

Horse sense

By
ERNEST V. JOINER



I've been out of town for a month and there's a lot of catching up to do. Let's get to it. Randy Lott has been lamenting the rise in the cost of a fifth of Ezra Briggs charcoal filtered bourbon; and Winn Crist, fed up with the high cost of Oregon booze, smuggled a case of Cutty Sark in from Colorado at a saving of about 40 per cent (sheriff, arrest that man). Oregon's booze is about the highest we've run into, which means that in this state it is official policy that the rich can get smashed but the poor cannot. . . . Ed and Tom Gonty are back on frozen TV dinners because Eleanor went a-visiting. . . . Carl Spaulding won't turn on cable TV service to the new development on the hill until the developers pay the \$3,000 it cost to underground the cables. . . . Everybody is going to Gardner's to buy clothing before Leroy gets the bill for expanding his store on the vague chance he will add the cost to his merchandise. . . . Police Chief Dean Gilman found that in one month the presence of the new night officer has (presumably) cut burglaries from 14 in March to 2 in April. . . . The secret is out: the reason Jim Rogers' meals taste so good is that he hires the prettiest and most shapely girls to serve it, thus making it impossible to concentrate on the food. . . . If you're still barking about the cost of good beefsteak at Central Market (1.69) consider that it's selling in California's Safeway Stores for 2.69. . . . Banker Ken Belcher and Dr. Joe Gifford fled to Moultrie, Ga., last week to fly back a new plane for the good doctor. Ken's bank financed the sale and the added "interest" was that Ken got to fly the job home. . . . It took five hours to fly over Texas, Ken grumbled. Like they say, everything's bigger. . . . Last week the Oregon Legislature passed HB 2579, which means the public can't see a criminal's rap sheet—another move to protect the criminal, and to hell with the public. School and city and county governmental officials are trying desperately to repeal the state law and permit them once again to hold their meetings in secret, and to hell with the public again. . . . Mayor Jerry Sweeney's new mustache makes him a dead ringer for British Comedian Terry Thomas. . . . Don't feel insulted if Heppner merchants ask for identification when cashing your checks. They've been ripped off for thousands through bad checks. Now they're organizing to protect themselves. No offense, stranger. Writing a bad check has become almost a "constitutional right" for many people, and it is well nigh impossible to legally collect a bad check in these permissive days. . . . Why, I asked, is everybody calling Ernie Ceresa "Ernie Sirica"? Answer: because he's made some pretty hard judgements around town!

It didn't take Oregon's legislative chickens long to come home to roost. The 1973 session gave most public employees the right to strike. It should have known better. Now the state is faced with union demands for a 27 per cent wage increase or a strike that would shut down the public's business. State employees already receive more in wages, benefits and job security than exists in the private business sector. That isn't enough. It never will be enough. Any state that gives its employees the right to strike has just turned over the reins of government to labor bosses. From that point on the public will be in a constant state of blackmail for more money, more power, more decision making, more security and more benefits. If the blackmail isn't paid the taxes won't be collected, the garbage picked up, the children taught or the water and sewer services continued. From this time on, unless sanity prevails and that ridiculous 1973 law repealed, this state and its people belong to organized labor—and organized labor exists for the sole purpose of getting everything it can get its hands on. The union needs't worry. Its blackmail demands will be met. It will cost taxpayers about \$300 million a year. Until next year when the ante will be upped. Every striking public employee richly deserves to be fired, imprisoned or both. When one strikes against a corporation or a business, that is bad enough. But for one to strike against the public welfare and threaten the fiber and structure of the government that holds us together, he deserves the contempt and punishing hand of the public he would destroy for a lousy buck. Gov. Straub could make himself a hero by telling the union goons to go to hell, fire them at once and prohibit their employment in government in the future. But is there an elected official in Oregon with the guts to stand up to union demands?

