

Horse sense

By ERNEST V. JOINER



I think television station KGW, Portland, owes to Judge Paul Jones, the Lake Penland Corp. and the citizens of Morrow County some kind of a retraction from its recent broadcast suggesting illegal or unethical conduct in the affairs of Lake Penland Corp. The broadcast was an irresponsible piece of reporting, and a good journalist would welcome an opportunity to publicly retrace a wrong done to any person through error, bias or plain sloppy reporting. I have done so several times, and it didn't hurt a bit.

Gov. Tom McCall, after having found through his ordered investigation of Lake Penland, praised the whole project and gave Judge Jones a clean bill of health. McCall wrote a letter on Nov. 14 to Forest Amsden, an official of KGW-TV, rebuking him for the Lake Penland approach. His letter, in part reads:

"... You had your romp on the technicalities—and Jim's series on the subject was important—but everyone missed the forest for the trees on what Penland really represents in the area of dramatic citizen action.

"Creation of the lake (Lake Penland) and conjunctive recreation area actually has been a miracle of ingenuity on the part of the participating local people (Heppner). It touched high ground in effective work by a team made up of these men and women and representatives of a half-dozen federal, state and local agencies.

"Producing a 60-acre body of water in that lake-scarce part of Oregon took some doing. Sure, they made some procedural short cuts—all too common in land development—but they've been raked for that, and now, in all fairness, TV ought to put the uniqueness of their masterpiece into perspective in what I judge could be, with John's sensitive handling, a whale of a human interest story." (Signed) Tom McCall.

The geniuses at KGW did, as McCall suggests, miss the forest. Lake Penland is the only lake and recreational area built by a bunch of smalltown business men and dedicated to public use. These men didn't run to Washington with their hands out for money, they put it up themselves. They got nothing in return but satisfaction, and a little guff from KGW. The story of Lake Penland should be televised as a unique exercise in people doing for themselves in behalf of the public good.

To end the story of Judge Jones' "involvement," and it should be ended, he attended a meeting of the Association of Oregon Counties at Eugene, Nov. 14-16. When he was introduced he was given a standing ovation. Gov. McCall personally appeared in Eugene to swear him in as the "embattled" member of the Land Conservation and Development Commission.

I take a dozen Oregon newspapers, and in each issue there is published the names and offenses of people who have been arrested by city and county law enforcement officers. But in Heppner, such news is withheld from the public. The reason arrests here go unreported in the Gazette-Times is because the Chief of Police of Heppner and the Sheriff of Morrow County do not keep official log books of their activities that are open to the public and the press—I am not going to speculate as to why such records are not readily available to the public, but I have written to the Attorney General as to the legality of law enforcement officers' failure to maintain accurate records to which the public has access. It is not fair or proper for this newspaper to publish the names of only a few violators without publishing the names of all of them, and we will no longer do so. We want all arrest records open to us, or none. And if the Attorney General says the records should be maintained and open to public scrutiny, I hope the city police and county sheriff will abide by that decision. The citizens of Heppner and Morrow County have a basic right, I think, to know about violations of the law and to know what their law enforcement officers are doing. Even if it should develop that the state does not require maintaining public records of arrests, I would hope that law enforcement officers would recognize that such news is of public interest, and provide it. And if the public wants this type of news, which I think it does, then elected or appointed officers should be instructed to furnish it.

I would like to explain that my stand in favor of the Dec. 3 bond proposal to modernize the city's water system has nothing to do with personalities. It has only to do with water. Or the lack of it. Nothing more. Mr. Vic Groshens, writing in the Mail Pouch, seems to think a personal attack has been made upon him as a former water superintendent. I don't know who were mayors, councilmen or superintendents in other years, and it doesn't matter in the present crisis. Had I been a member of the city council 20 years ago I would have done exactly as those councilmen did—provide water to city residents at the least possible cost. That is, after all, their duty. There comes a time, however, when a water system cannot be further "patched and spliced." It must be reconstructed and modernized. That is the situation in Heppner today. Last week I used the phrase "Mickey Mouse" to describe the water system. Some resented it. But "Mickey Mouse" means to patch up, repair, mend and make-do at the least possible cost, and there's nothing derogatory in that. It is simply good business, as long as it works. For that matter, I am running a Mickey Mouse newspaper operation. Hardly a week passes that I don't tie some machine together with baling wire to keep it going until I am eventually forced into a new machine. Don't feel insulted, for none is intended. When I get ready to insult somebody it will be in no unmistakable terms!

