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Highway Problems

The state legislature makes a lousy highway commission.
 When the 90 members of that body start attempting to draft highway plans, they are subject to multiple pressures (the same ones the highway commission is subject to), but is in a far poorer position to withstand them than the commission.
 Highways then become objects of pork barrelling and log rolling, and the areas which generate the greatest pressures are the ones which get the biggest highway appropriations—whether merited or not.

TWO sessions ago, in 1957, the legislature opened this dangerous door a crack, and last session, in 1959, opened it a bit wider, by directing the highway commission to do this and so, in addition to, or instead of, projects long drawn up on a carefully considered list of priorities.

The chickens released by this invasion of executive functions by the legislative authority are now coming home to roost.

The Oregon coast was particularly favored by the legislature, and has been, as a result, receiving far more than its really fair share of state highway funds.

BUT are they happy? They are not.
 The editor of the Coos Bay World, who usually is on firm ground in his editorials, let out a blast at the highway commission and the highway department for what he thought was discriminating against the coast, poor planning, an arrogant attitude, etc., etc.

Now the highway commission and department are not perfect. But we have watched them long enough to know that their people do their level best to be fair and impartial, and to allocate funds where they are the most needed.

THE Register-Guard, in commenting on the World's blast, makes a few points that should be kept in mind. In part, it said:

"Now the good Lord knows that highway developments never seem to come fast enough, anywhere, in this age of motorized masses. But the World's suggestion that Oregon needs a bigger highway commission needs to be quashed before it results in calamitous damage to future highway developments."

"Implicit in its criticisms is the suggestion that further pressures, brought through the 1961 legislature, are what is needed to see that southwestern Oregon gets its just highway deserts."

"The legislature, sadly, has proved that it is malleable under heavy local pressures. Neither the Highway 42 nor the 101 projects would be as far along as they are if the legislature hadn't been induced to stick its finger in the highway commission's planning pie."

"However, it should be clear to residents of southwestern Oregon and all other parts of the state that direction of highway planning, according to relative pressures placed on the state legislature, can lead only to chaos. If rivalry develops to see which community can put the most heat on the legislature to get the most in the way of road funds, there can be no other result."

"The Coos Bay paper decries the fact that the new Pacific Freeway is being pushed to rapid completion. But it ignores the fact that funds for interstate freeways do not come from the same source nor are they interchangeable with those for either primary or secondary state highways. It overlooks the fact that in relation to usage and populations served, more state funds have been directed to the Highway 101 and Highway 42 jobs than to any comparable projects elsewhere in Oregon."

"The way to sound improvement of Oregon's highways lies not in stirring a number of sectional interests, but in maintaining without further legislative interference, independent and impartial administration of the state highway system."

WE WILL concede to the World that the actions of the highway commission and department sometimes seem arbitrary and high handed, and that in the past the department's concept of public relations and information was abysmal.

But this is changing.
 And there is also the fact that, nationally and internationally, Oregon's highways and the administration which builds them are looked upon with respect and admiration.

We'd like to keep it that way.—E. A.

Merry Christmas, PT-N

Well doggone!
 Here we thought we had Pacific Telephone-Northwest all straightened out about Medford. They recently ran an advertisement which extolled the glories of Oregon, and mentioned about all the major cities in the state except the state's fourth-largest—Medford.

We took them gently to task, and they reciprocated by making an apology, an abject one, and declaring that Medford is one of their favorite cities.

SO NOW what happens? We get our monthly bill (including, incidentally, a charge for a long distance call we didn't make, but that's beside the point). The bill has an enclosure—a copy of the same ad. Is Medford mentioned? As Oregon's fourth-largest city? Or as the capital of the "State of Jefferson"? Or even as one of PT-N's favorite cities?

No sir, it isn't.
 Oh, well.
 Merry Christmas, anyway, PT-N.—E. A.

Dennis the Menace



"BE REASONABLE, MARTHA! SANTA CLAUS HIMSELF WOULDN'T SPEND \$12.98 ON DENNIS!"

Communications

Letters to the Editor must bear the name and address of the writer, although under certain circumstances the use of a pen name or initial for publication is permissible. The Mail Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters with a view to clarification and condensation. Letters submitted for publication must not exceed 400 words. The letters printed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the paper; in fact the contrary is often the case.

