

Heppner Gazette Times

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The following article came to the editorial desk as prepared advertising copy. The subject matter is so timely that we have decided to use it as an editorial.

Trouble is you can't wrap barbed wire and the Declaration of Independence up in the same package. Tom Jefferson could have told you that, and he wrote the second and almost invented the first.

Tom Jefferson was no shrewd Yankee from up Massachusetts way; just a level-headed fellow who worked a Virginia farm between inventing gadgets and being President of the United States. He liked to go stand on a green hilltop and smell things growing. He liked to look at the blue mountains and figure how there was room beyond them for almost every man on earth in those days to be his own boss.

Tom Jefferson would have known you could not put folks behind barbed wire and have the Declaration mean anything at all.

Of course, Tom was wrong about some things, too. He lived to see the first locomotive and had his doubts. He never thought the Declaration of Independence would work with railroads tearing across the country and banks and stores and factories in almost every town. He had an idea a man could be free only on his own farm.

But he wasn't altogether wrong; not by a sight. He knew that if a body could invent a better gun to shoot gophers with, somebody else might come along and tinker with the idea and end up with a gun that would kill more people. He could have almost told Orville Wright that a crackpot named Hitler would take that little man-carrying box-kite at Kittyhawk and try to turn it into something to conquer the world.

Folks in America had a priority on the Declaration of Independence, but Jefferson would be the first today to agree that they can no longer have exclusive right to it. The immortal truths in it are either self-evident for all people or for none. It has taken a lot of teaching to convince us that Li Hoi Foo has got to be secure on his Yangtze farm if there is to be an end to air raid drills in Seattle and Palm Beach. To some the lesson may not even yet be clear.

Tom Jefferson lived to be an old man. He invented a lot of things. Had he lived longer, he might have invented the telegraph, the electric light, maybe even the radio and the airplane. Anyway, he could have guessed they were coming, that the world would grow smaller, that in time the validity of the Declaration would be challenged not only by Tidewater Tories but by men and ideas across the whole world.

He would have known there could be no com-

promise. He would have known that you cannot wrap barbed wire and the Declaration of Independence up in the same package. He would have known that the world cannot exist half-slave and half-free.

Looked at Tom's way, our war aims are not hard to figure out. They are as simple as his Declaration of Independence. And as moving and majestic.

We trust this is the last Fourth of July it will ever be necessary to have to point them out.

Hazardous Season Here

Right at present there is as fine a prospect for a bumper wheat crop in Morrow county as can be recalled by the best informed observers. Our wheatraisers are fully justified in the feeling of optimism which pervades the country side, for nothing short of a disaster can prevent the harvesting of another big crop this season. The outlook is good from the lower reaches of the Cecil area to the higher foothills region next to the timber line—field after field of waving grain now mostly fully headed and ripening. It is an inspiring sight to the passerby. It is a source of great satisfaction to the producers.

There are forces that delight not in such inspiring sights. They delight ever in racing over these beautiful fields, leaving in their wake nothing but ruin. Those forces may be created by nature or they may be the result of carelessness on the part of human beings. In either event the loss is a means of lending comfort to our enemies. They are exponents of the doctrine of waste wherein their enemies are concerned, and no matter how small the loss they count it as so much gain to their cause.

It appears timely to call attention to the forthcoming holiday week-end. Celebrations will be few and probably the usual flow of holiday travel will be markedly smaller. Nevertheless, there is a tendency to grow a bit careless on such occasions and out of such carelessness spring some of the most damaging conflagrations. Each of us must realize the urgency of the situation regarding protection of grain fields and forests. The season thus far has been favorable to the grower, yet by the same token it may be disastrous if great care is not exercised. So, if you are inclined to toss lighted cigarette butts out of the car window, don't do it. Use every precaution ever advocated. When you have done that you have acted the part of a good citizen and will have no regrets.

And Now—Fuel Rationing

When it became necessary to ration fuel and motor oils, people of the west accepted the dictum with the minimum of complaining. It was evident that transportation had much to do with the problem and there was a desire to be helpful. As the program has worked out it appears that no one has suffered unnecessary discomfort, either at home or through lack of travel privileges.

Now comes the announcement that the north-western states are to be put on a wood fuel ration basis. To those of us who are familiar with the timbered areas of Oregon and Washington, this appears a bit peculiar and the only reason that may be accepted as plausible is the shortage of manpower and transportation. Let us hope that is the motive back of the order and not the suggestion that the west has too many favorable conditions and in order to make us appreciate the fact that a war is going on it must be made difficult for us to obtain wood for fuel. There are other things to remind us that the world is at war and this latest order (not officially issued) is but one more of the worries a harried public must endure until this whole issue is straightened up. None of these measures are pleasant to contemplate but neither is it pleasant to contemplate an uncertain outcome of the war, or at least an indefinite extension of hostilities. Looking at the situation from that angle it will be best to accept the edict and try to worry along.

Scotty's extends a cordial welcome to all Service Men in our midst.



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