I have to give the ecology nuts credit. They maintain an efficient organization for harassing their opponents. After having labeled the lunatic fringe of the environmental movement as "nuts," I have received dozens of letters from nearly every state, Mexico and Canada. They are all in the same vein—venomous and bristling with invective. Obviously, the Gazette-Times doesn't circulate in all these places, which indicates the ecology nuts have a system of communication set up and a policy of heaping coals on the heads of those who oppose them. They're wasting their time on me, of course, but there's a bright side. While they're attacking me they're leaving some nice people alone! Next week I'll devote this column to environmentalists—the real ones I admire and the phoney ones I despise.



"Let me know if they work."

"Let me know if they work."

The mail pouch

EDITOR:

Your recent editorial comment concerning ratchet penalties charged Columbia Basin for August and September at our Condon Substation was illusory to some extent.

As I told you prior to your editorial, the ratchet penalties did not result in a \$100 fine per se.

In our present power contract, there are many, many restrictions. One of these is that we must pay a minimum level of demand charge equal to 50 per cent of the level of the preceding eleven months—excluding the effect of irrigation load. Last December, we had some cold days and those 50 per cent of our members who have some electric heaters had them pretty well all in use. Thus, a high load peak was established. When our members at Condon conserved just enough in their usage to reach a level under 50 per cent of the December peak—Columbia Basin was charged a ratchet penalty.

I wrote BPA and complained of the August charge as soon as our billing was received; later we received the September penalty. The penalties amounted to \$21.85 for August and \$38.95 for September. Penalties are not uncommon in our operation if the wrong operating condition is present. We had been paying a penalty at two of our three delivery points for poor power factor when I became manager of Columbia Basin. This amounted to \$217.55 for August, 1972, for example. Within a few days we purchased and installed capacitors to correct this condition on our system.

I appreciated you calling the nature of our problems to the attention of your readers.

DAVE HARRISON
Manager

(ED. NOTE—Call it anything—you still got soaked cash money for not using more power.)

EDITOR:

Your little editorial in the last Gazette-Times dated Nov. 15 was very well written, believe me. You are very well versed on the art of printing what you wish to believe.

To begin with, the Mickey Mouse water system as you very aptly refer to is a far step from what it was 20 years ago. The city in 1950 was drinking from cow dung-strewn feedlots. The total water situation was one diesel motor on one pump, feeding 228 gallons per minute to the city on an 8-inch cement line.

Since then the total gallons per minute to the city was boosted to 750 gallons per minute through a sanitary 8-inch line. The city contracted 6 miles of pipe line, and the city crew laid an additional 2 1/2 miles. This was done in the budget. Please check State Sanitary records to see what was accomplished. In addition, an 8-inch iron and an 8-inch Transite line was laid around the city, all on budget money. This improved pressure to all points, except Lott's addition.

In addition, repairs were made to the 780,000 gallon reservoir on budget money, saving 125 gallons per minute to the city, plus the contamination caused by this faulty reservoir.

In the past the city has had some real mayors and councilmen, of which I am proud to have been associated with. The only things these people had was the well-being of the city, and above all, it's finances.

Look at the record, if you will. For the past 20 years what department paid the bills?

In 1950 the city had one operable well at a capacity of 350 gallons per minute. Since 1950 three wells were drilled and put into operation for a total capacity of 1,800 gallons per minute, all done on budget money. How can you say the past 20 years have been lost?

Get your facts straight, Mr. Joiner.

VIC GROSHENS,
Heppner.

(ED. NOTE—You have just described a Mickey Mouse water system; which, had it not been a Mickey Mouse operation, it would not now be condemned by the State of Oregon. Now for the facts you requested. (1) According to the Oregon Insurance Rating Bureau, when it rated the Heppner system in 1938, it got 3,097 deficiency points, placed Heppner in Protection Class 7 which carries a high insurance rate, and in 1968, 30 years later, the same bureau gave Heppner an even worse rating, 3,381 deficiency points for its fire protection system.

(2) According to the Preliminary Engineering Report on Proposed Water System Improvements for the City of Heppner, dated November 1973, compiled by Stephen C. Anderson & Associates, P. 2, "The present distribution systems are too small and do not have adequate cross connections and shutoff valves. Fire flows as recommended by the Insurance Rating Bureau are less than adequate in the business district and only about 15 per cent of the recommended amount at the grade school and high school. The present water system is inadequate in many ways. All of which is why the State of Oregon has, to put it bluntly, 'cut our water off.'"

(3) I quote from a letter to Mayor Jerry Sweeney written by the Department of Human Resources, Portland, dated Nov. 16, 1973, the agency that decreed no more water connections for Heppner until its water system has been upgraded: "Our immediate concern is to learn when approval action will be taken to correct the severe water supply problem near the High School. Also, we need to know when additional quantities of water will be delivered to the City, thus assuring an adequate supply for new users. It would be helpful if some indication were made as to where suitable building sites exist that will be developed when an adequate water supply is assured. Our past correspondence has asked that no new water users be served because of the inadequate supply."

