

Quality vs. Quantity

Every time we become concerned at the generally low level of public taste, we try to content ourselves with the thought that it is probably higher now than it has ever been before in the history of man.

Usually it is enough to remind ourselves that just a few centuries ago, the vast majority of humanity lived under conditions we wouldn't subject our domestic animals to today.

Only a few—perhaps something less than 10 per cent—of the Europeans during the Middle Ages were able to sustain an environment conducive to the development of refined sensibilities.

ALL that has, of course, changed. Today's man on the street has not only heard of art, he'll tell you freely he doesn't know much about the modern forms, but he certainly does know what he likes.

At least he has an opinion now, of whatever validity, on a subject that not too long ago would have been completely alien to his experience.

Probably nowhere in contemporary life is the mass taste more nakedly in evidence than in television programming.

Given a choice among two or three competing programs at a particular time slot, the public automatically reveals its taste by the way it turns its channel selector knob.

AND make no mistake about it, there are those who are vitally interested in the direction that knob is turned. Thousands are employed to conduct surveys to determine viewership and report their results to television network brass, who in turn pass on the information to sponsors.

Understandably, a sponsor is only interested in paying for a show that people watch. When a program's rating drops, usually the sponsor drops it.

Hundreds of thousands—probably millions—of dollars have hinged on a few rating points.

The whole matter of a show's survival is decided in this simple, pragmatic manner. Do people (enough people) watch the program?

THE answer to the question is supplied by the rating services, and since figures do not lie, the results have never been questioned—at least up to now.

Whether the show was good or bad to start with, is, more often than not, completely beside the point. Quality, per se, is just not a factor.

Surely no one is going to argue that the shows in the top ten in terms of viewership are therefore the best.

In two weeks, the show we consider the finest on television this season is going to be permanently dropped because it has the lowest viewer rating of any other show on the air.

WE'RE speaking of "It's a Man's World." For sensitivity, maturity and variety of theme, continuing character development, and possibilities of viewer identification, the show has no parallel.

Its plots, week after week, are consistently fresh, provocative and insightful to human nature. The show's writers, director and producer have unfailingly demonstrated an uncommon ability to reveal the inner human heart and the poignancy that so frequently accompanies its workings.

Opinion among the handful of viewers who have watched "It's a Man's World" is widely divergent. East coast critics, with a perhaps more elevated and sophisticated judgment, have panned the show and are chortling at its impending demise.

Strangely, however, west coast critics (we timidly count ourselves among them) have militantly praised the production, and seemed prepared to do battle to try to save it from the ashean.

WHEN we heard several weeks ago that the show was in trouble—which it was almost from the start—we fired off a hot letter of protest to an NBC executive on Madison Avenue.

We wrote the letter on Mail Tribune letter-head stationery, and sure enough, it worked. We got an answer: A cool, rational reply—as to a child—which pointed out in clear terms that there was no room in competitive television for a "loser."

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And that's what "It's a Man's World" was, the NBC letter writer suggested, on the basis of several professional rating surveys that had been taken. That was that.

BUT now, at long last, we read in a report in the New York Times that the very validity of rating survey techniques is being questioned by the Federal Trade Commission. It seems the survey firms have been taking relatively "small samplings" and then projecting their collected data. Such projections may or may not be accurate. At any rate, they are questionable.

Without doubt, the FTC investigation into rating techniques is too late to have any effect on the cancellation of "It's a Man's World." NBC has announced the show, together with "Saints and Sinners," the ridiculous hour-long program about a newspaper man which follows it, will be replaced with a movie.



Washington Report

By William S. White (c) United Feature Syndicate

NEW ERA Washington - Congress has at last entered the post-Rayburn era, more than a year after the death of the man whose power and personality had dominated it so long.

His successor, Speaker John W. McCormack of Massachusetts, has now emerged from the long shadow of "Mr. Sam" to become the heart in fact of the House of Representatives. So, too, has emerged the assisting group immediately around him - Rep. Carl Albert of Oklahoma, the Democratic floor leader, and Rep. Hale Boggs of Louisiana, the Democratic whip, or assistant leader.

All this must now in fairness be said by those who, like this columnist, had seen Sam Rayburn of Texas, agree with him always or not, as more or less the indispensable man. It is not necessary to go so far as to say that McCormack has succeeded to all of Rayburn's prestige or rare sense of national responsibility.

HE HAS, however, now truly and fully succeeded to Rayburn's position. Heretofore, he was a sort of probationary speaker, serving in a chamber where the old master's commanding voice had been so profoundly missed that the ukases of his successor tended to be lost in the nostalgia of the yesterdays.