Last week Leann Rea of Boardman wrote a letter to the editor outlining her problem with the telephone company. For four years she and her husband have been trying to get phone service at their farm where they specialize in raising hay for commercial purposes. The situation is that their residence is in one phone company's territory and it won't provide service, whereas the phone company whose territory the Rea residence is NOT in CAN provide service, but cannot do so because the Reas are in a competitor's territory. The PUC has been of no help, even though it is the state agency charged with protecting Oregonians from utilities companies and utilities from each other. Pacific Northwest Bell, in whose territory the Reas live and which declines to extend service, also refuses to release the Reas from its jurisdiction in order that the competing phone company can extend service. Utilities enjoy a government-sanctioned monopoly. In turn, utilities must provide reasonable service to the public to maintain that monopoly. Failing to do so, the least that can be expected is that the offending utility (in this case Pacific Northwest Bell) should release any person on the borders of its territory from being forced to use a phone service that cannot or will not be supplied. I suggest the manager of Pacific Northwest Bell be contacted. If there is no satisfaction, contact the state consumers' office in Salem or any other good consumer group. If that does no good, a lawyer might conclude that a suit against the phone company might be productive, especially so in the Rea case where actual damages are a factor in what appears to be a conspiracy to withhold telephone service. Let the Gazette-Times know what happens. We're interested. P.S.—It has never been explained why large corporations so often spend millions (even billions) of dollars to build up a good public image through advertising and public relations. Then, in one dismaying display of sheer stupidity, louse the whole deal up with a petty instance such as the one involved in the Rea case.

Dean Gilman says he has a sure-fire, fail-safe method of determining when spring is definitely here. When you see the snakes come out to sun on the warm pavement, Dean says, you can be sure the half-starts and false beginnings are over and that spring is actually here. Check it for the next few days. It could save you a good case of pneumonia in cases like last Friday's warm day followed by Saturday's brrrrrrr.

It didn't get much attention in Heppner, but my March 27 column on the poor quality of public education has been reprinted in six states so far. Here in Oregon it was reprinted in The Fore-Front, publication of Oregon Research and Education, in its April 21 issue; and last Sunday it was featured on the editorial page of the Herald and News at Klamath Falls. Sometime, somewhere, somehow the American public is going to have to come to grips with its most expensive, uncontrollable and tyrannical sacred cow, public education.



Rep. Groener's threat 'Ease property tax or 2nd revolution'

"Unless positive steps are taken to ease the property tax burden, Oregonians will soon be ripe for a second American Revolution," State Rep. Ralph Groener, D-Oregon City, said in Salem, May 2.

"Citizens protest groups are being formed in several areas of the state, including my own district, to fight what they consider unfair and unjust taxation," Groener stated. "At best, their mood is one of anger and frustration."

Groener, a member of the House Committee on Education and School Finance, said the only workable solution is to fund schools through a progressive income tax based on ability to pay.

He raised the issue April 30 before the committee and called for a revival of the 1973 tax relief and school finance plan initiated by Gov. McCall.

"The McCall plan had its flaws, but 75 per cent of the property owners in this state would have seen their total tax bills reduced," he said. "What I'm seeking is an improved plan that people will have time to study and understand."

He suggested placing responsibility for updating the plan with a legislative interim committee, one of whose assignments would be to conduct "town meetings" throughout the state.

"These meetings would not only aid in determining what the taxpayers want, but would serve as a means of informing people of the tax options we can offer," he said.

He called upon citizens to support property tax reform by writing or calling their legislators.

"The pressure is building, and the only way to hold the lid down is to show people we're taking action," he said. "The alternative is to stick our heads in the sand and hope the problem solves itself."

The mail pouch

EDITOR:
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN—Anyone who will take the time to examine a city map or the tax rolls will soon find out that WE ARE, in the City Limits, do have city water and have never had the privilege of sewer lines or hook ups. However, we for the most part, have a hard time convincing anyone of this fact. They need only to consult the Zoning Ordinance Book published in Sept. 1966 by the City of Heppner to get and keep their facts straight.

MRS. J. W. NORENE
Heppner



"And just how long have you been driving this school bus?"

THE GAZETTE-TIMES

MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER
Box 337, Heppner, Ore. 97836
Subscription rate: \$6 per year in
Oregon, \$7 elsewhere
Ernest V. Joiner, Publisher

Published every Thursday and entered as a second-class matter at the post office at Heppner, Oregon, under the act of March 3, 1879. Second-class postage paid at Heppner, Oregon.

Water . . .

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the realtor to have the property cleaned up."

—Variance permits were granted to Dean Teel for placing a mobile home on his property. However, when the building permit was applied for the city attorney asked if the property owners on the east of the property had been notified, as they would have to look at the trailer.

