

# Capital Journal

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"With or without offense to friends or foes I sketch your world exactly as it goes."

### Prison Clemency Racket

Cecil Edwards, secretary to Governor Sprague and as such a member of the present state board of paroles, is drawing the fire of a certain class of attorneys because of his announcement that penitentiary prisoners and their relatives who employ lawyers to help obtain pardons and paroles are wasting their money; that there is nothing that a hired attorney can do except, perhaps, prejudice the board against the applicant.

The point of the protests is that a certain clique of lawyers, most of whom have for years been preying upon gullible convicts and their relatives who have money or property with promises of securing paroles or other forms of clemency for the unfortunate prisoners, resent any such interference with the little graft they have been practicing. Publicity given to such announcements as that made by Edwards makes it difficult for shysters to fool even a desperate convict or his family into believing that they can buy their way out of prison.

All these racketeering attorneys have to sell is their professional "influence" with members of the parole board and with the governor, in whom is vested the parole and pardoning power. Such influence is as fictitious as the legal services they actually render.

Edwards and his associates on the board, resentful of the inference contained in the activities of these attorneys and incensed over the manner in which prisoners and their relatives are being bled and bilked out of their savings and property, are rendering a real public service in their efforts to break up the racket. It is to be hoped that they go deep enough into their investigation of the abuse to make examples of some of those guilty of these questionable practices and wipe the slate clean before turning over the administration of parole matters to the new board in June.

Clemency for convicted offenders should not be conditioned upon political influence and technicalities requiring the employment of professional go-betweens. In actual practice it seldom is.

### Third Term Aspirations

Recent developments and utterances leave little doubt that President Roosevelt will be a third term candidate in 1940 and will bolt any conservative democrat named. The New Deal candidates he has sought to promote for the nomination—Jackson, Murphy, Hopkins, Wallace, etc.—have all fizzled out. Probably "we planned it that way."

A European war, whether America participated or not, would precipitate what the president referred to in his Mount Vernon address as that "real crisis and deep emergency" which induced Washington to lay aside his desires for retirement and accept the presidency of the new nation. He inferred it might induce him to seek a third term. Washington however refused a third term, although the country faced even a greater crisis with its internal and foreign complications in 1796 than it did in 1788.

With war psychology gripping the country there would be a tendency to "avoid swapping horses while crossing a stream" and a strong propaganda to retain Mr. Roosevelt in office, which he would affect to regard as a summons to public duty.

War would spell good-bye to the remaining liberties we have, for all power would be given the president for a war dictatorship—as it was given to Wilson in the World War. Wilson gave up his war powers immediately after the armistice because he detested them. Mr. Roosevelt has never willingly given up a single extraordinary emergency power to combat the depression given him on his inauguration. He is not built that way.

### Financial Fallacies

Chairman Eccles of the federal reserve system told a senate committee yesterday that the administration's silver purchase program threatened to "destroy the domestic silver industry in this country." Coming from a silver state, he ought to know. He proposed that the United States quit buying foreign silver and work out some program to stabilize domestic silver production.

The treasury now holds 1,000,000,000 ounces of silver which cannot be sold and against which it has not issued silver certificates. Most of it was purchased abroad at prices above the world market, which has been inflated by the high prices paid by the United States. This silver cost the treasury \$564,000,000. Against it the treasury could issue \$1,225,000,000 in silver certificates and Mr. Eccles says might result in a situation where silver dollars were the only currency and replaced federal reserve notes.

The fantastic silver buying program was matched by the purchase of gold in world markets at high prices until when the dollar was devalued in 1934, it got up to \$35 an ounce instead of the old price of \$20.67. The object of this monetary manipulation was to raise commodity prices.

How it has succeeded is shown by the bureau of labor statistics, which makes the official index for this country. Last week wholesale prices dropped back to the lowest level since August 1934, the approximate level before we started these price raising experiments, which have been a major deterrent to long term business planning, and hence re-employment. At the same time the excess of bank reserves over legal requirements reached an all-time high—\$3,880,000,000.

