

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us, No Fear Shall Awe"
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The League and the Railroad

Women, bless their hearts, will have their way. And it's a good thing for Salem they do, in this instance, at least.

For years and years, people in Salem have muttered darkly about the railroad grade crossings. Every time there was an accident at one of them, there would be worried frowns. Every time someone got mangled on some cow-catcher, there would be the realization that "it could happen to me—or my boy or girl." Every time a long line of cars has to wait for a longer slow freight to trundle its leisurely way down the tracks through downtown Salem, there is a cursing and a gnashing of teeth barely drowned out by the hoots of the switch engine.

So there has been much concern and worry and frowning and cussing about the iron rails that encircle the city, snarl traffic, stymie fire engines and ambulances, and bring injury and death every year. But mostly, it has just been that dark muttering, and nothing done about it. Until this year, that is. This year, the League of Women Voters decided to find out if there was any solution to the problem. Other groups have proposed solutions before—the Long Range Planning commission, for instance. But the ladies of the League weren't content with letting it rest there. They've had engineers go over their survey of rail crossings, and they're going to take up their recommendations for safety improvements with the city council. If they have their way, Salem is going to get grade separations at the SP mainline.

We hope they have their way, those public-spirited women. If all the people who've worried and frowned and cussed and muttered about the railroad crossings will support the League of Women Voters, through financial contributions and through cooperation in their surveys, and will let the city fathers know they are supporting the League in its railroad safety campaign, the women of Salem will have their way. And all of Salem will benefit.

The Yakima (Wash.) Herald and Republic newspapers recently moved into one of the finest new newspaper plants in the nation. And to herald the occasion, 350 members of the staff and their families held a picnic. Then 200 went to the hospital with food poisoning. The unfortunate occurrence must have cast quite a blight on what was to have been a gala celebration. But those stricken recovered and the presses rolled again. With a new work-home like theirs, no one could stay ill long.

The special visit of the bloodmobile to the Oregon Pulp and Paper company today is worthy of special attention. The cooperation of the firm's management and workers makes the visit possible, but aid from other persons is vital if maximum results are to be achieved. The bloodmobile will be at the paper company from 1 to 5 p.m., and with hardly one-tenth of actual overseas requirements now being met, the need for full cooperation is starkly apparent. There is still a war on.

Lloyd Riches was a master at getting action when action was needed. Of high character and integrity, he contributed valuable service during World War II as a member of the war production board's advisory committee. And he was widely known for his executive abilities in the newspaper and paper specialty fields. His community and his many friends here and elsewhere will miss him.

Draining of Troops for Indochina War, Lack Of Ready Cash Handicaps French Army

By Stewart Alsop

ON MANEUVERS WITH A FRENCH BATTALION IN GERMANY, Sept. 19 — French soldiers, like other soldiers, are much given to arguing about what is wrong with their army. In any such discussion, two words are likely to be heard repeatedly throughout the cheerful battle of complaints. One is "L'Indochine." The other is "Le Fric," which is French slang for money. When this word is uttered it is always accompanied by an occult gesture consisting of extending the right hand, with thumb and forefinger touching to form a zero.

If those who may have to do the fighting are to be believed, France would have a great army again very soon. If it were not for the constant drain of the endless, bloody little war in Indochina, together with the lack of ready cash in the French treasury, French general officers have no doubts at all about the spirit of their troops. To judge from the intelligence and cheerful energy with which the French recruits go about their business in the field, the officers are right.

As for arms and equipment, French soldiers have little concern on this score either, since M.A.T. began to transform the French army from an army without arms into an army with the means to fight. The fact is that France is now visibly capable of putting into the field a first-rate army of about ten divisions. But French Premier Rene Pleven has promised to double the fighting strength of this army in a matter of months. On France's capacity to make good this promise a great many things, including the security of the United States,

may depend. And it is when you begin to ask French soldiers how this promise is to be made good that you begin hearing about "L'Indochine" and "Le Fric."

By the very nature of the French military system, the French military strength depends utterly on the small core of regular officers and non-coms who have made the French army their career. These are the men, tough, hard-bitten and seasoned, with a best professional soldiers in the world, who must yearly transform about 400,000 French recruits called up from field and factory for 18 months of service, into soldiers.

But even now, there are simply not enough professionals to go around. This is partly because of Indochina. Only the professionals, plus a few volunteers, are sent to fight in Indochina, which means an endless drain on the core of professionals. It is partly also because a career in the French army offers few consolations. A second lieutenant, for example, gets about the pay of a street-car conductor, and if he has a family, unless he is very lucky, he can find no lodging for them near his post. Thus, where, as before the war, about three times as many young men applied for St. Cyr as were accepted, there are now hardly more candidates than there are places.