When it was found they had not been notified, the variance permit was rescinded. It was stipulated the owner supply the city with a list of property owners and the city will in turn send the necessary letters.

—Granted a building permit for the third time to Mike and Danny Sweeney and Larry Prock for the construction of a six-plex at 515 N. Elder. The permit had to be re-applied for because construction had not started within the 60 day limitation set forth by the city.

—Approved a variance and building permit for Harold Whitaker who plans to construct a residence above the Lebush Shoppe. The Whitakers applied to the city planning commission previously and their request was granted after a hearing was held and there were no objections to their application.

—Adopted a resolution for a state highway fund application for streets within the city

that are in need of repair due to excessive and unusual traffic.

—Heard a letter of complaint from Ed Dick, regarding access to his property from Bisbee St. Mr. Duvall agreed to work with city crews in eliminating the problem.

—Mike Sweeney asked the council for a letter to the Department of the Interior, for the preservation of six and one-half miles of Oregon Trail located in the Boardman bombing range.

—The council voted to approve a progress payment to Kenny Construction, withholding 15 per cent in retention to insure paving of the streets. According to Ralph Marlatt, the contractor is making an effort to remedy the situation.

—A meeting of the finance committee will be held to re-negotiate a contract with the city attorney. —Set May 12, 7 p.m. for the time of a special meeting to discuss the franchise of the cable television system. The meeting will be open to the public.

—Ordinance 394, which will increase the city's sewer rates was read, but could not be formally adopted at the meeting because of the absence of councilman Warren Plocharsky. The ordinance will be read for the third time at the June meeting.

School needs . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

—Remodel present shop into a music room. Stage is presently used for music instruction. \$3,000.

—The following recommendations are for the A.C. Houghton Elementary School.

—Add six classrooms, special reading room, speech and hearing room, conference room, storage room, rest rooms and pantry.

—The present space is full, several rooms are overcrowded and three classrooms occupy an area within the old building which are conditionally safe from a fire standpoint. \$250,000.

—Construct a new gymnasium 132 x 70 feet, with dressing rooms. Present frame gym is old, small, and a part of the old building which is only partially usable because of the fire regulations. \$218,000.

—Increase the size of the present library. The present library is the size of a single classroom, not adequate for expanded school needs. \$1,000.

Riverside High School needs:

—Four general classrooms. This would accommodate growing enrollment which adds about 30 students per year. \$120,000.

—Construct proposed addition to gymnasium. This would provide more space to scheduled P.E. classes in order to meet the increased demand. \$141,000.

—Provide additional seating in gymnasium. Present capacity is limited. \$9,000.

In other business, Orville Cutsforth reported he recently returned from Salem where he visited the state legislature. He attended the meeting representing the Farm Bureau in the two bills regarding corporation bills.

He said he was unhappy with the way Senator Thorne conducted the meeting, giving two hours to those in favor of the bill and granting the farmers only five minutes to voice their opinions.

Cutsforth quoted excerpts saying, "Four companies control 50 per cent of the farm market, and in the food industry, four firms control 90 per cent of the breakfast foods, 75 per cent of the flour, 56 per cent of the processed meats, 65 per cent of the sugar, 80 per cent of the canned goods and one single company controls 90 per cent of the soap."

Cutsforth has been invited back to Salem to testify on the measures. "Only this time I will be prepared," he said.

Mayor of Hardman

DEAR MISTER EDITOR:

Usual, I jest take care of the big decisions at my home. I work out farm support prices and how much we ought to pay for Arab oil, and I handle tricky items like how to cut the federal budget and increase aid to other countries. I even had time left over recent to work on the Equal Right Amendment. I let the old lady worry about the little problems, like taking care of the garden, the cow and the house.

But even President Ford has to take time off from his golfing and skiing ever now and then to go to his office and find out what Kissinger has been up to, so I don't think it's out of line for me to do a little private worrying about personal situations as long as I don't make it a habit. I allus figgered the best way to worry was to fall asleep right after you start, but the old lady has called this matter to my attention and I will pass it on to you.

We got this cow I reckon we ought to sell. Her eating has fell off and her milk likewise. The price of beef what it is, I can't sell her, and with feed prices going up ever week, I can't feed her. Until a few years back, she got along good on hay in winter and the little pasture in summer, but I reckon she heard of all the supplements everybody's got to get in their diets now, cause she don't seem to get the nourishment out of her feed that she use to. On the other hand, if milk price controls get the price of milk out of control like the State Milk Commission done in North Carolina, I can't afford not to keep the cow for the little milk she gives.

