

Teams To Investigate Estes Said Becoming National Pastime

By DICK WEST
Washington — (UPI) — Baseball may be hard pressed this year to retain its ranking as the national pastime. At the moment it appears that America's most popular diversion is to choose up sides and investigate Billie Sol Estes.

Exact figures on the number of persons engaged in this pursuit are not available. But, as Rep. L. H. Fountain points out, the total is considerable and seems to be growing.

He noted that the roster currently includes at least 76 FBI agents and more than 30 Senate investigators, plus an undetermined number of gumshoes representing the Agriculture Department, the attorney general of Texas, the Internal Revenue Service and private creditors.

The North Carolina Democrat added that his own government operations subcommittee has enlarged its

staff for hearings on the Estes case, which got started Monday.

Furthermore, the way his phone has been ringing indicates there must be two or three hundred reporters looking into the matter, he said.

"Before it is all over, I think Mr. Estes is likely to find a place in history as one of the most — thoroughly investigated individuals of all time," Fountain commented.

Strictly as a spectator, I took in the opening session

MEDFORD TRIBUNE

SECTION B MEDFORD, OREGON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 1962 PAGES 1 to 2

Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS

(Register and Tribune Syndicate 1962)



This Sweet-Smelling Plant Is Common, but Useful

Until I found out he could purchase a bottle of it for his own use at home, he visited the barber shop twice as often as necessary merely because he liked the smell of witch hazel.

It was a common skin lotion used extensively by barbers who, perhaps to show their versatility, would sometimes substitute bay rum. But witch hazel was the favorite. Usually it was pretty economical; a whole pint could be purchased for the price of a couple of cheap cigars.

Supposedly the pungent liquid, patted on the tender face after shaving, soothed and healed the razor nicks. The housewife, too, found witch hazel a benefit in cases of bruises and burns and used it frequently in most inflammations affecting the skin.

Commonly Sec.

The shrub from which the lotion is distilled, grows pretty generally over a large part of America. It is the small tree that brings each year the epilogue of the fading summer to a fitting close because it bears its yellow flowers late in the fall, usually November — the very last blossoms of the northern year.

The witch hazel shrub gives the honeybees their final chance of nectar gathering. After the hazel bush blossoms, the cold north wind whistles across the hillside.

The woodsman and the farm boy found the witch hazel bush a very interesting plant because of the explosive nature of its seeding. The hard, shiny seeds are shot out of the dry pods with considerable force. Like little, fast-flying missiles they have often struck a bystander in the face. If they meet no obstruction, the seeds are shot to some distance away from the parent tree.

Mystical Powers
Some folks who didn't care for the peculiar fragrance of witch hazel, attributed mystical powers to it. They maintained a forked branch of the hazel shrub was the proper

material for divining rods. Those gifted individuals took a forked branch from the tree, held the two long ends in either hand, the other end pointed down and walked across the ground.

When the short end of the branch pointed directly downward, there water would be, any amount of it. A divining rod, in the hands of an "expert" could also locate buried treasure, ore deposits or oil pockets, so the operator claimed.

Of course, the operator used his head, selecting only those areas where underground water was usually plentiful. Scientifically, the witch hazel divining rod leaves considerable to be desired. An adequate water supply could have been better found with a generous amount of "sweat of the brow" and a shovel.

American Officers Missing in Laos

Washington — (UPI) — Two U.S. noncommissioned officers are missing after an attack by 150 Communist Viet Nam Minh forces on a 15-man Royal Lao patrol in Laos, the Defense Department said Tuesday.

The royal patrol suffered six casualties, according to the report. The fighting took place Sunday 15 miles north-east of the town of Ban Houei Sai.

The report was received from Maj. Gen. Reuben Tucker, chief of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group in Laos. It did not identify the missing Americans, but said six other U.S. instructors with the patrol were uninjured and accounted for.

GOVERNORS INVITED

Salem — (UPI) — Gov. Mark Hatfield has invited all the other 49 governors to the 40th annual convention of the National Isaak Walton League June 20-23. It will be held in Portland.

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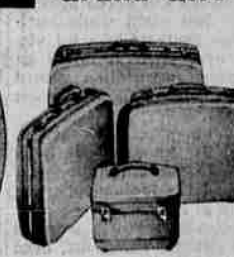
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