

Medford Mail Tribune
"Everyone in Southern Oregon Reads The Mail Tribune"
Published Daily except Saturday by MEDFORD PRINTING CO.

The Bill of Rights

One hundred and seventy-one years ago tomorrow the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution were ratified.

The ten amendments are properly honored by the observance of Bill of Rights Day tomorrow, for they are an integral part of our basic charter, and there are some who feel they actually are the most important part of the Constitution.

They guarantee the very liberties for which the American Revolution was fought, and have served ever since as a bulwark of our freedom.

THEY did not, obviously, spring into existence overnight, nor were they the spontaneous creation of the Founding Fathers.

Some of the rights enumerated in the first ten amendments were first proposed by the ancient Greeks. Some others were the children of a long line of European libertarian philosophers.

Together they form the guarantees that, however controversial they may be in specific instances, have given Americans more freedom, and for a longer period of time, than any other nation has known.

THE ideals contained in the Bill of Rights were assembled in strikingly similar form years before they became part of the Constitution.

The Virginia Declaration of Rights was adopted by that state on June 12, 1776, even before the Declaration of Independence, 13 years before the Constitution was adopted and 15 years before the Bill of Rights itself was ratified.

The Virginia declaration was the work of a little-known patriot named George Mason, who drew, in turn, upon a variety of sources in writing the document.

Not only was it the precursor to the Bill of Rights; it also contained much of the phraseology adopted by that other great Virginian, Thomas Jefferson, in writing the Declaration of Independence.

READ, and compare, these random quotes from the Virginia declaration:

"That all Men are by Nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent Rights . . . namely the Enjoyment of Life and Liberty, with the Means of acquiring and possessing Property, and pursuing and obtaining Happiness and Safety."

"That all Power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the People . . ."

"That in all capital or criminal Prosecutions a Man hath a Right to Demand the Cause and Nature of his Accusation, to be confronted with the Accusers and Witnesses, to call for Evidence in his Favour, and to a speedy Trial by an impartial Jury of his Vicinage, without whose unanimous Consent he cannot be found guilty, nor can he be compelled to give Evidence against himself; that no Man be deprived of his Liberty except by the Law of the Land, or the Judgment of his Peers."

"That excessive Bail ought not to be required, nor excessive Fines imposed; nor cruel and unusual Punishments inflicted."

"That in controversies respecting Property, and in Suits between Man and Man, the ancient Trial by Jury is preferable to any other, and ought to be held sacred."

THERE is more, but these quotations give the flavor and tenor of the document, and show its remarkable similarity in many respects to the later and better known charters of freedom.

George Mason also had a hand in the writing and adoption of the Bill of Rights. He had been against ratification of the Constitution largely because it contained no such guarantees.

In June of 1788, Virginia ratified the Constitution by a vote of 89 to 79. However, in the words of an article by Mrs. Josephine Evans Harpham of Eugene, about George Mason:

"The price of approval, however, was a promise that a set of amendments embodying a bill of rights would be introduced into the first Congress. Therefore on the next day George Mason drew up 20 proposed amendments founded on his own Declaration of Rights, which in essence later became the Bill of Rights. Life, liberty, pursuit of happiness and safety, liberty of conscience, free press, judicial safeguards, the right to vote, civil supremacy, are perhaps more significant today than they were nearly 180 years ago."

THE Bill of Rights was proposed by Congress in September of the following year, and finally ratified two years later, on Dec. 15, 1791.

It is entirely possible that the Bill of Rights is too little known, too little understood, and too little appreciated today.

A reading of it, a study of its meaning and background, and of its employment over the past 171 years in the safeguarding of the rights of American citizens, would be rewarding.

The Bill of Rights is a charter of freedom that has intense and personal meaning to all of us, and to the other nations whose desires for liberty and self-government have been spurred by this historic document.—E. A.

Sad Tidings

Death, with his good companions, Drink and Speed, has been hard at work so far in 1962. Motor vehicle accident deaths totaled 29,600 in the first nine months, up 9 per cent from the same period last year.

Ominously, the fatality rate per 100 million passenger miles, declining steadily since 1941, may go up for the first time. In 1941, with 34.9 million vehicles going 334 billion miles, that rate was 12.0. Last year with 76 million vehicles traveling 735 billion miles, the rate per 100 million passenger miles was 5.2. This year an estimated 78.6 million vehicles are expected to travel 765 billion miles, and the rate may go up.—E.R.R.

