

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
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Silly Law Doomed

Washington.—Senator McKellar, Tennessee Democrat, arose in the senate recently to offer a bill that would repeal a provision of law prohibiting the employment of both man and wife by the government. It has been in effect since the summer of 1933. The provision ought to be and probably will be repealed because, as far as I can see, there is actually no sense in the national government refusing to employ efficient workers because a man's wife or a woman's husband already is on the federal pay roll.

It was not the importance of this particular repeal proposal, however, that interested me. Senator McKellar's action was significant and interesting only because when repeal of the so-called marriage clause and federal law was proposed, it marked the beginning of the end of one of the most abortive pieces of legislation that has been on our statute books. I refer to the so-called economy act of 1933.

I cannot refrain from recalling a prediction that I made when the economy act was before congress in 1933. It was introduced and supported by the New Deal legislature in an effort to carry out a campaign promise made when President Roosevelt was running for office in 1932. You will remember that he promised to reduce the cost of government twenty-five per cent, saying in many speeches that the cost of government was too high and that a reduction in taxes was necessary. It will be recalled likewise how he said that "Taxes come from the sweat of every man who labors."

Well, the economy act was driven through despite declaration from many senators and many representatives that it was impossible to mutilate the structure of government as proposed in that bill and still have a government that would function properly. And here were some of the most ridiculous provisions in that legislation to come before congress in many years: They worked injustices on veterans of the World war, on farmers, on retired government workers, on the army and navy and marine corps, and hamstrung and handicapped government agencies in a manner I had not seen in my long experience as an observer of national affairs.

It was on that occasion that I made the prediction mentioned above, and to which I call attention because of the McKellar proposal for repeal of the marriage clause. I wrote at that time my definite conviction that the economy law was silly; that it would work hardships and that its basis was ninety per cent politics. I predicted further that within a year the politicians in the house and senate who had shouted so loudly about economy would begin to chisel various provisions out of that law. Each of those things has happened and now we see the end.

The end of the law has come but not the end of its effects. Practices in federal government administration that had been operating satisfactorily and efficiently throughout the years were thrown into the discard and new ideas substituted. The discarded methods were the development of experience and were serving the purposes for which they were intended. Some of them have been restored and are again functioning as they should but one can wander around through the maze of government corridors and find attempts still being made to make schemes work that are unsound in practice, schemes from the minds of theorists. It will be a number of years before the effects of the economy act will be obliterated.

As the chiseling began and the economy act fell to pieces under sounder thinking, there was launched the greatest spending orgy any nation ever witnessed. It has continued with unabated peculiarity and is still continuing notwithstanding the fact that within the last few weeks we have heard statements from administration sources to the effect that administration expenditures will be cut. The fact is they have not been cut.

But the average person outside of Washington sees and hears only things related to large totals of government spending such as relief for the destitute and vast programs of public building. They do not hear nor do they see what is going on among agencies of the government that relate to comparatively small items of money outgo. It is these small items, when taken together, that bulk so large even though by comparison with relief the total appears insignificant.

I am going to call attention to just one item, a small item as government expenses go, about which I suspect most persons who do me the honor to read these articles have had little information. They have had little information because they are in a position to see only isolated examples. I refer to government publications.

Representative Taber of New York called attention to the condition respecting government publications recently when the house appropriations committee was holding hearings on a bill appropriating funds for several government departments.

Mr. Taber estimated that government publications were costing in the neighborhood of twenty-million-dollars a year. He called them administration propaganda.

"Every organization in the government," Mr. Taber declared, "is sending out all sorts of propaganda, propaganda in fancy colors, pamphlets with pictures of resettlement projects, pictures of WPA propositions and all that sort of thing."

It was the first estimate I had been able to obtain of the cost of government publications for it is not easy to ascertain how much these beautifully done magazines cost each department or agency. Nor is it easy to determine how much is paid for the distribution of the countless thousands of statements issued for the press or mailed in millions of copies to voters. The whole thing constitutes a maze that is so complex that it is staggering. The government printing office lists 73 periodicals of the magazine type for which it will take subscriptions or sell individual copies. These, of course, are printed documents. They do not include the many pamphlets that are mimeographed or published otherwise by governmental agencies.

I mentioned the distribution of official statements for the press and to voters throughout the country. There is no way, as far as I can see, to calculate the total, but one Washington correspondent recently took occasion to weigh the output of press statements from the Department of Agriculture for one week. His curiosity had been aroused by the tremendous volume that had been delivered to his office—both by mail and by special messenger—and so he weighed the week's grist. It totaled more than three and one-half pounds. This, as I said, was from only one department and the weight was the weight of the paper alone.

