

Horse sense

By ERNEST V. JOINER

● The fact that Johnny can't read isn't news any more, but the extent to which he can't read is. The American Press Institute met at Columbia University a few months ago and made tests of readership comprehension among college upperclassmen, all English majors from good high schools. The first group to take the test, and flunk it, was Columbia's graduate journalism school. It makes one wonder how a student who cannot read gets into a graduate school of journalism, but that isn't the point right here. Other interesting figures were arrived at: 90 per cent of high school graduates never read another book in their lives; half the college freshmen are required to take bonehead English; they can't write a simple declarative sentence; and they are ignorant of grammar and syntax. What to do about it? Prof. Fry, head of Rutgers University's reading center, had this to say: "Until educators put more emphasis in the early years on basic communication skills, newspapers and wire services must solve the problem by writing more simply, or they'll lose that vast potential audience."

● There is something sad as well as tragic in this suggestion that U.S. newspaper reporters and editors, in order to communicate with younger people, must "write down" to the average person's 8th grade level of difficulty with the language. This involves me personally, as an editor who got the well-honed and polished tools of his trade in a two-room country school 50 years ago—and who is now being asked to trade those tools for the two-syllable communicative system of the Stone Age in order to be understood by youthful illiterates. There may be something practical in the "If you can't whip 'em, join 'em" theory. But I hope the nation does not embrace that theory by encouraging the illiterates and lending dignity to what should be humiliating disgrace.

● How well I remember that country teacher to whom I owe so much. Mrs. Frank Rader, at Sunnyslope School, somewhere in the vast Oklahoma Panhandle. She taught all grades, 1 through 8. She taught all subjects—reading, writing, arithmetic, art, penmanship (penmanship?), spelling, history, geography, English grammar and composition. All eight grades were housed in one room. Mrs. Rader called for 1st grade, and everybody in the front row seats moved back so the 1st grade students could "recite." Then 2nd grade was called, and the 1st grade retreated to the rear of the room and so on through 8th grade. There was strict discipline. Each student was pushed to his capacity. She drove a horse and buggy five miles from home to school each way. Her salary (when the school had the money) was \$40 a month. She was probably the best teacher I ever had.

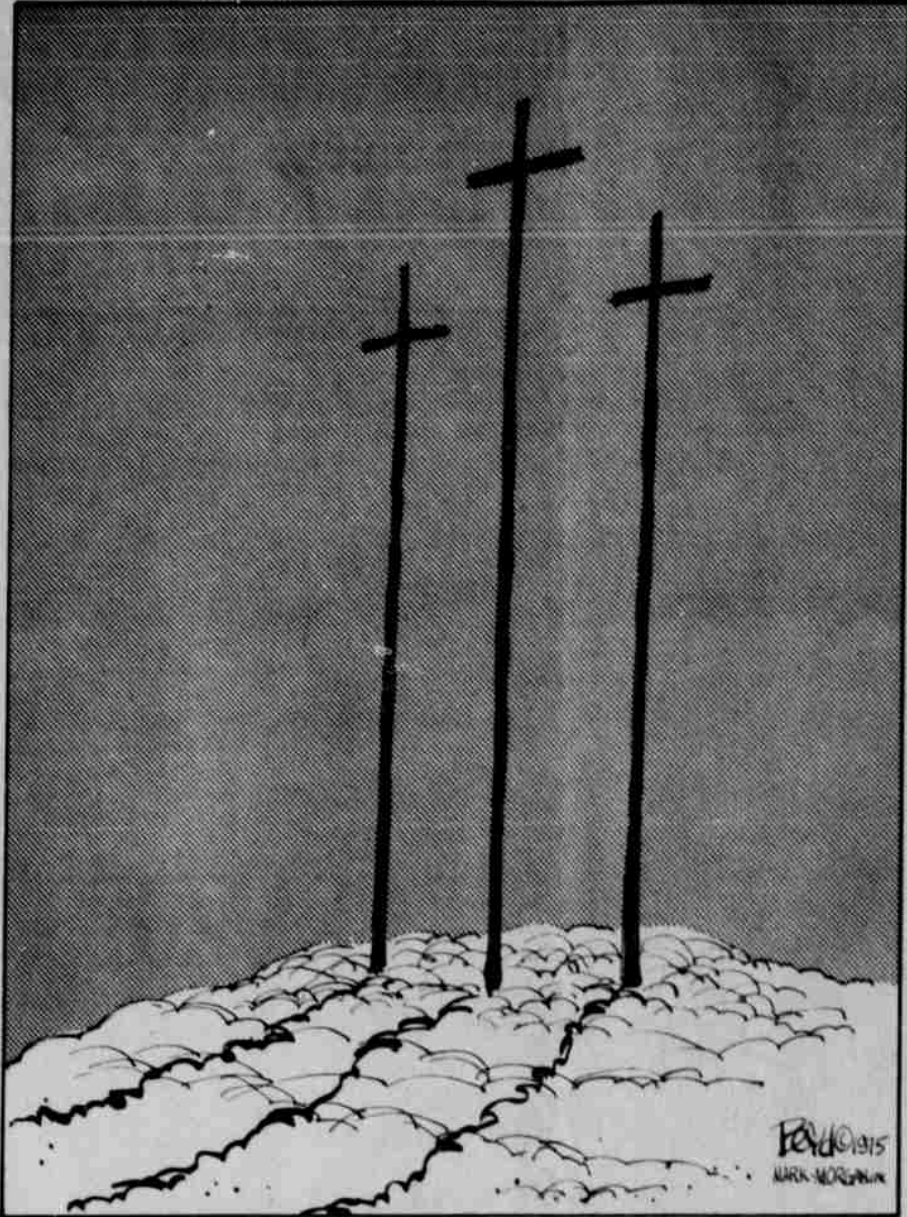
● There were no illiterates in my elementary school. There were no illiterates in my high school. There were no illiterates in my college. Yet, according to Associated Press accounts, there are more illiterates in the United States today than in 1900. Why? I was 50 years old before I began reading of the increasing rate of illiteracy. I cannot believe that this situation exists because young people are less intelligent than they once were, or that the learning desire has diminished. One reason for growing illiteracy may lie in the tendency to de-emphasize the English language in public schools, and to neglect grammar. Some modern teachers believe the language should not even be taught. One school would rely heavily on colloquial expression. "Relate" has been substituted for "communicate." There is growing emphasis on such things as body language, rock and other types of music, dress styles and hair culture as means of communication. And, of course, television. True, the young stress "communication." But how can communication be better conducted than through reading and writing?