"At The Risk Of Being Labeled A 'Red,' I'll Have To Agree With Khrushchev!"



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.

Girls in Uruguay: To the Editor: We will be very obliged to you if that important organization publishes the following call from 14,000 kmts. away.

Dear Readers: We are two little sisters of eight and ten years of age, named Margaret and Virginia. We live in a small country, Uruguay, where, without the great resources you have there, we must face however, our daily existence and our education.

Bye now, and God Bless you. Pearl Spackman, Box 33, Jacksonville, Ore.

The Shrinking Russian Bear: To the Editor: I am a tough old Russian bear.

I'll go to the meeting over there. I'll tell those delegates what to pass.

'Cause I'm big and tough and full of gas. I growled and snarled and clawed the air.

But not a one crawled under my chair. I pounded the table with my shoe.

And did everything that a bear could do. But they just let the big noise pass.

And I gulped and lost about half of my gas. I went out West where the corn grew high.

And I told them our corn reached the sky! They answered me with a silly sly grin.

And it made me feel so small and thin. Then I got mad and started to swear.

For now I'm a half-sized Russian bear. I started to tell them I had class.

But I gulped and lost some more of my gas. Then I went to the Coast where all was humming.

I thought they would cheer when they heard I was coming. But when I arrived they had heard enough.

They didn't bother to call my bluff. I started to give them a lot sass.

But I gulped and lost the rest of my gas. Now I am tired and I don't care.

I am just a little Russian bear. Then the mayor of a city gave me a rub.

And now I know I am just a cub. I went back home through a quiet pass.

Wondering why I had lost all of my gas. When I arrived the snow was deep.

Time little bears were all asleep. So I curled up tight and sucked my paw.

After saying goodnight to dear old Maw. E. G. Roseborough, 810 Oakdale dr., Medford

Miss Elder Receives Honors on Entrance: Miss Susan Ann Elder, 1617 Stratford ave., Medford, is one of the 346 freshmen students enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley, who received Honors at Entrance awards for superior scholastic achievement in high school.

The group represents 16 per cent of the 3,383 freshmen who began studies at Berkeley this semester. To qualify a student must have a G or better in all A's in subjects on which college admission is based.

West German Government Patched Up Again; Weakness, Uncertainty Remain

By PHIL NEWSOM UPI Foreign News Analyst Chancellor Konrad Adenauer has patched up his coalition West German government, but it is doubtful if anyone is very happy about it.



A beneficial result was the fact that it gave West German Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder the backing of a government in-being and able to make decisions at the current meeting in Paris of NATO foreign ministers.

But to get his government back on the rails again Adenauer had to pay a price. Lost in the shuffle was his controversial Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss who was replaced by Kai-Uwe von Hassel, governor of Schleswig-Holstein but relatively unknown outside Germany.

As a price for continued co-operation of the Free Democrats with his Christian Democrats, Adenauer also was forced to announce that he would resign next fall.

Altogether, the shakeup is not expected to effect foreign or domestic policy. It seems it must, however, have a weakening influence on the government both at home and abroad as German politicians scramble for position in the next power line-up.

In effect, Adenauer's promise to resign next fall placed him in the position of being a lame duck chancellor.

This may or may not be binding since Adenauer has reneged on such promises before.

The man still at the top of the list to replace Adenauer is Ludwig Erhard, 65, the minister of economics who is credited with placing West Germany on the road to its present prosperity and who enjoys wide popularity within the Christian Democratic party.

Erhard's weakness is that he is regarded as a top economist but not as a statesman. It is feared he would have difficulty standing up against Soviet needling and might not display Adenauer's enthusiasm for a united Europe.

In any event, the speculation now is that Erhard's tenure in office would be a short one, probably ending in 1964 and certainly not extending beyond general elections in 1965.

This in itself is discouraging to Western diplomats who believe that a strong West German government is essential to a united front against the Soviet Union and that the government already has been weakened by the political scramble of recent weeks.

Washington Report

By William S. White (c) United Feature Syndicate

COLD WAR PAUSE

Washington - A great and fateful pause has fallen over the central issues in the cold war. There is what amounts to an American decision not for the moment publicly to push the Soviet Union very hard over any of the problems lying between the two countries.

In effect, a consensus has been reached within the Kennedy administration that our October triumph in forcing the removal of Soviet missiles and nuclear bombers from Cuba should suffice for the time being.