One need not employ a great deal of imagination to think of the cost involved. First there was the paper itself. In the second place there was the cost of typing the material and then of mimeographing it. But before it reached either one of these stages, it was necessary that a vast amount of work be done by well paid men and women writers and research workers who prepared the material that was used whether in mimeographing or in printing.

There are two publications that come to my desk regularly that strike me as being extraordinarily expensive. The "Consumers' Guide," a product of the Agricultural Adjustment administration and the "Electrification News," published by the Rural Electrification administration, are the two most expensive and most elaborate periodicals that I regularly see. They are sent out free not only to the Washington correspondents but to thousands upon thousands of voters—to any voter whose name either agency obtains. And they are paid for out of taxpayers' money.

Typographically, each of these periodicals is exceptionally well done from a magazine standpoint. They are replete with pictures, and copper engraving is expensive. And so it is throughout the government. Everywhere a correspondent goes among government offices he meets "federal workers," among the government personnel, engaged in preparing and distributing the government's stories for public reading.

Now, let me touch on another phase of the cost of government publications. I refer to the use of the franking privilege. As everyone knows, government mail goes through the United States mails without the payment of postage. That does not mean, however, that the railroads or the airplanes or the steamships haul that mail free. The only difference between that mail and the letters you write or receive is that the government pays the transportation lines on a pound basis and no stamps are used. It is bulk transportation whereas when you and I mail letters we pay the cost of transportation on those letters to the government by means of a postage stamp.

It is entirely proper and reasonable that government mail should not require postage stamps. It would simply be taking government money out of one pocket and putting it in another. Yet, in the end you and I, as taxpayers, pay for the transportation of the government mail and we pay for the millions of pieces that are sent out from the various government departments.

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NEWS NOTES OF THE NORTHWEST

A Brief Summary of Events of Special Interest to Oregon, Washington and Idaho Communities.

MABTON, Wash.—Seepage of gas into the city well has led geologists to recommend the Mabton area as a location for drilling for gas well.

WILBUR, Wash.—Hugh McShane, founder and manager of the spectacular annual two-day salmon celebration here, has set the celebration this year for May 29 and 30.

PENDLETON, Ore.—L. G. Frazier, dean of Pendleton Round-Up directors, has resigned. He is succeeded by A. L. Powers. Frazier had served as grounds director since 1910.

PINE GROVE, Ore.—The George T. Galligan orchard at Pine Grove, one of the first commercial orchards of Hood River valley, has been bought by Victor Thomsen at a price reported to be \$30,000 for the 37 acres.

TROY, Ida.—April 30, Troy and the high school will be hosts to 300 musicians of eight Latah county schools. The festival started here two years ago. Miss Marie Marler of the Troy high school, acting chairman, said preparations are well under way.

TILLAMOOK, Ore.—With grass production starting rapidly during the recent warm rains, Tillamook dairymen are "feelin' fine" and are polishing up additional cans to hold the increased supply of milk. Present prospects indicate a good season for dairymen and other farmers.

ENTERPRISE, Ore.—A flock of about 25 beautiful wild swans dropped in at the pond of the state fish hatchery last week. The birds appear nearly every spring on their flight to the lakes and marshes of the Far North, and remain a few days on ponds of the county. They are protected, quite tame and attract much attention.

ASTORIA, Ore.—The Oregon fish commission set April 26, as the opening date of the commercial fishing season on the Columbia. The commission, regularly opening the season May 1, exercised its authority to advance the date, thus giving the industry a five-day head start. The change was agreed to by the Washington commission.

YAKIMA, Wash.—The contract hop market this spring is in "good condition" Lloyd Hughes, prominent valley grower and dealer has announced. He said that one-year contracts have been signed for as much as 25 cents a pound. Three-year contract prices range from 13 to 24 cents. Eighty-five per cent of the Yakima valley growers are now under contract, he said.

WHEAT CONTRACTS HIGH
PENDLETON, Ore.—Heaviest and earliest contract selling of wheat for August delivery in more than seven years involves about 500,000 bushels in the Pendleton territory, dealers here said. The contract price stood at about \$1.02 to \$1.03 a bushel. Largest single contract reported was for 10,000 bushels from one grower, who raises annually about 30,000 bushels.

