Can we successfully conclude the Dumbarton-San Francisco treaties under these circumstances, and get them securely ratified? If we do, can we then live in friendly peace under them?

Or is it time for alteration or a change in our policy? How much? Should we get military bases? Keep the Philippines? Close more tightly in upon Latin America as is Russia upon Poland, etc?

There are some authorities who think our position is sound and can be permanently maintained. Certainly our stand should gather the small nations toward our side, or at least those left loose. We could make quite a formidable world bloc of small nations behind us perhaps.

But if we must fight on the council for our position, we will certainly be on the losing side. There Russia, Britain and France could control the course. China and the United States would no doubt be a minority.

In the larger assembly, even with Russia's three votes to our one, we would appear to have a better chance of a majority, but the assembly is not to make the important decision, and the Russian position puts entire responsibility in the council, as indeed does the text of the agreement.

Yet win or lose, we would, by continuance of this policy, continue to stand for our ideals. I suspect this is the basis upon which the administration now is moving toward and beyond San Francisco.

To me personally, however, it seems a change of front is necessary in the interests of national security and maintenance of our now existing primary authority as a world power. I think there is an essential and somewhat suicidal weakness in the extremity we are pursuing, renouncing all hopes of getting anything out of the war, delivering bases to an international trusteeship, leaving the Philippines open to the next invader, etc.

It should not be necessary to renounce our ideals and the Atlantic charter, in order to protect ourselves and maintain our interests to the fullest as the others are doing. We could have a temporary postwar policy based on national unity with the promise to moderate it and create maximum freedoms for all small people as soon as world conditions warrant.

For instance we might be able to maintain the Philippines a lot freer under our wing, than by letting her fall under some other wing. If we need Iceland, for defense or even for commercial purposes in a world of empires, we should have it.

We are not Nazis. There is nothing onerous about our democratic influence. Perhaps the extension of our power democratically might well save the world from worse things.

The tentacles of these facts, at least, are laying hold of events, and guiding the course of world developments.

GLENN'S FERRY, Idaho (AP)—Seaman Second Class Glen Larsen came home on leave and found his family quarantined with heart fever. Went maple hunting and accidentally discharged his shotgun, blowing off four toes.

Kenneth L. Dixon
AT THE FRONT

Liberated American Correspondent Has Woes in England

By Godfrey H. P. Anderson
(Substituting for Kenneth L. Dixon)
LONDON (AP)—I must be the unluckiest war correspondent ever.

Just one week after getting out of the bag in Germany I got into it in England. But this time my "captivity" only lasted five hours.

It happened this way. Within five minutes of landing from an American military aircraft at an airfield in Kent, after flying from Paris, I attracted the eager scrutiny of a British security officer. Although fully documented, I apparently posed him a new problem.

"We've had escaped prisoners, we've had prisoners repatriated on exchanges and we've had people who evaded the enemy in occupied territory but we've never had a liberated prisoner through here," he explained.

A protracted series of telephone calls followed. Once I heard myself referred to as "the prisoner" and a further reference to an escort.

For three hours I waited at the airfield while telephones rang and much government time and money were consumed. My request to be allowed to communicate with the Associated Press or my home were refused. Then I was loaded into a truck with an RAF sergeant who had orders to deliver me at a destination somewhere in Buckinghamshire.

I thus got glimpses of London streets as a prisoner again after being three and a half years a prisoner.

During the drive I asked the RAF sergeant what he would do if I tried to escape. "Would you shoot?" I asked.

"I don't know. I've got no instructions," he said.

I was almost tempted to try it and see what resulted.

At a reception camp in Buckinghamshire, a colonel, a captain and a WAAF officer set their heads together to consider what to do with me. It seemed that I had been taken there for interrogation because the rules said something like that, but no one knew of any precedent for interrogating a liberated war correspondent.

The WAAF officer solved her part of the problem by telephoning higher authorities. They said, "We don't touch war correspondents." That suited me.

