

Public Refused Knowledge of Official Activities in Many Fields, Survey of State Discloses

Editor's note: Are there barriers to the news in Oregon? This is the first of two articles on the subject, based on reports from men throughout the state.)

By GORDON MACNAB
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A pitched ball came in high and, as thousands watched, batter fell unconscious from blow.

Thousands and the other hands listening to the game, learn next morning whether the batter, Oakland's Dario Giani, had a skull fracture or worse; whether he'd be back in lineup soon or whether he'd be through for weeks. The host in Portland refused to say.

SCORES SAT at a crowded Club meeting in Salem, a man of interest in the matter of mid-way through his speech everything was "off record" and could not be said. Those present could hear only the mass of the people could not learn of it from the papers.

These things are illustrations of the barriers erected to the news elsewhere in the country. There have been numerous national stories of news barriers, but the people have a right to be fully informed on what goes on.

Many of the stories have come from news barriers erected by federal agencies.

WHAT ABOUT the Oregon news barriers in the federal buildings, the county offices, the

school board meetings, the city offices, the police departments? And what, too, of those who are not public officials but who deal with large numbers of people and by their acts affect the interests of thousands? And what of those who work with the most fascinating subject of all—life and death?

An Associated Press survey shows that there are news barriers in Oregon. Some are put up by those who are elected to work for the people; some are put up by private individuals who deal with affairs of public interest.

BUT THERE ARE NOT very many of them.

The survey found only one news barrier general throughout the state. Other barriers exist in one city but not in another.

Reporters told how they solved local censorship problems and their answers mostly boiled down to this: Honest reporting breeds confidence among honest men; it gets censorship problems to a point where constant vigilance can control them.

THIS IS WHAT newsmen— from dailies, weeklies and radio

stations—told of Oregon news barriers:

Federal offices: Most of these are in Portland and they set up news barriers which honest reporting cannot break down. There is for example the problem of the U. S. marshal's office. The marshal says he wants to work with the press, but that regulations from Washington tie his hands in many ways. As a result, he bans photographs of those in his custody whether in a federal building or on a public street. He refuses to allow reporters to look into the arrest book.

THE RESULT? Who can say that a man is going to get a chance to state his case swiftly after arrest? The public has to take that on faith because the public does not know who is arrested or when, except as newsmen by persistent digging and by personal friendships among deputies assure themselves that all in custody have been named.

The FBI in Oregon as elsewhere is a news barrier all to itself. There have been complaints. The Portland Associated Press bureau has had good co-operation, within a limited sphere, in the past. It

has not had occasion to ask co-operation on a major case recently.

AS ONE NEWSMAN PUT IT, FBI co-operation depends in part at least on the personality of the FBI agent in charge. He may or may not phone quickly with story developments as he gets them. If he does, he has gone as far as he can under regulations which govern him. If he does not, the people do not get the news.

Practically all federal employees show some reluctance to tell what is going on, and one reporter said: "There is actually a fairly widespread horror of being quoted."

THAT PERHAPS EXPLAINS why plant quarantine inspectors would not say yes and would not say no to the report—it was true—that African snail shells had

Flight Brings Court Martial

GUAM —(AP)—A special court martial Wednesday found two Air Force enlisted men guilty of helping two adventure-seeking American girls stow away on a B-29 flying from Sacramento, Calif., to Guam.

Staff Sgt. Dewey H. Meeks, Greenwood, Miss., and Airman 1/c Robert L. Quick, Rifle, Colo., were both sentenced to six months at hard labor on one-third pay.

At the end of the period Meek is to be given a bad conduct discharge.

The sentences are subject to review by the commanding general. The two girls, Jeri McDaniel, 26, Walnut Grove, Calif., and Maxine Allen, 23, Tacoma, Wash., returned to McClellan Air Force Base near Sacramento, Tuesday and were immediately placed under arrest.

They were charged with illegally entering and hiding in a U.S. aircraft with the intention of travelling.

Federal Cotton Branch Head Resigns Job

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Clovis D. Walker, central figure in a Senate investigation of government cotton buying deals, resigned Monday as director of the Agriculture Department's cotton branch.

In a letter of resignation, Walker said his action "does not constitute any implication of guilt on my part," but he felt that to stay in office, in the light of charges made against him, would be "embarrassing to the department and also detrimental to my health."

A department investigator told the Senate Agriculture Committee Friday that Walker had given inside information to an Egyptian cotton broker about government plans to buy Egyptian cotton.

Shortly before Walker's resignation was announced, Secretary of Agriculture Brannen had asked to be heard by the Senate Agriculture Committee to answer a complaint by Sen. Aiken (R-Vt.) that Brannen had tried to "cover up" wrongdoing in the farm aid program.

"I believe the press should be kept in the federal building," he said, "and I'll see to it that it is."

Federal employees are not the only ones, though, to erect news barriers in Oregon. Newsmen say the biggest barrier and the one most difficult to overcome is that set up by the medical profession. The next article will discuss that and other state barriers.

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Visiting District Attorney Says Gambling 'Corrupts Morals'

Leonard Lindas, district attorney of Clackamas County and a Republican candidate for attorney general, said Tuesday that gambling is a disease "that can corrupt the moral foundation of our nation."

Speaking before Eugene Exchange Club on "Should Gambling Be Legalized?" Lindas spent 45 minutes hammering at the evils of such a proposal.

Gambling never brings good to a community, Lindas said. "The gambler lives at the expense of others. He is a parasite. Those who feel they can rid a community of racketeers by legalizing the gambler's operations are facing a fallacy. The gambler doesn't care whether his operation is legal or not. All he is concerned with is profit. As long as he is making money, he will stay."

Lindas said the gambler tries to buy respectability in a community and tries to be accepted as a "good fellow." Legalize the gambler, and you will have him forever, Lindas asserted. "Only vigorous and honest law enforcement will eliminate gambling."

The district attorney said enforcement normally is up to local police and sheriff's departments, but when these agencies fail to enforce the law, the district attorney has to make the move. Lindas said this is what happened in his own county.

The citizen often fails to realize the amount of profits gamblers collect, the district attorney said. "In one raid we seized 115 slot machines. Each machine had a weekly take of \$50. This would amount to about a third of a million dollars a year."

Lindas said people often point

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