LICENSE EXAMS SLATED
OLYMPIA, Wash.—Examinations under the new highway act for operators' licenses will begin on August 1, officials of the highway department said. Anyone who applies for new licenses or renewals before that time will not be required to take the examination, but those who apply for licenses for the first time, or for renewals after August 1, must submit to examination.

The reason for that ruling is that the machinery and details for holding the examinations have not been worked out. However, all operators must submit to the tests within the next two years.

FARM MEETINGS SCHEDULED
MOSCOW, Ida.—Farm debt adjustment committees in 16 counties of Washington, Oregon and northern Idaho will start meeting once each month with Frank H. LaFrantz, district supervisor, he said here last week. Now that country roads have again become passable, LaFrantz said he would make a personal call to county seats representing 60,000 square miles of territory.

Major changes will be made in the debt adjustment program this year, the supervisor explained. The principal change will deal with the newly approved Frazier Lemke bill, which he said will probably extend the debt payment of farmers from one to three years.

KELLOGG, Ida.—Entered by the chamber of commerce, Myron Higbee, Cataldo, champion wood sawyer of this district, will compete in a wood-sawing event at the Golden Gate bridge celebration May 23 in San Francisco.

BOISE, Ida.—Water users of Boise valley, through their executive committee, have gone on record as opposed to the creation of the proposed Sawtooth national park and will ask Senator Pope to withdraw his measure, pending in congress.

What Irvin S. Cobb Thinks about

The Origin of Sitdowns.

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—With the Barnum show there once was an elderly lady elephant named Helen. Now, Helen had wearied of traipsing to and fro in the land.

Probably she figured she'd seen everything anyhow. So each fall, when the season ended, she went rejoicing back home to Bridgeport, Conn.

Nobody ever knew the date of departure the next spring. There was no more bustle about winter-quarters on that morning than for weeks past.

But always, when the handlers entered the "bull barn" to lead forth the herd, they found Helen hunkered down on her voluminous haunches, which, under that vast weight, spread out like cake batter on a hot griddle. She would be uttering shrill sobs of defiance. And neither prodding nor honeyed words could budge her.

So they'd wrap chains around her and two of her mates would hitch on and drag her bodily, she still on her rubbery flanks, aboard a waiting car. She'd quit weeping then and wipe her snout and accept what fate sent her.

So please don't come telling me that the sit-down strike is a new notion or that somebody in Europe first thought it up. Thirty years ago I saw my lady elephant friend, Helen, putting on one, all by her four-ton self.

Taxes and More Taxes.

JUST when everybody is taking comfort from the yodelled promises of that happy optimist, Chairman Harrison of the senate finance committee, that the government will be able to get by for 1937 without asking this congress to boost taxes, what happens?

Why, in a most annoying way, Governor Eccles of the federal reserve board keeps proclaiming that, to make treasury receipts come anywhere near meeting treasury disbursements throughout the year, he's afraid it's going to be necessary to raise the rates on incomes and profits higher than ever.

And meanwhile state governors and civic authorities scream with agony at the bare prospect of any reductions in Uncle Sam's allotments for local projects.

A balanced budget would seem to be like Santa Claus, something everybody talks about but nobody ever expects to see.

Self-Determination.

FORMERLY the states jealously guarded their sovereign perquisites. Once—but that was so long ago many have almost forgotten it—they fought among themselves one of the bloodiest civil wars in history over the issue of states' rights.

Now we see them complacently surrendering to federal bureaus those ancient privileges—and maybe, after all, that's the proper thing to do, if in centralized authority lies the hope of preserving a republican form of government.

Still, one wonders what Englishmen would do under like circumstances, since Englishmen are fussy about their inheritance of self-determination. Perhaps the distinction is this:

In democracies there exists the false theory that all men are born free and equal. So the Englishman insists on having his freedom, which is a concrete thing, and laughs at the idea of equality. Whereas, the American abandons his individual freedom provided he may cling to the fetish of equality.

Yankee tweedledee and British tweedledee may be brothers under the skin, but they have different skin diseases.

The Parole Racket.

IT IS astonishing but seemingly true that, of five young gangsters recently caught red-handed in a criminal operation, not a single one was a convict out on parole. Is there no way to bar rank amateurs from a profession calling for prior experience and proper background? And can it be that the various parole boards over the union are not turning loose qualified practitioners fast enough to keep up with the demand? Maybe we need self-opening jails.

Those sentimentalists who abhor the idea that a chronic offender be required to serve out his latest sentence should take steps right away to correct this thing before it goes too far. Our parole system must be vindicated if it costs the lives and property of ten times as many innocent citizens as at present.