### Snell Selected as Regatta Admiral

Secretary of State Earl Snell was named admiral for the sixth annual Devil's Lake regatta, June 24 and 25 yesterday by "Speed" Thompson, district governor for North Lincoln county Lions clubs, when he appeared before the Salem Lions during their luncheon at the Marjion Hotel. Thompson, together with E. M. Reynolds of Coanlake, were here in the interest of the regatta. They presented a plan to the Salem Lions club which calls for the en-

trance of a Salem girl in the queen contest. Votes will be secured through the sale of buttons, with the profits being divided between the regatta association and the communities which enter candidates for queen.

The regatta association has dispensed with an outside promoter for this year's show and are handling all of the details themselves. Calvin Ingle of Corvallis will be master of ceremonies for the various functions. Motorboat racing under official sponsorship will feature the regatta.



### Sips for Supper

By Don Upjohn

The most helpful cooperation we've yet secured in organizing our things-to-do-to-make-it-rain club came from Ron Gemmill who has shaved off his now well known mustache.

The George Birrell's have made a gallant gesture in the right direction by starting to have their house painted. When the first dab of paint went on the barometer sank down almost out of sight but we're told has come back up again.

The situation is getting so desperate we're afraid we'll have to reveal that Major Van Van Svareride was the party at the public utilities commission who successfully proposed rain a few weeks ago. It will be remembered that he said whenever the sulphur smell from the paper mill invaded the precinct of the commission it always rained and his prophecy came true before the day was over. We bring his name out in the open now because he may have to be appealed to as

emerged from a nearby ravine. The car had coasted across the garage a last resort to get some sulphur and brimstone going down his way. Can't you start something major, for the sake of the farmers, at least?

A local grocery store offering "Spagetti" for sale on one of its signs reminds us to inquire as to what has become of this squabble in federal courts as to whether long or short spaghetti is the legal kind to eat? We'd like to hear how that case came out as we were getting hungry for spaghetti and wouldn't want some agent of J. Edgar Hoover tracking us down for eating the wrong size. We don't know whether swallowing spaghetti of an illegal size is an Alcatraz island offense or just rates McNeil's island, but we don't care much for either place as a more or less permanent guest.

Last evening we saw the mural unveiled at the Garfield school which was painted by Murray Wade the younger and Dick Yeater, two 12-year-old Raphaels who worked eight months at the federal Art Center producing this juvenile masterpiece. Not only did Murray and Dick astound with their mural the folks who packed the Garfield school. But they proceeded to explain how they produced same in a couple of talks which were both about the best orations we have yet heard. The federal Art Center has surely justified itself in what these lads have accomplished, let alone what several hundred more are doing and deserves wholehearted support from the town folk.

Deaf, Maybe, But Not Dumb  
Los Angeles (U.P.)—Mike Solan eased his aged frame into the witness chair and cupped a hand behind one deaf ear. It was the hearing of one James Watson, 49, accused of burglary.

"And now," shouted Prosecutor John Loucks, "on the night of April 9 when you returned to your room, were a blanket and an oil stove stolen?"

"Sure, my name is Solan," snapped the witness. "I told you that once."

Loucks began again. "What I'm getting at," he raved in the old man's ear, "is this: Before Watson took them, were these things in your possession?"

"Depression or no depression, he had no right to steal them," Solan said peevishly.

Loucks wrote on a paper the question: "Is this your blanket?" But Solan had forgotten his spectacles. He stared at his paper, and then jumped up, thoroughly aroused.

"No, I'm not guilty," he shouted. "That's the thief over there."

Watson was bound over for superior court trial without further testimony by the complaining witness.

### Novelties In the News

**Wet Cargo**  
Rural Hall, N. C.—It wasn't that he scared the dickens out of Constable J. T. Spalhour so much as the company he kept that got this driver into trouble.

Spalhour was gaining speculatively at a freshly dug ditch, when a car sped past him into the ditch. The constable climbed down, helped the uninjured driver out, then looked into the wreck and discovered 90 gallons of liquor. He charged the driver with violation of the prohibition laws.