To the Editor: I wuz asked, "Where did we put the telephone in Placerville?" We put it at the end of the wire. We lived upstairs over the store and the chimney went through the middle of the kitchen, like a chimney should. The first thing we hit when we got up in the middle of the night wuz the chimney, so that's where we put the telephone.

We didn't have an extension on the telephone. We wuz lucky to get enough wire to reach from the telephone pole to the chimney. We didn't have a telephone in every room, but we had wun in every County. They had one in Norwood and one in Naturlia. Central was in Tel-luride, but she didn't have a telephone. The one in Denver did, but we couldn't get Denver. The wire wuz 200 miles short.

The telephone maintenance crews didn't have snow-cats. They used Swendendorfer-biscuits and old Peanuts. Swendendorfer vas der lazy burro vot used to stand on der railroad track and flag der passenger trains. Old Peanuts never stopped anything, and he never started anything. He used to be der caboose on der pack train. He vas packing gold at \$17.50 an ounce. Swendendorfer and old Peanuts vas old burros ven vas left Colorado, but dey vas still going strong.

Everett Acklin
 Ashland, Ore.

Christmas Pets
 To the Editor: The board of directors and members of the Southern Oregon Humane Society wish to take this opportunity on behalf of our animal friends to extend seasonal greetings to all.

Many homes will no doubt receive pets as Christmas gifts, and in view of this fact, we would like to offer a few suggestions for their care, feeding and treatment, so that they will be able to adapt themselves into their new surroundings and become a pleasure to own.

1. Immediately upon acquiring a pet, have your veterinarian make a physical check-up of the animal to determine its health and discover any symptoms of disease.

2. A very young puppy should not be given to a child less than six years old, without complete supervision of older members of the family. Puppies should not be constantly fondled or held and should be given frequent rest periods.

3. Proper diet is essential for the health and well being of the animal. Puppies need to be fed four times a day until they are six months old, then twice a day until they are a year old, then once a day. Table scraps alone do not constitute a balanced diet. The proper feeding and care of the first few months may well determine the life span of a pet.

4. A warm, dry place to sleep is most important, especially for puppies. A temporary bed can be made from even a cardboard box with an opening cut just large enough for the animal to enter and placed in a position to avoid drafts. Cedar shavings are excellent for bedding, helping to discourage fleas and other parasites.

5. Disease prevention shots and worming are important to the health of your pet, not only for its own well being but because of its close association with members of the human family will ensure a re-

Primitive Laos Is Still Important in Southeast Asia

By PHIL NEWSOM
 UPI Foreign News Analyst
 As a piece of real estate, Laos has no railroad, scarcely more than footpaths for roads and a few grassy strips that pass as air fields. Its wild mountains work against large-scale military maneuvers either for or against invasion.

Its people have no great political consciousness such as in, say West Berlin. Yet in Southeast Asia, Laos has a morale value approaching the equal of Berlin or South Korea in the battle to contain Communist aggression.

Arms Flow Cited
 Nehru noted that the flow of Communist arms to Laotian Reds was through Communist North Viet Nam, run by Ho Chi Minh.

SEATO Reaction
 And how the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, of which the United States is a charter member, reacts to the attempted Red take-over of Laos could well have just as much effect on Asians as would be the effect on Europeans in a similar situation against Berlin.

This is an effect well recognized in Washington and other SEATO capitals, most of which already have declared their willingness to act either on a call for help from the Laotian government or in case

of proven outside aggression. It is recognized by Red China in its pledge of its "utmost efforts" to stop "U.S. imperialism's intervention and aggression in Laos."

And it also is recognized among Laos's neutral neighbors who are showing increasing nervousness over the possibility that in Laos another Korea may develop.

In New Delhi, Prime Minister Nehru called for re-establishment of the international truce commission in Laos and noted with alarm that both United States and Communist arms are pouring into Laos.

With Ho's help Suphanu Vong organized the Pathet Lao (Free Laos), which today is the Red arm in Laos and which today is making its most energetic bid to take over the whole of the nation.

Today and Tomorrow

By Walter Lippmann

THE CABINET COMPLETED

With the Cabinet completed, the most debatable choice is that of Robert Kennedy, in many ways, however, the most significant is Douglas Dillon.