The result is that in a French infantry company of more than 350 recruits there are apt to be only one or two officers and three or four regular non-coms. Under the circumstances, it is downright astonishing that the professionals have done so good a job of turning recruits into soldiers. If the French military strength is really to be doubled, however, it is mathematically obvious that the number of men in uniform must be increased by extending the term of service to at least twenty-four months. Was it this all. The reserve divisions on which French military

Penny-pinching, dollar-spending congressmen passed up a chance to save the cost of government. Despite a predominance of bald heads they shouted down a move to cut free haircuts and shaves for themselves from an appropriation bill.

It Never Gets Excited

One can't call the "good grey lady" unpredictable, nor overly entertaining, nor sparkling. In fact, one can fairly well predict that each day of the "grey lady's" existence will be much like the last one. And that is as it should be. For the "lady," actually the New York Times, each day puts out from its great plant just about the finest historical document in the world.

The Times had an anniversary earlier this week. It is 100 years old—about six months younger than The Statesman. We would guess The Times took its celebration in urbane stride and that one would never know now that anything unusual had happened.

The Times deals in the unusual, as do all papers. And it does an unusual, thorough and comprehensive job of it. The only thing that would be unusual would be for the Times to get excited about anything.

There are newspapers with greater circulation than the Times, which is proud that it makes no pretense of being entertaining. But there are none more round. It's world-wide system of correspondents is the largest maintained by any single newspaper anywhere. It makes a fetish of publishing in toto every important statement or document or treaty.

The Times has come of age gracefully and in fine health. May its second century be as fruitful as its first in the maintenance of the best that is free American journalism.

"Oregon Goes to the Dogs" is the title of an article by Sen. Neuberger in the current Nation. He describes the political alliance which has protected dog racing in Portland, the sharing of proceeds with fairs and public events furnishing a backlog of support for the pari mutuel betting which operates at the dog tracks. What he reports is not new, but so far the conscience of Oregonians has not been stirred enough to obtain a repeal of the law.

Editorial Comment

LET'S YOU PAY

What can it mean? Before they left San Francisco the Soviet delegates to the treaty conference cleaned the rug, polished the silverware, paid \$1,000 for plumbing and electric repairs, and proved themselves ideal tenants of the 37-room mansion they had hired for the occasion. "I have never dealt with nicer or more cooperative people," said the real estate agent who let it to them.

And now, as though to compound this niceness and cooperativeness, a Soviet spokesman at the United Nations has borne gracious tribute to American capitalism. The diplomat in question, A. A. Soldatov, suggests that the United States pay half the yearly operating costs of the U.N. because a study of comparative incomes shows the American economy best able to sustain this load.

Shades of Marx, Lenin, and all five-year plans to date! Where is that post-war collapse of American capitalism which follows inevitably from orthodox Soviet doctrine? The United States should accept Mr. Soldatov's gratuitous though left-handed compliment in the same spirit in which it is given. "No, really!" Americans might say. "You're too kind. We don't want to hog all the credit and are perfectly willing to share more of the expenses with you. You mustn't feel too indebted to our system." After all, two can be nice and cooperative as well as one.—(Christian Science Monitor)

"DIAMONDS ON THE DOORSTEP"



Congressional Quiz

Q—I was in the senate visitors' gallery Sept. 13 when Gov. Thomas E. Dewey of New York came on the floor and talked with senators. How could he do that?

A—Governors of states have the privilege of the senate floor and can visit there when the senate is in session.

Q—I see the senate passed a bill further limiting the size of packages that can be mailed. Did it make any special provision for people of rural areas?

A—Yes. While it would reduce generally the maximum package size and weight to 72 inches, length and girth combined, and 40 pounds, parcels mailed from or to rural areas or small towns could remain at the present limit of 100 inches and 70 pounds. The senate passed the bill Sept. 6; the

house has not acted. Sponsors of the legislation said it would get the Post Office department "out of the freight business."

Q—Will the senate do any more crime investigating now that its special crime committee is no longer in existence?

A—It is considering firing up the probe again. Sen. Homer E. Capehart (R-Ind.) Sept. 12 introduced a bill to give \$150,000 to the senate interstate and foreign commerce committee so it can go on with the investigation. But some democrats were cool to this GOP move, and urged, instead, that the senate concentrate on passing the anti-crime bills recommended by Kefauver-O'Connor group which expired Aug. 31.

(Copyright, 1951, Congressional Quarterly)

did not know sufficient about the various resorts."