All this, though not inconsiderable, is about the only real meaning of the success of McCormack, Albert and Boggs - allied with the Kennedy White House - in keeping the vital House Rules committee packed as Rayburn himself had packed it at the onset of another Congress in 1961.

The mere result itself, despite much happy gee-whizzing by leadership Democrats, was not so much a victory as a staving off of defeat. After all, the administration is no better off than it was before. But - after all, too - it is surely no worse off, and worse off it very well might have been.

THE RULES committee has a qualified - but not a total - right to prevent legislation from reaching a vote in the House, because this committee normally must give right of way to all bills. Two years ago Rayburn increased it from 12 to 15 members so as to reduce the power of its

conservative coalition to bottle up Kennedy measures. The change was to last only until 1963 unless the House, by affirmative action, decided otherwise.

The question as to whether the committee should revert to the total clutches of the Republican - Southern Democratic coalition or remain the moderate instrumentality which Rayburn had made it.

With a good deal of hard wheeling and dealing and maybe a little log-rolling - all of which is both constitutional and permissible - McCormack and his associates saved the committee at its present size. Though literally it was a standoff, in spirit it was more than that, since it was so much better than the defeat which only weeks ago seemed likely to await them.

THE VALUE of the episode to the Kennedy administration is its proof that the McCormack leadership - allied to other increasingly savvy Boston political pros in the White House like Kenneth O'Donnell and Larry O'Brien - has come into its own. So, too, have they.

It would be the greatest mistake, however, to suppose that all is now clear in the House for "liberal" legislation. The chances for which is welfare in tone will be no better than before.

Foreign News: Communist Split Wider; Macmillan and Italy; MIGs for Cairo

By PHIL NEWSOM UPI Foreign News Analyst Notes from the foreign news cables:

Communist Split? Word from Moscow is that Nikita Khrushchev's trip to attend the East German Party Congress may mark a turning point for the Communist movement.

When Khrushchev packs up to go home, he may leave behind him the gravest split in world Communist history if, as expected, he uses the East Berlin platform to launch a concerted drive to isolate Peking from the rest of the socialist bloc.

The Moscow betting is that Khrushchev wants to use the East German meeting as a sort of stacked-in-favor substitute for the world Communist conference proposed by the Chinese. If so, it would be expected that the Berlin talks will result in a succession of position statements by all Khrushchev's allies designed to show how little support Peking really has. By implication, the Soviets have dared the Chinese to come and talk it out.

Macmillan Strategy Some observers in Rome now are reading into British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's visit to Italian Premier Amintore Fanfani next month a move toward an Anglo-Italian "special relationship" to match the Bonn-Paris "axis." The reasoning is based on Italian backing

of Britain's bid to enter the Common Market, Britain's need for this support and Italian fear of being submerged in Europe by Franco-German power politics. The Italian government has allowed word to leak out unofficially that Italy might seriously consider pulling out of the market if the British bid fails.

MIGs for Egypt Western intelligence sources claim that the Russians recently delivered 60 MIG jet fighters secretly to the Cairo government. The planes, believed to be MIG-21's, were said to have been shipped in crates and assembled secretly at an airfield. The MIG-21, called "Fishbed" in NATO terminology, is super-sonic.

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"The reason for this," he explains, "is to be found in a basic fact about military technology in a nuclear age. This is the fact that offensive capability has completely outstripped defensive capability. Policy-makers are fond of talking about great defensive shields or umbrellas, but these defenses are more in men's minds than weapons. Defense in this nuclear age adds up to little more than mutual fear."

Only by recognizing the Neanderthal within us can we hope to control him, the author warns. We cannot avoid global war by denying the threat, by ignoring the paradoxes, by adopting slogans and attitudes that are totally outmoded. Nor can we avoid war by "frightening the living daylight out of people" with apocalyptic visions of the world's extermination - for this only makes people dig their heads deeper in the sand.

"An Alternative to War or Surrender" offers some practical, sensible alternatives to Red or dead. It should be studied carefully by all who do not want to perish like the Neanderthals.

Lafferty Returns To Native Missouri Portland - (UP) - A. W. Lafferty, former U.S. Representative from Oregon and Portland attorney, has returned to his native Missouri.

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NATIONAL EDITORIAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER OF AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

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

Jan. 14, 1953 (Monday) Medford Safety Council's annual awards for outstanding achievements in safety during 1952 were presented to Claude C. Haggard, and Mercy Flight, Inc.

Five petitions requesting a hearing to consider formation of a proposed 350,000-acre soil conservation district in Jackson county are being circulated in the Rogue valley and Applegate-Missouri Flat area.

20 YEARS AGO

Jan. 14, 1943 (Saturday) Bill Morgan, former Medford High school football player and star with University of Oregon and New York Giants grid teams, joins Marines.