The colonel suggested a drink or a meal in the mess but I managed to convince him that what I really wanted was to get home and that quickly. Finally I secured by release conditional upon reporting the next day.

It certainly was harder to get into England again than it ever was to get out of it.

IT SEEMS TO ME

(Continued from page 1)

has come. The body which had won out over a dangerous illness a score of years ago and had borne the strain and grind of 12 years of responsibility in high public office in times of severe depression and global warfare, finally became exhausted. The sleep of rest became the sleep of death.

For millions of Americans the news of Mr. Roosevelt's death brought deep and sincere grief. He had been their leader, the man whom they trusted, the one whom they elected four times to the presidency of the United States, twice in violation of long-settled tradition. Nor will the sorrow be confined to this country. Roosevelt was a world figure, known and respected in all save enemy lands. Millions of people over the world will feel that they have lost a friend, one who sympathized with the lot of the common man and sought to raise him to a higher level of living. Even among bitter political foes in this country there is regret over Roosevelt's death, because of the resulting uncertainty in the management of affairs.

It is usual on the passing of a great public figure to make an appraisal of his life and work. I shall not attempt that now for Franklin D. Roosevelt, save to say that without doubt he will rank among our greatest national heroes. The fierce antagonism that raged over his political program as embodied in the "new deal" will die out in time. His radical reforms directed toward saving, through modification, the old economic system will be accepted, as they already have been, as part of the scheme of things. His leadership of his country and of the United Nations through the fires of war and into the fair prospect of world order will give endurance to his name and fame.

Instantly, in every mind, when the fact of Roosevelt's death registered in one's consciousness came concern over the future. Immediately questions tumbled into the mind: What will happen now on the war fronts? What about the framing of the peace? What about the coming conference at San Francisco? Who will guide our nation in the councils of the nations? What policies will prevail on the domestic scene as we reconvert our activities from war to peace? How competent will Harry S. Truman be as president?

It is indeed a serious time for a change of this character. The people voted it down when it was proposed last fall. A higher hand has intervened and ordered

the change; and the man on whom the burden of the presidency falls is one who has not hitherto impressed the country as being of presidential stature. The situation is indeed grave; but it is not without precedent. When Lincoln was assassinated and crowds in New York became excited and agitated, a young army officer, James A. Garfield, addressed the people from the balcony of the New York customs house and said: "God reigns and the government at Washington still lives." The American people still have that optimism, which stays with them in hours like the present. There will be no defeatism; there may be anxiety, but not despair.

The military plans are working out so well that there will be no change or serious interruption due to the president's death. In the field of foreign affairs Truman is altogether inexperienced, but it may be presumed that he will retain and rely on the present staff in the department of state which is fully acquainted with Roosevelt's plans and purposes in the writing of the peace.

The organization of the United Nations as outlined at Dumbarton Oaks will in all probability be effected at San Francisco. What will be missed will be Roosevelt's prestige as well as his comprehensive knowledge of affairs and his singular deftness in the field of politics. On the domestic scene changes may come swiftly. The leader's death gives a signal for a fresh struggle for political power which may result in very different political alignments.

Aristotle wrote: "There is a cropping-time in the generations of men, as in the fruits of the field."

Franklin Roosevelt had reached his "cropping-time" after a life full of high political adventure. The record of his words and deeds and of his influence on the stream of history will fill many books. We shall not soon see his like again.

OSC Student Body Up 12%

CORVALLIS, April 12 (AP)—Civilian student enrollment at Oregon State college was up 12 per cent for the spring term—1823 students with 266 soldier-students in engineering courses boosting the total above 2000.

Women students continue to dominate the campus although enrollment of civilian men jumped last year. Women students total 49 per cent above the spring term 1408, men 414.

The increase bears out the college's prediction a year ago that enrollment then had reached the low point for wartime and gradually would increase.

Crescote, carbolic acid, naphtha, naphthalene, photographic developers, tear gas and a host of chemicals can be made directly from coal tar.

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