● Money alone is not the answer to better education, as witness that \$40-a-month teacher in a two-room clapboard schoolhouse. The difference lies in the quality of teaching. There is reason to believe that the quality of education suffers in proportion to the money we spend on it. Dr. Martin Larson, economist, recently testified before Cong. Al Ullman's Ways and Means Committee in Washington that "The federal government now disburses about \$14 billion a year for education, although education got along very well without any of this money before 1964, and the net result has been that the cost of education has quadrupled." Apparently, the more money we lavish on education the greater the increase in illiteracy. An interesting footnote comes from Albert Shanker, president, American Federation of Teachers. He has informed the New York Board of Education that the 75,000 members of his teacher union will need a very substantial raise in salary next year because "my people are hungry." The median annual salary for teachers in New York is \$18,350.

● Somehow the delusion that more money insures high quality education must be exploded. Hopefully, it will happen before our children become totally illiterate.

● The few who attended the Pat Roberts Show at the high school Sunday afternoon will agree that it was one of the finest entertainment performances seen in Heppner in many years. This was a professional performance that would have done credit to New York City or San Francisco. It was loaded with musical talent. It was an enjoyable two-hour program. The Heppner Lions Club underwrote the Pat Roberts appearance on the assumption people would attend. Only 135 did. The Lions lost \$600. The community lost, too, for it may be a long time before the Lions underwrite another first-class show.

● Mr. and Mrs. Paul Taylor attended that \$25-a-plate dinner for Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz in Pendleton last week. Anticipating a dinner at least comparable to the price, the couple skipped lunch and showed up with a great appetite. The menu consisted of popcorn, peanuts and pretzels—one bowl of each! . . . The Department of Environmental Quality, Salem, needs \$375,000 to continue operations through July 11. If it doesn't get the money, 100 DEQ employees will be cut from the payroll, which would be a blessing for all mankind! . . . As of today America's national debt stands at \$495 billion, and the interest amounts to about \$75,000 a minute. . . . Oregon Legislature observers say that the current session is the most strongly anti-business one in recent years. Look for at least 55 new laws that will make doing business more costly—with the added cost to be passed on to the consumer. . . . The U.S. Chamber of Commerce points out that 76 per cent of high school students are taking courses emphasizing college preparation—yet only two out of 10 jobs today require a college degree. . . . The father of a 14-year-old son was trying to explain to him the difference between inflation and deflation. And getting nowhere. Finally, in desperation, he resorted to the visual aid technique. "Son," he explained, "it's this way. Deflation is when your mother takes off her bra; inflation is when she takes off her girdle." . . . It's Eastertime, a very important time of year for Christians. Non-church members have to be introduced to religion and church members have to be introduced to their ministers. . . . Have a nice Easter, even if the snow continues and we have to dig those eggs out of a snowbank.



For God So Loved The World...

Cigarette smokers pay \$258,000 during 1974

What changes, if any, have residents of Morrow County made in their smoking habits in recent years?

Have they cut down on cigarettes? Are they smoking more or less than people in other parts of the county?