From Arthur Perry's "Ye Smudge Pot" column: "Pure of Pea Soup, a la London Fog, prevailed hereabouts most of last week, and was not welcomed by either the troops or civilians."

30 YEARS AGO

Jan. 14, 1913 (Monday) Harold Woods and Clem Childers, both Medford, escape death in snow slide near Crater Lake.

Alvon Foster Dunford, first Jackson county man to enlist in armed forces during World War I, dies after long illness.

Judge W. E. Crews, recently appointed corporation commissioner by Gov. Walter Pierce, names George A. Coddington, Medford, as chief deputy.

John B. Hammersley, Gold Hill's ex-postmaster, mayor, recorder, marshal, government trapper and editor of the Gold Hill News, returns after two-year absence.

50 YEARS AGO

Jan. 14, 1913 (Thursday) Oregon's first Progressive club founded in Medford; 50 become charter members of organization.

Medford High school basketball team leaves for northern California to play series of contests with Yreka, Etna Mills, and Ft. Jones.

What's Your I.Q.?

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

- 1. Name the late war correspondent whose writings as a roving reporter are compiled in a book, "Home Country."
2. What was the first creature to leave Noah's Ark?
3. Alligator peat is a common name for which fruit?
4. The Solicitor General of the United States is appointed by the Supreme Court, Attorney General, or the President?
5. Name the British nobleman who wrote "Charge of the Light Brigade."
6. What is the name of the instrument that measures wind velocity?
7. What is the missing letter in this scrambled word beginning with S and meaning a form of worship; Siveev?
8. The art of growing stunted shapely trees is called what?
9. Gold is weighed by the fluid ounce, Troy ounce or avoirdupois ounce?
10. Which of the oceans is the largest in area?
1. Ernie Pyle. 2. A raven. 3. Avacado. 4. President. 5. Alfred, Lord Tennyson. 6. Anemometer. 7. R. (service). 8. Bonsai. 9. Troy. 10. Pacific.



Cartoon in a religious weekly depicts an usher passing a collection plate at a church wedding. The caption reads, "I admit, sir, it's a bit extraordinary—but the bride's father insisted on it."

When a big advertising account executive died suddenly, a friend asked in hushed tones, "What did he have?" The answer was, "General Motors, U.S. Steel, and American Tobacco." © 1963, by Bennett Cerf. Distributed by King Features Syndicate.

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 initials 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.

For Court Study To the Editor: Our press clipping service has just delivered a number of stories about our recent report, "Court Services to Children and Families in Oregon."

I noted with appreciation your Jan. 2 editorial on this subject. You have captured in a few words the essence of the problem. I particularly liked your point that because "we are used to our present court organization does not mean that it is sacred and should not be tampered with."

As an attorney I had for years simply accepted the court organization for what it was without seriously questioning whether it was structured to do the job in the best possible way. Our look at court organization has been a real eye-opener to me and to other members of the Council.

I am hopeful that we can obtain support for a joint resolution of the Legislature providing for an objective professional study of court services to children and families in Oregon.

Thank you again for your interest and supportive editorial.

Esperanto To the Editor: I read your article about World Wide

Language, 12/28, with much interest. Mr. Beeson seems to suggest an entirely new language from scratch, apparently disregarding 75 years of research and practical use, also, that Esperanto would be too difficult for Orientals, though Miss Josko Kajino, who has been in this country for several months promoting the 1963 Esperanto World Congress in Japan, says there are 50,000 Esperantists in Japan, that a very good Esperanto Journal is published in Peking, and that China is studying the adoption of our Latin alphabet.

We have dabbled 75 years with this problem, though we have spent hundreds of years with English, and even more with others. In February, 1960, an American plane and a Brazilian, landing at Rio de Janeiro, collided and fell in the sea, with a loss of nearly 100 lives, also, the Italian liner, Andrea Doria, and a Swedish vessel, the Stockholm, collided in the fog, with a loss of 51 lives. How long would Mr. Beeson have us wait, and how many more would he see plunged in the sea? It makes me sick every time I see a big plane in the sky, or a big ship at sea!

No one is asked or expected to give up his native language. If Mr. Beeson wants more "culture", let him study Italian, the language of grand opera, or any other that he prefers. Neither does Esperanto profess to guarantee world wide peace, though it certainly would help. If we put our shoulders to the wheel, all together in this country, we could solve this problem in a very few decades.

If you want to know more about Esperanto, the world common language, ask your library, or write to us.

H. E. Dillinger The Esperanto Club, Box 792, Placerville, Calif.

Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

ONE OF THE troubles with statistics is that astute politicians can make