EDITOR:

Imagine my surprise this morning when I heard excerpts being read from the Gazette-Times over Radio Station KGO, San Francisco! It made me sit up and listen.

Eighty years ago last March I was born on Willow Creek, the daughter of L.M. and Ethel Powell. Father was known as Milton.

After locusts cleaned us out, my parents moved to Eastern Montana. I recall hearing my parents speak of the cloudburst on Willow Creek in which many of their close friends lost their lives.

Is it possible for me to learn the year in which this cloudburst happened. I would appreciate any information on it.

MRS. VIOLET POWELL ROSE,
Grass Valley, Ca.

(ED. NOTE—The date was June 14, 1903. Give my regards to that old radio reprobate, Jim Eason of KGO.)

EDITOR:

I suppose this letter will go where my other one went, in the wastebasket.

Anyway, your language has improved. What I wish to bring up is this dam business. I doubt if the people of Heppner had a chance to vote on it that we would ever have a dam built.

The money spent on the thing so far would go a long way toward the water line and sewer works.

Isn't there some way the money could be used where needed and not on a dam which most don't think is needed? Also, the last two or three floods have come down Shobe Canyon and a dam on Willow Creek wouldn't be any help at all.

Keeping the creek clean through town is what is needed.

MARTHA VAN SCHOLACK,
Heppner.

REMEMBER THIS? REMINISCENCE!

25 YEARS AGO, Nov. 18, 1948

Conservation of electricity between the hours of 4:30 and 6:30 p.m., the evening peak demand period, is being urged for all users of power in the Pacific Northwest during the winter weeks. . . . City council pledges cooperation in plans for flood control dam on Willow Creek. . . . Case Furniture advertised new Admiral combination automatic radio-phonographs for \$69.95. . . . Platt's Stage Line announced passenger service to Arlington, 7 days a week, \$3.80 round-trip. . . . Appearing in "A Mind of Her Own," junior play, were Colleen Connor, Gerald Bergstrom, Rose Pierson, Norman Ruhl, Marlene DuBois, Rita Johnson, Darlene Wise, Vesta Cutsforth, Mrs. Marie Clary, coach, Bob Bergstrom, Loren Pieper, Betty Graves, Jim Orwick, Rachel Cox and Marlene Turner.

55 YEARS AGO, Nov. 21, 1918

H.V. Gates of Heppner Light & Water Co. makes proposition to city regarding new hotel for Heppner. . . . R.W. Turner was seriously injured last evening by being kicked in the side by a horse. . . . Henry Blahm and family will move to Walla Walla next week after residing in Heppner 26 years. . . . Ashbough's new meat market is now open to the trade and is supplied with a good line of fresh and cured meats. . . . Judge J.P. Williams has been holding matrimonial court this week and reports the following weddings: Jeff McFerrin and Amy Crawford of Heppner were married Saturday evening. Robert Brunson and Vina Thorp were married Monday. . . . County Superintendent Mrs. Lena Snell Shurte contemplates three one-day institutes over the county instead of one general meeting lasting three days. . . . After an enforced vacation of five weeks Heppner schools opened again Monday (flu epidemic).



"Put your pistol up Jake, with all the notes you got in here, you have done robbed this bank!"

Mayor of Hardman

DEAR MISTER EDITOR:

Fer onct, Mister Editor, the fellers didn't get no static from their old ladies about spending Saturday night at the country store. Zeke Grubb said his old lady actual suggested they have supper a little early so he wouldn't miss what she called the opening ceremony of the session.

That's how Zeke knew it was close to Thanksgiving. It never fails to amaze him, Zeke told the fellers, that his old lady can git started on her Thanksgiving cooking a full week ahead, and still be late getting dinner on the table Thanksgiving day. If they was to move Thanksgiving up to Monday, like some of the other holidays, Zeke figured he wouldn't git nothing atall to eat the first Monday Thanksgiving cause it would take his old lady a year to work out a new schedule.

And Zeke was able to report on why the other wives was so eager fer the fellers to git from under foot. He said his preacher was pushing fer a community Thanksgiving service and supper at the church, and all the wimmen around the neighborhood was to fix the food. What was happening, Zeke allowed, is that all the wimmen is gitting together to plan what they're going to fix, and Saturday night was their first planning session.