2. What is the correct pronunciation of "series"?

3. Which one of these words is misspelled? Sacrilege, satellite, sagacity, sarsaparilla.

4. What does the word "sumptuously" mean?

5. What is a word beginning with ra that means "hoarse; harsh; rough"?

ANSWERS

1. Omit on, and say, "did not know enough about the various resorts." 2. Pronounce se-reez, both e's as in see. 3. Sagacity. 4. Costly; luxuriously. "The halls were sumptuously decorated." 5. Raucous.

Literary Guidepost

By W. G. Rogers
CALL IT EXPERIENCE: THE YEARS OF LEARNING HOW TO WRITE

by Erskine Caldwell (Duell, Sloan & Pearce; \$3.50)
"The best way to learn to write is by writing," says Caldwell in this record of his professional life. That is just the way he himself became the author of a score and a half of books. "I liked writing as some men liked raising cattle," he says. "I had no philosophical truthe to dispense, no evangelical urge." He was an eye, an ear and a pen, or rather a portable.

Son of a minister, brought up in Georgia, earning money in several hard ways before he tried the hard way of writing, he was primarily a man who just would not cry uncle. He made the rounds with a doctor, a tax collector, and worked on a newspaper. With a \$200 stake, he quit earning and eating for writing and starving. That was in 1928, and in 1929 he at last sold "Midsummer Passion" to New American Caravan; his first six published short stories paid him less than \$100. Still he stuck to it. When Maxwell Perkins expressed an interest, Caldwell wrote him a short story every night for a week, and then two a week for

a couple of months. If he began by earning \$10 a year by writing, the day came when he was paid \$2,000 a month as a correspondent, and \$1,500 a week in Hollywood.

Authors, who are talkative fellows, like to discuss their work not as a trade or profession but as a calling; and while they prate about inspiration, theory and ideal, they sometimes omit the basic facts. Caldwell, in these welcome pages, comes no closer to theory than "I liked writing," but he does give facts, about agents, publishers, royalties, working hours and so on. He writes about it as if it were a job; he is 100 per cent the professional. Here, he says, is how a man sweats to become a writer, and then becomes one. This may not teach a young man how to make \$1,500 a week, but it will help steel him for the difficult task. This is a manual, it is no more hi-falutin than when do we eat and where do we borrow money. This shows what an author is doing with his feet on the ground while his head is in the clouds.

Better English

By D. C. Williams

1. What is wrong with this sentence? "We planned on taking a vacation, but found that we

GRIN AND BEAR IT by Lichty



"I consider the senator's charge that my bill is a waste of money a dangerous security violation!"

Atom Defense Plan Raises High Hopes

By J. M. Roberts, Jr.
Associated Press News Analyst
WASHINGTON, Sept. 19—(AP)—Senator McMahon, chairman of the joint congressional committee on atomic energy, strikes close to one of America's great hopes with his suggestion that defense costs can be halved through a proper development of atomic armament.

One of the nation's great worries is how to attain and maintain the position of strength which the diplomats say is required without forcing American living standards down to the level of other countries which have maintained burdensome military establishments for centuries.

McMahon says atomic weapons are at hand with which to replace conventional arms, permit a smaller yet still stronger military establishment, and eventually save some thirty or forty billion dollars a year.

McMahon is one of the very few people in a position to know. Yet one cannot help thinking that no one is free from the possibility of over enthusiasm about his particular interests.

It is obvious that vast developments are taking place in the atomic field. The president's request for \$500,000,000 more for the new South Carolina hydrogen bomb plant is taken as evidence that production of that weapon is assured. Congress can hardly deny any funds which the experts say are needed.

The matter of substituting a small atomic military establishment for most of all of the present

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ent system is an entirely different question.

Overconfidence in the ability of such a force could be disastrous. With all of America's vast military establishment and vast resources, she hasn't had enough strength available on the spot to take care of a small job in Korea. With commitments all over the world, small forces, no matter how armed, might not be sufficient.

There is a considerable tendency in this country to discount Russia's atomic development. To many, the absence of any detected explosion in Russia since 1949 indicates the reeds have not advanced into the field of new weapons as we have here. Whether that estimate is any more reliable than the old and inaccurate estimates of how long it would take Russia to produce an A-bomb is a matter of speculation.

At least for the present the United States is in the position of needing all the rearmament it can get in every field. Specialization can come when the military has more experience with the new weapons, and when both public and congress can know more about what they are doing.

Merely having an open mind is nothing. The object of opening the mind, as of opening the mouth is to shut it again on something solid.

Quote for the Day

—Gilbert K. Chesterton

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