IRVIN S. COBB.

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Festival Bills Elephant Fight
Elephant tug-of-wars, in which the beasts locked tusks and sometimes struggled for hours, were a feature of a festival recently held near Calcutta, India.

Smart, Flattering Dresses



MRS. DICK EVANS has come to town and brought Ann and Eddie LeRoy with her. She lives in Palm Beach in the wintertime and, of course, knows all about style. That's why she wears this director-type frock that is both new and figure flattering. In the floral print she has chosen she is perfectly gowned for the parties that will be given for her in the home town. The kiddies are wearing the simple styles appropriate to childhood and therein their smartness lies.

Auntie Rose Sews, Too. Little Ann is asking Auntie Rose if she makes her clothes too. "Sure enough, dear," comes the reply. "I made this percale for mornings and have a beauty in yellow crepe cut from the same pattern to wear to the Bid-or-Bi meetings."

"I'll bet you can sew fast, too, the way Mother does. It only took her two mornings to make Eddie's suit and my dress. Won't you help me with my doll clothes now?" "Indeed I will, Ann, and then we will have some of those oatmeal cookies you like for lunch."

The Patterns. Pattern 1272 is available in sizes 14 to 20 (32 to 42 bust). Size 16 requires 4 1/2 yards of 39 inch material and 2 1/2 yards of ribbon for the belt.

Pattern 1275 is for sizes 6 months to 4 years. Size 1 requires 1 1/2 yards of 32 inch material.

Pattern 1403 comes in sizes 2, 4, and 6 years. Size 4 requires 1 1/2 yards of 36 inch material.

Pattern 1212 is designed in sizes 34 to 48. Size 36 requires 5 yards of 35 inch material plus 1/2 yard contrasting for the collar.

New Pattern Book. Send for the Barbara Bell Spring and Summer Pattern Book. Make yourself attractive, practical and becoming clothes, selecting designs from the Barbara Bell well-planned, easy-to-make patterns. Interesting and exclusive fashions for little children and the difficult junior age; slenderizing, well-cut patterns for the mature figure; afternoon dresses for the most particular young women and matrons and other patterns for special occasions are all to be found in the Barbara Bell Pattern Book. Send 15 cents today for your copy.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., 149 New Montgomery Ave., San Francisco, Calif. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

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Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets are an effective laxative. Sugar coated. Children like them. Buy now!—Adv.

Talent and Genius. Talent is that which is in a man's power. Genius is that in whose power a man is.—Lowell.

Hara-Kiri in Japan. Obligatory hara-kiri was abolished by Japan in 1868. Voluntary hara-kiri is sometimes practiced.

Large National Forest. Lolo National forest, in Idaho and Montana, has the largest gross area of any national forest.

Cincinnati, Covington Bridge. Cincinnati was first connected to Covington, Ky., by a bridge in 1867.

Spain's First Stamps. Spain's first stamps, in 1850, bore the likeness of Queen Isabella.

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A Great Gift. The first great gift we can bestow on others is a good example.—Morell.

Sentinels of Health. Don't Neglect Them!

Nature designed the kidneys to do a marvelous job. Their task is to keep the flowing blood stream free of an excess of toxic impurities. The act of living—life itself—is constantly producing waste matter the kidneys must remove from the blood if good health is to endure. When the kidneys fail to function as Nature intended, there is retention of waste that may cause body-wide distress. One may suffer nagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—feet tired, nervous, all worn out.

Frequent, scanty or burning passages may be further evidence of kidney or bladder disturbance.

The recognized and proper treatment is a diuretic medicine to help the kidneys get rid of excess poisonous body waste. Use Doan's Pills. They have had more than forty years of public approval. Are endorsed the country over. Insist on Doan's. Sold at all drug stores.

DOAN'S PILLS

"Quotations"

An adequate revival of international trade will be the most powerful force for easing political tensions and averting the danger of war.—Cordell Hall.

Morals, which change so slowly, are changing today like clouds before the wind.—Will Durant.

The great scholars of the world are the captains of the modern world's army of progress.—Nicholas Murray Butler.

I cannot stand a sad expression on someone's face. I wish to see everyone happy, smiling and enjoying himself.—Ignace Jan Paderewski.

Any woman who likes it could be a successful explorer.—Mrs. Martin Johnson.

The Shoe Fit. Solicitor—You pay a small deposit, then you make no more payments for six months.

Lady of the House—Who told you about us?