It has been said by the "New York Times" that Mr. Robert Kennedy would "certainly not be named for attorney general if he were not the President's brother." In my view, the fact that he is the brother cannot have been the decisive reason. Moreover, it is not really important. Robert Kennedy could not have been named just because he is the brother. In the main he was named because he had been the successful manager of the campaign.

He has been named to the Cabinet for the same reason that Farley was placed in Roosevelt's Cabinet, Hannigan in Truman's, Brownell and Sumnerfield in Eisenhower's. In American politics it has long been the rule, to which I cannot think of an exception, that the President keeps in his official family his chief political organizer.

This is not done merely as a reward for past services. It is done to keep at the center of things the man who knows best where are the sources of the President's political power. For while the presidency rises far above party politics, it has its roots deep in party politics, and to be a successful President a man must be a successful politician. For these reasons it would have been unprecedented if Robert Kennedy had been excluded from the Cabinet because he is the President's brother.

THE really debatable point is that the campaign manager has been placed at the head of the Department of Justice. The more usual practice has been to make the chief politician the postmaster general. It is certain that in the sensitive office of attorney general, which controls law enforcement and the FBI, Robert Kennedy will be compelled to convince the country that he is not playing politics. As attorney general he will be judged by higher standards than as PMG.

There is, however, a notable precedent for his appointment. President Eisenhower chose Herbert Brownell, who organized his nomination and election, as his attorney general.

Among those who have worked closely with Robert there is no question of his exceptional competence as an administrator and as a law enforcer. There are some who say that he has a certain ruthless efficiency, and that he has not yet acquired a sufficiently highly refined and mellow sense of due process.

THE selection of Douglas Dillon confirms the view, which some of us expressed during the campaign, that in

Matter of Fact by Joseph Alsop

WHAT THEY WANT FROM KENNEDY
 Washington - It was both a disheartening and an oddly stirring experience to test the atmosphere on the other side of the Atlantic after the election, as this reporter has just been doing.
 It was disheartening because the test revealed, for the first time, the full extent of the alarming loss of ground by the United States in the last eight years. While officials and politicians in the other capitals of the Western alliance still had to count on doing business with the Eisenhower administration, they did not speak frankly to vagrant reporters. Now they do.
 Their verdict on America's recent leadership of the West, whether it be just or unjust, is certainly cruel. The President's moral virtues of course continue to be respected. But that is about all there is on the favorable side of the balance sheet, except perhaps in the case of some British officials who reflect the personal views of Prime Minister Macmillan.
 "A vacuum of leadership when only America could lead," is the thing most complained about. After this

comes "the difficulty of finding anyone in Washington you could talk to." In the Allied capitals, in fact, the American government of these last years is thought to have been feeble, unimaginative, and sadly deficient in men of first class ability with whom great issues could be effectively thrashed out.

THE ONE man President-elect Kennedy has kept on, Under Secretary of State Douglas Dillon, is the one Eisenhower policy-maker who has earned the kind of universal, enthusiastic admiration abroad that was given in the old days, to such figures as Robert A. Lovett and John J. McCloy. Secretary of State Herter and Secretary of Defense Gates are also admired and respected, though somewhat less widely; and there the human credits end.

The debts include a good many Eisenhower policy-makers who have simply become public learning stocks. If this estimate of recent American performance is depressing, and perhaps unfair, it is at least balanced by our allies' hopes for American performance in the time ahead. These hopes are stirring to any American with natural pride. Yet they are, quite frankly, fairly desperate hopes. Allied officials and leaders at all levels are convinced that the future of the Western alliance will be very dark indeed unless there is a powerful rebirth of vigor and intelligence in Washington; and having this conviction, they are forced to hope.

To a President-elect Kennedy himself, there is a decided attitude of wait-and-see. The shape of his personality, the force of his character, the tendency of his policies, are alike unknown to most of the leaders in Bonn and Paris and even London. Before anyone hurries to the rooftops to raise a cheer for the Kennedy administration, everyone wants to know what the new Administration's positions are going to be on a whole series of crucial issues.

THE scene at Democratic parties could not be more different. Here all is turned not toward the recent past or the distant future but to the here-and-now and or immediately tomorrow. These Democratic parties—and it is in the nature of the Democrat to be a bit gayer always than the Republican—are full of breathless chatter.