Though thousands of Soviet troops are still in Cuba, there is no present plan to demand their evacuation by any given date. Nor is there any present plan to compel Nikita Khrushchev to make good on his promise of United Nations on-site inspection in Cuba to verify the withdrawal of his offensive weapons.

IN a simplified sense the "hard" line adopted at the height of the Cuban crisis has been followed by a line which might be described as trying out a policy of wait-and-see.

Twin dangers have been weighed up—the danger of allowing the Russians to suppose that our will has softened, and the danger of compromising the victory of October by demanding too many additional concessions too soon from Khrushchev.

For better or for worse, the conclusion has been reached that the first danger is not at the moment so great as the second.

There is no disposition among officials here to read any vast hopefulness for the west in the present divisions between the Soviet Union and Communist China—which is, at least for the record, insistently pressing Khrushchev to take up a "tougher" stance toward the west.

All the same, the prevailing official view is that there is at least some genuineness in these divisions and thus that this would be a poor time to push Khrushchev too hard, lest he fall back into full partnership with the Chinese, who really want nothing less than all-out war with the west.

IN CLOSING, this point is perhaps worth noting: The Nixon campaign closed with a SURPLUS of \$36,024. The Brown campaign came out with a DEFICIT of \$101,495.

At least, the Republicans appear to be sounder fiscal managers. They tend to pay as they go. The Democrats tend to put it on the cuff and hope for the best.

LET'S turn to pleasanter news. In Astoria recently, a 14-year-old boy (Russell Rickman) found an expensive camera, and immediately started a search for the owner.

He advertised his find in his home newspaper, but got no answer. So he started sleuthing.

There was a roll of exposed film in the camera. It was color film. He developed the roll. One shot showed an automobile, including the license plates. The license figures were legible in the print, but the name of the state wasn't. So he checked with the state police. They said the color indicated a Nevada license.

He then wrote the Nevada Motor Vehicle Department, which replied that the car belonged to a family named Pitman in Las Vegas. Russell then wrote the Pitmans.

They said yes, the camera was theirs. He sent it to them. They thanked him, and sent him a \$15 reward.

WE HEAR a lot of evil about the carry-ons of some of our teen-agers. We hear less about the GOOD that our teen-agers do. BAD acts are news. Good acts make the headlines only in unusual cases, such as this one. When a dog bites a man, you know, it isn't news because dogs quite often bite men. But when a man bites a dog it IS news, because men seldom BITE DOGS.

SO— We tend to hear FAR MORE OFTEN of the off-color or things our teen-agers do than of the GOOD things they do. Unless the good deed is so outstanding as to make a good story—as in the case of the Astoria boy—it doesn't get into the papers and out on the air waves. Good deeds are EXPECTED.

If we could hear of ALL the good things our teen-agers do, as well as the bad things, and could balance the good accurately against the bad, I'm pretty sure we would find that the good things they do FAR outweigh the bad things.

Let's not lose faith in our younger generation.

Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

A TEST PILOT had occasion to parachute to earth from a great height. Later he complimented the maker of the parachute. "It worked perfectly," he asserted, "and I want you to know I appreciate your cooperation."

"Thank you," beamed the maker. "There's one thing about the line we're in, you know. We never get a complaint!"

Nominated for the worst of the year: the story of the three Indian squaws who were admitted to the maternity ward at the same time. Chief Wampus, head obstetrician, assigned one to a buffalo hide, the second to an elk hide, and the third to a hippopotamus hide (now where did he get hold of THAT one?).

At any rate, the squaws on the elk and buffalo hides each produced a 6-pound son. But the squaw on the hippopotamus hide mothered healthy, 6-pound twins. All of which proves, of course, that the sons of the squaw of the hippopotamus equal the sons of the squaws of the other two hides.

Overheard: At Luchow's: "No wonder she's gushing. The fellow she's dining with owns 200 oil wells."

At Schrafft's: "My fiancé likes the same things I do—only he likes to save it and I like to spend it."

On a street corner in Damascus: "I don't remember your name—but your fez is familiar."

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What grammarians call "the nouns of multitude" are most puzzling to foreigners when trying to learn a new language. A German maid I know returned from shopping and told her mistress she had been unable to buy a group of bananas.

Why should bananas be a bunch? There is no reasonable explanation for the nouns of multitude, because language was invented long before logic. I remember, in an old book about the oddities of language, the tale of a foreigner looking at a picture of a number of vessels, and saying "Look at that flock of ships."