**Political Minded**  
Idaho Falls, Idaho—Residents of the Blount school district went to town in a body to see a movie (Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs) forgetting it was school board election day.

Pettifoning County Superintendent W. S. Brighton for help, they promised: "Just appoint a board member for us and we'll remember to hold an election next year."

**The Man Was Right**  
(By Associated Press)  
Weatherford, Okla. — Garageman Pete Zuchman ran for his tools when a car coasted across his yard, the driver yelling:

"Quick, fix my brakes—they're in terrible shape."  
Returning, Zuchman found no trace of car or driver until a shout lot into the gully.

## NEWS BEHIND THE NEWS

By PAUL MALLON

Washington, April 21—Mr. Wallace has dropped the cotton subsidy idea, but so softly no one heard it fall.

It seems Attorney General Murphy let the agriculture secretary know that he would be glad to waive a ruling on the legality of subsidizing FSCC cotton sales abroad—but it would not be favorable. Thereupon, Mr. Wallace told the justice department to forget it.

While official spokesmen of the two departments are now denying Murphy made such a ruling, they are merely covering the inside fact that Murphy actually, but unofficially, offered only an unfavorable one.

(Murphy's idea was that the government cannot take title to FSCC loan cotton before July 31 without paying all the handling charges on it, which would make the procedure too expensive.)

### Blocked by Jones

Mr. Wallace also has been blocked on cotton subsidy legislation in the senate, where, at the bottom of the pile of those who tackled him, may be found the white-haired, smiling countenance of Mr. Jesse Jones, the RFC chairman.

With his usual complete avoidance of publicity, Mr. Jones apparently convinced a number of southern senators the export subsidy proposal would severely injure the cotton trade.

### Strecker Decision

The supreme court's Strecker decision has caused a number of congressmen to get their heads together in a plan to broaden the pending subversive activities bill.

They have decided that if the law does not permit deportation of the commies or subversive agitators, it should be strengthened. House judiciary committee lawyers now are going over the Strecker decision to ascertain how far new legislation should go.

The pending Smith bill (H. R. 5138) goes far enough to outlaw any organizations and persons advocating overthrow of the U. S. government. It would require civilian military organizations to get permits from the war secretary (this would presumably also stop the Nazi bundlers. Old guarantees against search and seizure would be relaxed to permit search warrants to be issued against suspects harboring books and pamphlets. Aliens violating the act would be deported forthwith.

### Red Propaganda

The navy has slipped to congressmen privately several pamphlets seized aboard navy ships, or passed out by young girls to sailors on Riverside Drive, in Norfolk and San Francisco reading: "It's an officer's navy! . . . You will be used to fight for the same bankers and bosses who piled up fortunes in the last war . . . Sailors refuse to mur-

der your fellow workers here and abroad! . . . Fight for your own right to organize!" etc., etc.

The army has had some little trouble like this, but not as much as the navy. From private autos, driving through army posts, leaflets have sometimes been thrown into the stables and troop quarters.

Navy and army are interested, however, only in the few sections of the Smith bill relating to this kind of activity, and not to its broader civilian aspects.

There will be trouble aplenty in congress over the issue, as a majority there has long opposed extensive anti-sedition laws which could be misused for political purposes, or any expansion of military authority over civilian political activity.

Some mammoth ideas are reported developing in these Morgenthau conferences on what to do in case of war. Three courses of handling stock market liquidation are supposed to be under consideration. The administration will choose one, probably the first one, recommending legislation from congress authorizing \$4,000,000,000 in new gold certificates to be issued against gold already held and deposited to the credit of the treasury. With this fund, some government agency, probably RFC, could buy whatever American securities are liquidated by foreign holders. But it raises prospects of government ownership and inflation, both of which are undesirable.

The other two courses under consideration are similar but worse: creation of a specific government agency to buy securities, and use of the old Thomas amendment authorizing the president to issue currency up to \$3,000,000,000.

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