For a time, following the Surgeon General's report, issued about 10 years ago, that smoking was a hazard to health and was responsible for 41,000 lung cancer deaths a year, some local people swore off completely, some cut down on the number they smoked and some turned to cigars and pipes as a substitute.

More recently, however, despite the barrage of medical reports in subsequent years linking cigarettes with heart disease and other illnesses, they have been puffing away at a near-record rate.

Figures released by the

government, by the Tobacco Tax Council and by others depict the trend in each section of the nation.

Cigarette sales in Morrow County in the past year came to approximately 654,000 packs, according to a breakdown of regional totals reported by industry sources.

In terms of the local population over age 18, this was equal to 235 packs per person. It was a higher rate than was found in most areas. The average throughout the United States was 214 packs. It was 192 in the Pacific States.

Although most health authorities believe the case against smoking has been well proved, the tobacco industry maintains that the evidence is merely statistical and that no cause and effect relationship has been properly documented.

Despite the steady increase in taxes imposed on cigarettes by federal, state and many local governments, making smoking more costly, sales have been on the rise in the last few years and are within 2 per cent of their all-time high.

The biggest increase since 1970 has been among teen-age girls. They are now smoking nearly as much as the boys.

How much does the average Morrow County smoker spend for cigarettes? Approximately \$92.60 a year, it is estimated.

The total bill, for the community as a whole, was close to \$258,000 last year.

Summer jobs open for 4-H

Mayor of Hardman

DEAR MISTER EDITOR:

I don't know if it has anything to do with the price of groceries and the 17 million Americans that are using food stamps, but it seems everywhere you go folks are talking about food. The fellers got on this train of thought Saturday night at the country store.

Clem Webster reported where he had saw by the papers that young folks at churches have started holding fasts. They git together and don't eat for a day or so, and they round up sponsors who pay them so much fer ever hour they don't eat.

Clem said he wasn't convinced about how much good the money these fastings raised could do fer starving people in Africa, but the idee of gitting two or more Americans together and not eating could turn the hole social structure of the country around.

Clem was of a mind that everthing we do, from the hot dog at the ball game and the popcorn at the picture show to the state dinners fer visiting kings and commissars is built around food.

These young folks that don't eat at the church find somepun else to do, went on Clem, and they may even go back to talking to one another. If this notion of meeting and not eating catches on, Clem said, politicians in this country can expect direct benefits. You announce so-and-so is going to speak at a rally and you ain't likely to find folks scrambling fer front row seats. But you say the speaking will foller the barbecue, and you ain't able to stir the faithful with a stick, The candidate allus has to eat some of the food, and unless he is blessed with cast iron innards he's shore to run into problems afore his campaign is over.

General speaking, the fellers were agin no-eating meetings. Zeke Grubb declared that covered dish suppers at the church was the best way to keep the body and soul nourished that's ever been, and he said he was prepared to come out foursquare agin any change in this arrangement. If the Good Lord hadn't intended us to have covered dish suppers, allowed Zeke, he wouldn't of give us casseroles and 20 different desserts.

Speaking of church suppers, Bug Hookum brought on a heavy debate with a question about how to eat corn on the cob. Bug said he had saw in one of these columns on manners that you hold your head still and move the cob, but Bug said he allus had moved his mouth along the cob, mowing as he went.

After some discussion, it was Isaac Cornfodder, that don't speak up much, that set the matter straight. Isaac said he'd been eating corn on the cob, man and boy, teeth and no teeth, fer nigh on to 70 years, and that he had found that moving the head in one direction while moving the corn in the other direction at the same time gives the best speed and efficiency.

His motion carried unanimous.

Yours truly,
MAYOR ROY.

Applications from college persons for short term employment this summer in two Oregon State University 4-H and youth programs are now being accepted, according to Mike Howell, Morrow County Extension agent.

About 50 students, both men and women, are needed to serve as counselors during the 60th annual 4-H Summer School at OSU, June 15 through 21. Counselors must have completed one year of college, and preference will be given to older, more experienced applicants who are former 4-H members.

Experience in counseling is desirable, but not necessary. The job pays \$70 for the week, plus room and board.

The counselors will work with groups of about 30 4-H members who will be housed in OSU residence halls during summer school.

In addition, applications are also being accepted for 11 staff positions in the 4-H department at the Oregon State Fair. Employment will begin either Aug. 17 or 19 and continue through Sept. 2.

The state fair staff will receive \$23 a day plus room. Applicants must be college students or out of high school for at least a year. The student staff members help with exhibits, various 4-H events and supervise high school students on the teen staff.

Persons interested in one or both programs may obtain application forms from the Morrow County Extension office or from the State 4-H office, 105 Extension Hall, Oregon State University. Deadline for applying for both summer school and state fair positions is April 15. The same form is used for both programs.