As I see it, Mister Editor, ever self-respecting farm ought to have a cow. And changing cows is a serious business, like changing wives or churches. You know what you got, but you never know what you're getting. Take our old cow, for instance, she has sorter got use to our place in the past 12 years, and we have got use to her. She knows what time the old lady will come to milk and feed, and we know what time she'll be standing under if we got out to look for her in a storm. The old cow knows our fences as good as I do, and I know she has give up the idea of greener pastures, so in places the fence ain't nothing more than a strand of baling wire.

Practical speaking, is it better to have more milk and more worry, or less milk and no worry? A new cow probable wouldn't stay home, and she might git on the road and run over, or she might tear down a fence and tear up a neighbor's crops. We don't git much use out of our old cow, but we can depend on her to be what she is. She's like old wore out shoes that feels good on your feet.

Mister Editor, would you sell her or keep her? I don't figger this is a hard question to put to you, cause you newspaper folks solve the world's problems ever time you come out with a paper, and all you got to do it with is a typewriter.

Yours truly,
MAYOR ROY



Selectively indignant religious stockholders

By LESTER KINSOLVING

PITTSBURGH, PA.—At 10:00 a.m., this Monday, April 28, at this city's Heinz Hall, an estimated 2,000 people will attend the annual stockholders meeting of IBM.

Among these stockholders are the national headquarters of the Methodist, United Presbyterian, Episcopal, Disciples of Christ, American Baptist, United Church of Christ, Reformed Church of America along with the National Council of Churches.

Headquarters staffers of these denominations have banned together to form an organization called "The Church Project on U.S. Investments in South Africa."

For the third successive year, this organization of hierarchs will introduce a resolution designed to inhibit or eliminate IBM's doing business in South Africa. (The volume of IBM's business there amounts to approximately one tenth of one per cent, according to IBM headquarters.)

The wording of this ecclesiastical stockholders' resolution will be different in some measure from the resolutions introduced in 1974 and 1973. For the Securities and Exchange Commission requires that no stockholders' resolution may be reintroduced unless it receives at least 3 per cent of the vote.

Each year, the anti-South African resolution of these religious denominations has received less than the required 3 per cent. And last year, exasperated IBM stockholder Wayne Six asked why these religious stockholders showed no such concern about the governments of the Soviet Union and Maoist China, which have regimes far more repressive than South Africa's.

This interesting query reportedly evoked no response from the churchmen.

This year, IBM stockholders might care to inform these churchmen publicly that IBM is also doing business in Uganda. For there is no such resolution pertaining to this East African country.

Conditions in this nation have been reported by the last U.S. Ambassador to Uganda, Thomas Patrick Melady, who is now Executive Vice President of St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia.

Writing in the Jesuit magazine "America," Dr. Melady recalls:

"Since President Idi Amin took over Uganda on Jan. 21, 1971, over 50,000 Ugandans have been killed."

"I lived through the horror of seeing close to 50,000 people brutalized and expelled from Uganda because they were of another ethnic origin." (Indian).

"While I served in Uganda, I met several of the widows of prominent Ugandan civilians slain by Gen. Amin's men. One widow, whose name I cannot reveal as she still lives in Kampala, asked me if 'Africans in South Africa suffer more than we do in Uganda?'"

Few rank and file Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians could sincerely answer this in the affirmative—especially in view of Dr. Melady's mentioning, during an interview with this column:

"Gen. Amin's men prefer to dispatch their victims with sledgehammers, either that or they force the larger prisoners to take the smaller prisoners and tear off their limbs."

How can the churchly stockholders of IBM be concerned about South Africa—and not about the continuing horror of Uganda? One probable answer: the government of Uganda is not white. And Gen. Idi ("Big Daddy") Amin is slated to be the next President of the Organization of African Unity.

Moreover, as the Rev. Carroll Simcox, editor of "The Living Church" magazine notes: "Our leaders have proceeded on the assumption that they know better than the rest of us what is our corporate duty in this matter."

Hence the ecclesiastical bureaucrats continue applying their selective indignation to IBM, while the rank and file of these purportedly Protestant organizations—rather than protesting—continue to pray, pay and obey.