He was told (the book went on) that a flock of ships was called a fleet, and that a fleet of sheep was called a flock. And it was added that a flock of girls is called a bevy, a bevy of wolves is called a pack, a pack of thieves is called a gang, a gang of angels is called a host, a host of porpoises is called a shoal, and a shoal of buffaloes is called a herd.

To further enlighten him in the intricacies of the English language, he was informed that a herd of children is called a troop, a troop of partridges is called a covey, a covey of beauties is called a galaxy, and a galaxy of ruffians is called a horde.

To confound this confusion even more, he was told that a horde of rubbish is called a heap, a heap of oxen is called a drove, a drove of rioters is called a mob, a mob of whales is called a school, a school of worshippers is called a congregation, a congregation of engineers is called a corps, a corps of robbers is called a band, a band of locusts is called a swarm, and a swarm of people is called a crowd.

In the animal world alone, we have a different word to designate nearly every different species as a group, from a brace or team of horses to a colony of ants and a pride of lions. And, of course, in the realm of semantics, we know how skillfully we change the group names when we are dealing with objects we like or dislike—as, for instance, "a company of merry-makers," which includes us, becomes "a gang of drunkards" when the party is held in the apartment just above us.

Many nouns of multitude have been introduced into the language by etymologists, like Eric Partridge, the distinguished British lexicographer, who has given us some delightful and whimsical terms for bishops, judges, and other special categories. Only the other day, in fact, I heard about two such men discussing what a group of prostitutes should be called. "A jam of tartlets," volunteered one. "No," said the other, "an anthology of pros."

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

"For gosh sakes, can't they hurry it up? I've got a taxi waiting for me outside . . ."

Flight o' Time

Medford and Jackson County History from the files of The Mail Tribune 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 years ago.

10 YEARS AGO

Dec. 14, 1952 (Saturday) Twenty-two cases of chicken pox, all in Medford, led the list of 30 cases of communicable diseases in Jackson county last week.

Six actors from Ashland's Vining players, among them Philip Hanson, will offer a presentation of Charles Dickens' "Christmas Carol" at Washington school next week.

20 YEARS AGO

Dec. 14, 1942 (Sunday) Ashland Attorney Frank Van Dyke reports he is unable to serve in Oregon house of representatives because of service in armed forces.

From Arthur Perry's "Ye Smudge Pot" column: "The weatherman is now serving fog. This is no worse than his recent offerings have been, but is more cuseable."

30 YEARS AGO

Dec. 14, 1932 (Tuesday) Four passengers are injured when independent bus lines stage goes over 50-foot embankment near Tolo overhead.

Advertisements in the Mail Tribune list new cars for \$485, overstuffed lounge chairs for \$11.70, six-piece dining room sets for \$38.50, theater admissions for 5 cents and dressed turkeys for 75 cents each.

40 YEARS AGO

Dec. 14, 1922 (Wednesday) Special meeting held at Medford city library to discuss plans for community Christmas tree.

From the Local and Personal column: The number of autos seen parked on the business streets this afternoon, and the crowds of people in that section indicated this would be a big day with local merchants because of the cold weather.

50 YEARS AGO

Dec. 14, 1912 (Friday) Ashland women, exercising their right to vote for first time, cast 60 per cent of ballots in city election.

What's Your I.Q.?

Nine or ten correct is superior; seven or eight is excellent; five or six is good.

1. Does an electric fish actually discharge electricity? 2. What is the fleur-de-lis called in America? 3. Who is called the Father of Baseball? 4. When signing a bill does the President always indicate in writing the time of signing? 5. "A soft answer turneth away" what? 6. Add two numbers to this logical numbers series: 3 9 7 6 18 16 9 27 25 12.

7. A mathematician who works on insurance problems is called an underwriter, actuary, cartographer, or agent? 8. Landrum-Griffith and Taft-Hartley deal with what subject? 9. Unscramble these cities: Sallad, Ostobn, Tatlees, Tubt.

10. May a United States President veto a declaration of war made by the Congress? Answers: 1. Yes, 2. The Iris, 3. Abner Doubleday, 4. No; only when time is of extreme importance, 5. Wraith, 6. 36, 34, 7. Actuary, 8. Labor, 9. Dallas, Boston, Seattle, Bufile, 10. Yes.