There are more cocktails. And sometimes an enthusiastic partisan will suddenly stand, without advance notice, and call upon all present to drink a toast.

To whom? Well, "to Jack," meaning Mr. Kennedy, or "to Lyndon," meaning Vice-President-elect Lyndon B. Johnson. Or maybe to some lesser-known Democratic character whom it seems, at the moment, most important to honor.

FOR this town lacks a winner rather overmuch, and is a bit quick to say a brusque farewell to a loser. But the losers are stolid in the face of this ancient reality of Washington. Their defeated leader, Vice-President Richard M. Nixon, sets the tone for the quite modified gaiety with which they are saying goodbye to the power and the glory.

Mr. Nixon has small groups to his house for "receptions." The faithful - salted here and there by an unpartisan guest presenter more as a minor observer of history than as a participant - gather round the retiring Vice-President and hash over the late campaign.

Some grow angry. Mr. Nixon's general economic philosophy there is no serious difference between Kennedy and such modern and progressive Republicans as Rockefeller.

Mr. Nixon, I think, understood this. But President Eisenhower did not, and when he intervened in the campaign he misrepresented wholly the economic philosophy of Kennedy in regard to the budget, spending and saving, gold and the balance of payments. The truth, as was evident to anyone who cared to seek it, is that Kennedy is a conservative of the age he lives in. His views are addressed to the contemporary scene, not to the dead past nor an imaginary future.

Mr. Dillon is also a modern man, as are Governor Rockefeller, Senator Case, Sen. John Sherman Cooper, and a very large number of Republicans. His appointment does not signify that the new administration means to be more conservative than it would like to be. It means that the Cabinet reflects the fact that there is a consensus in the country, which may work out as a coalition in Congress, among the modern and progressive members of both parties.

THE intensity of this longing for more vigorous American leadership of the West is the measure, in turn, of the scope of President-elect Kennedy's opportunity. Throughout history, the strongest powers in wide-spreading alliances have most often been the object of jealousy and suspicion. Instead of being begged to lead with vigor and decision, they have usually been obstructed by the lesser allies who feared and disliked their strength. But in this case, it is different. All the Western allies acknowledge that America must lead, if anyone is to lead; and all acknowledge that leadership is badly needed.

The tangle of critical problems Kennedy will inherit from Eisenhower is downright appalling. His leadership will be particularly hampered by the long neglected, then hysterically ventilated, problem of the balance of payments. Wealth is what gives America authority, and the balance of payments problem therefore tends to undermine American authority.

Yet Kennedy has the ball at his feet, as far as the Western alliance goes, if he only knows how to kick it hard and fast.

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Washington Report

By WILLIAM S. WHITE

THE OLD ENDS

Washington - The old year is ending in Washington in a special nostalgia for the departing past and a special sense of hope and excitement for the oncoming future.

For it is not merely the last days of 1960 which are now passing. In his twilight stage, passing also an administration, a whole governmental era. And a new phase of national life is close upon the horizon of time.

It is auld lang syne, of course, for the Republicans; it is hail and hurly-up tomorrow for the Democrats. The Republicans are going out without sadness or bitterness. They had a long run of it here - eight years - and they are for the most part now ready to depart.

Already, well before the inauguration Jan. 20 of John F. Kennedy as a Democratic President, their ranks are shrinking as this or that old official puts his resignation into the mail. They, the Republicans, are gathering in the evening time in small, reflective, sober parties. The guest lists for these affairs are short now, where a little while ago they were quite long.

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Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

IT WAS THE NIGHT after Christmas, and a wealthy psychiatrist, father of five children, sat exhausted in his easy chair. "You might say," he advised his wife, "that I am suffering from a severe case of Santa Claus-trophobia."

Morey Amsterdam tells about a Scotch couple he overheard discussing the coming birthday of their young hopeful. "Angus," said the mother, "tells me he'd like either a bicycle or a tricycle."

"Why don't we wait till January," suggested the father, "and get him as he'd like?"

Miss Chou Chou Horn-toot buttoned a diamond-studded victrola coat around her miniature poodle and took him for a walk up East River Drive on a frigid January afternoon. When she came home, she was indignant. "You won't believe this," Chou Chou told her maid, "but do you know that 90% of the dogs on this drive don't even have overcoats?"

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