Clem Webster said he was in favor of the eating fer whatever reason. He was of the mind that some of the best eating a man can git in this world is good, solid home cooking at church. He said his old lady even makes a special biscuit fer church suppers, and she calls em angel biscuits. When all the wimmen work out different dishes and breads and goodies to bring, Clem said if they was any better feed to be had the Good Lord is keeping it fer Hissell.

General speaking, Mister Editor, the fellers was in a meller mood Saturday night, and it was more than looking to the Thanksgiving supper at the church. It was the Thanksgiving. They complain about anything and everything, but they are quick to admit they got a heap to be thankful for. Ed Doolittle said this old country has seen some rough going at home this past year, but he was special thankful we ain't in a shooting war. As bad as the news has been out of Washington lately, Republican Ed allowed, it's been worse in the Middle East.

This Thanksgiving, declared Bug Hookum, he is like the feller that grumbled cause he didn't have no shoes, til he met a man who had no feet. Bug said he was reminded of the old lady at the revival meeting that stood to witness at church. She said "I ain't got but two teeth, but thank God they fit."

And me, I am thankful that when ever bone in my body aches, I ain't a herring.

Furthermore, I kin be thankful that my friends in town give me a new lease on mayorship of this town. Its a good feelin to know ones wanted, and that theres something that makes friend besides good grammar in a weekly letter to you, Mister Editor. And I'm grateful to Missus Steagall for offerin me mayorship of her home town, St. Charles, Va., I know its a great town, but I'd have a great lonesomeness there away from old friends.

Personal, I'm thankful fer a heap more than I'm worried about. It would be a better world if we could be more thankful fer what we got and quit being bitter about what the other feller's got that we ain't.

Yours truly,
MAYOR ROY



Church politics on Israel

BY LESTER KINSOLVING

Israel's nearly three million citizens know better than to expect much by way of justice for their nation in the United Nations.

For they have learned over the years to expect that Israel will be voted against, almost automatically, by a large coalition of Communist and Arab countries who are now beginning to purchase African votes as well.

Israel, on the other hand, might expect some semblance of fairness from the National Council of Churches (NCC) in the U.S.A. For all 31 of the Protestant and Orthodox denominations who belong to this organization are self-professed followers of Jesus Christ.

On Saturday Oct. 6, however, while Jesus' fellow Jews of the Holy Land were observing the solemnity of Yom Kippur, the armies of Egypt and Syria struck simultaneously. Did the NCC deplore the massive sacrifice of using the holiest day of the Jewish year to start a war? It did nothing of the kind.

The NCC General Board, meeting only one week later in New York, resolved that it "deplores the outbreak of hostilities." (The absolute nonexistence of any self-identified "hostility lobby" rendered this neat solution comparable to resolving officially against the man-eating shark.)

The NCC General Board also called upon the U.S. government "to use the present spirit of detente, especially with the USSR, to effect an immediate mutual cessation of arms shipments to the belligerents."

This resolution was passed despite the enormous airlift of weapons by the Soviet Union to Damascus and Cairo. And considering the obvious lack of influence of an church council upon the Kremlin, this resolution, whatever its intent, constituted a call for an arms embargo upon Israel alone.

Such an embargo proposal, if it had not been ignored by the U.S. government, would have very possible resulted in Israel's defeat, and a genocide on the Mediterranean, courtesy of the Syrians and the Iraqis, if not the Egyptians.

The American Jewish Committee's two guest observers at the NCC meeting, Rabbi James Rudin and the Rev. Gerald Strober (Presbyterian), were appalled by this resolution. And so were a few of the NCC delegates such as Cleveland's Episcopal Bishop John Burt, who tried valiantly but in vain to amend this embargo proposal.

The AJC observers noted with deep regret the NCC's "failure to deal with the reality of the Middle East War," including "aggression threatening the very existence of the State of Israel."

What the AJC did not say (understandably, as they were guests) is the fact that while church property is sacrosanct in Israel, in Libya, strongman Muammar Quadaffi can expropriate an entire Roman Catholic Cathedral and turn it into a mosque without so much as a murmur of international protest.

There are also the NCC's Arab member-denominations, such as the Antiochian Orthodox (until recently Syrian Orthodox) bodies, who, while contributing little or nothing to their share of NCC's budget, use the NCC as a national platform for Arab propaganda.

Any of these Arab denominations might walk out of the NCC (as did the Seventh Day Babbists, only this year.) If such withdrawals begin to multiply, the NCC's image of many denominational members could be seriously tarnished.

This ecclesiastical fact of life is approximated by the old question as to why the U.S. should offend 100 million Arabs who control a lot of oil, simply for the sake of 3 million Jews. Answered Golda Meir, who seconded the AJC's expressed regret about the NCC:

"If the United States would sacrifice the lives of millions for the sake of oil, this is not the America I once knew."

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