Selection of both summer school and state fair staffs will be made in May.

VOTING PRECINCTS ARE CONSOLIDATED

There will be a consolidation of voting precincts for the Blue Mountain Community College budget election to be held May 6.

Precincts 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are consolidated. Voting will take place in the multipurpose room at Heppner Elementary School.



Ideal host for the World Council of Churches

By LESTER KINSOLVING

According to Tubingen University's famed Professor Peter Beyerhaus, the last big meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Bangkok in 1973 was "a masterpiece of manipulation."

"Crudely dispensing with even the basic rules of parliamentary procedure, the whole conference was a well-planned experiment in group dynamics," he recalled. If Dr. Beyerhaus and other distinguished delegates to this WCC "World Mission" conference felt that it was turned into a Siamese snow job in order to sanctify violence, they ought to contemplate the impressive staging possibilities at this November's Fifth General Assembly of the WCC in Nairobi, Kenya.

This site selection should effectively stifle any opposition to the current WCC program of financing black African terrorist organizations. Why? Because Kenya's police, as well as the nation's only political party, are controlled by the original Mau Mau President Jomo ("Burning Spear") Kenyatta.

England's Punch Magazine has just reported that Kenyatta has, among other manifestations of Kenya "Churu" (freedom):

—Proven to be a union buster—by issuing a presidential decree banning all strikes.

—Last year, when students at Nairobi University dared complain about the quality of the food, the dormitories and the administration (no violence in the protests), Kenyatta's government promptly closed down the entire university, subsequently requiring the entire student body to apply for re-admission months later—and excluding 19 student leaders.

—When Lord Chelmont of the British Broadcasting Company dared to criticize Kenyatta, he was declared a "prohibited immigrant," and barred from Kenya. This had the desired chilling effect upon the local and foreign press.

It is possible that there may be some intrepid WCC delegate who will dare to ask about these conditions. If so, there are additional questions which should be posed about the Kenyatta government. These queries should be made publicly before the delegate is awarded a special side trip to Uganda, the land of enchantment (and a close-up view of "Big Daddy" Amin's crocodile pond). Some salient questions are:

—What precisely are the details of Mrs. Jomo Kenyatta's "partnership" regarding the ruby mine discovered by two Americans, John Saul and Elliot Miller—and why was Saul deported so soon after Mrs. Kenyatta was let in on the deal?

—How does Kenyatta's massive expropriation of Indian property (which together with other aspects of "phased withdrawal" has caused more than 100,000 Indian refugees from Kenya) square with the charter of the so-called Organization of African Unity? That charter reads:

"It is the inalienable right of all people to control their own destiny; freedom, justice, dignity are essential objectives."

How, for that matter, does Kenya's brutal treatment of its Indian community differ essentially from Hitler's expropriation of Jewish assets? It is hoped (but under the circumstances not expected) that Asian WCC delegates will raise this compelling question.

There is one Kenyatta ruling which is on the light side. If any WCC delegates are by chance inclined toward streaking—beware. For the ingenious Kenyatta policy is to deport streakers—in exactly the same state of dress as when apprehended.

This intriguing regulation brings to mind the famed WCC film in which a clergyman electrifies a drowsy congregation by stripping to the buff and then leaping about the chancel. Just how Burning Spear will deal with WCC exhibitors or viewers of this classic ecclesiastical film has not yet been announced.

The mail pouch

EDITOR:

The Master Planners and Designers out of Washington are either after our guns or our land and with this will go all our voters' rights.

The right of private property, guaranteed to the people under provisions of the Fifth Amendment, and respected as fundamental to individual freedom since Dec. 15, 1791, is being overturned by land control planners in Washington.

Though defeated by Congress in May, 1974, the Udall Land Use Bill has again surfaced and is scheduled for passage during the current session.

The states are falling into line with the federal land control plan by appointing land use commissions which carry out the dictates of the federal government. A stunning example is Colorado House Bill No. 1092, "Enacting the 'Land Use Planning and Urban Service Area Act of 1975.'" In addition to transferring control of private property to federal agencies, Bill 1092 seeks to change the form of government by merging counties into planning districts, eliminate representative government in Colorado, and make American citizens wards of Washington. Similar legislation has been enacted, or is being considered, by every state legislature.

Those who control our land or our guns or our vote, control the people.

For facts behind the national crisis write for a free copy of, "The New Federalism and Land Control," Committee to Restore the Constitution, 990 Savings Building, Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521.

CARL M. MARQUARDT
Lexington.

EDITOR:

Please renew Mont Bundy's subscription for another year. I note a definite change of personality in the editorial and other columns of your paper these last two years or so. Are you a Whig or a Tory?

LOLA GULKER
Warren, OR.

(ED. NOTE.—Neither, and none. I stick pins in effigies of political parties, especially donkeys and elephants.)

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