

Members of Legislature Declared Too Busy to Write Press Releases

By MARY JANE DELLENBACK
Salem — I have written a number of times about my own schedule, but I have not dwelt at any length upon the most important part of our day, and that is the schedule of the Representative himself, and that is John Dellenback, my husband and boss.

Every once in a while I become disturbed over a fact which by now I should realize is inevitable, and that is the fact of how news is reported from the legislature. With so many people involved and with all going in separate directions most of the day, it is easy to see that it would be impossible for the press to report all that is of interest about all the members of the legislature. This is true even of the newspapers and radio people who are on the scene, but it is even a more difficult task for those who do not

have a representative of their organization present and must therefore rely on the news services or on press releases for their reports of what is newsworthy at the legislature.

Now if you analyze it further, you will realize that the place where a news release comes from must generally be from the one who is most directly concerned with its publication. So when you read that Congressman so-and-so has done such-and-such, or that Senator so-and-so has introduced such and such a bill, generally it is the legislator himself who has wanted to be sure that the people back home know that he has done something and so sent a press release to the home town newspaper to be printed.

Possibly this is a responsibility that John and I have not taken seriously enough. Perhaps it is part of his job to send regular press releases to the news media. We would

be interested in an expression of public opinion on this subject. I am sure that in many cases the press release is necessary and helpful. But we who are on the scene see that very often a choice must be made between taking time to get out a news report and continuing to do the other parts of the job here.

Releases Rare

Therefore, only on a rare occasion when he deemed it really important has my boss asked me to make a stencil and get out a press release.

It is for this reason that I have developed a concern that the people back home — the ones who sent him here — might have the idea that he isn't doing very much that is newsworthy. So I wanted to tell you something about what I feel is a most conscientious

piece of work being done for you.

All representatives have a certain number of committee appointments which require their attendance at a number of meetings each week. Some committees have more bills assigned to them for work than others, and some schedules are more complicated than others. This is a factor which is worked out by the Speaker, John finds that alcoholic Control has a certain number of bills — only an average work load as committees go. There are this session a number of fairly important matters in this committee for determination — the matter of I.D. cards for liquor buyers and whether there will be a change in the way they are issued, for instance. Elections and Reapportionment, of course, is always a matter of

concern. This session they are wrestling with a number of matters which are controversial and have factors in favor of many different sides of the issues. One of these is the possibility of changing the way Multnomah County is districted, with the possibility that the districts will be made smaller, with more of a man-against-man type of campaign being the result there.

Constitutional Revision, as you might realize, could take all the time one could give it. John often goes back to the Capitol at night in order to read further in the document itself, as well as to read the report of the Constitutional Revision commission to familiarize himself with their thinking and conclusions on various sections. I am hoping that he will write a rundown for your reading of what they

are doing in that committee, as they are following a somewhat different system than some of the others, due to the preliminary work which has been done by the commission.

In addition to his regular duties in the committees to which he has been assigned, John has worked out his schedule to include attendance at several other committees. This he has done for several reasons. He is anxious to educate himself in various phases of state operations, and has developed a particular interest in some areas through his work on committees last session and on interim committees. He attends the Education committee regularly, which is a committee with a great many matters to consider. He is intensely interested in this field, since this

is the interim committee of which he was a member last year, and he has a wealth of background information which is very helpful to the committee, since a number of the members of it are freshmen, and do not have the benefit of the study done by the interim committee. He is very glad that his schedule will permit this attendance, and I suspect that the other members of the committee are glad for this fill-in information, too. Then, he attends on a regular basis, as regularly as his other duties will permit, the Judiciary committee, which is concerned with many matters which need the understanding of a legally trained mind. He, naturally, is interested in these matters. He has wanted to follow the activities of the Ways and Means committee, also, and finds it impossible to follow all they are doing by virtue of lack of time. He has, therefore, settled on the Sub-com-

Dinner Slated By Two Groups

Veterans of World War I barracks 540 and auxiliary, will hold a covered dish dinner Wednesday, March 20, at 7 p.m. in the Girls' Community club, 229 North Bartlett street. A social evening will follow.

Mrs. S. R. Hale and commit-

tee on Higher Education as the place where he "could learn more about the matters with which he is already conversant."

You can see that all this does not leave much idle time, and I often wonder "where he is!" I know he is attending a committee meeting, but he

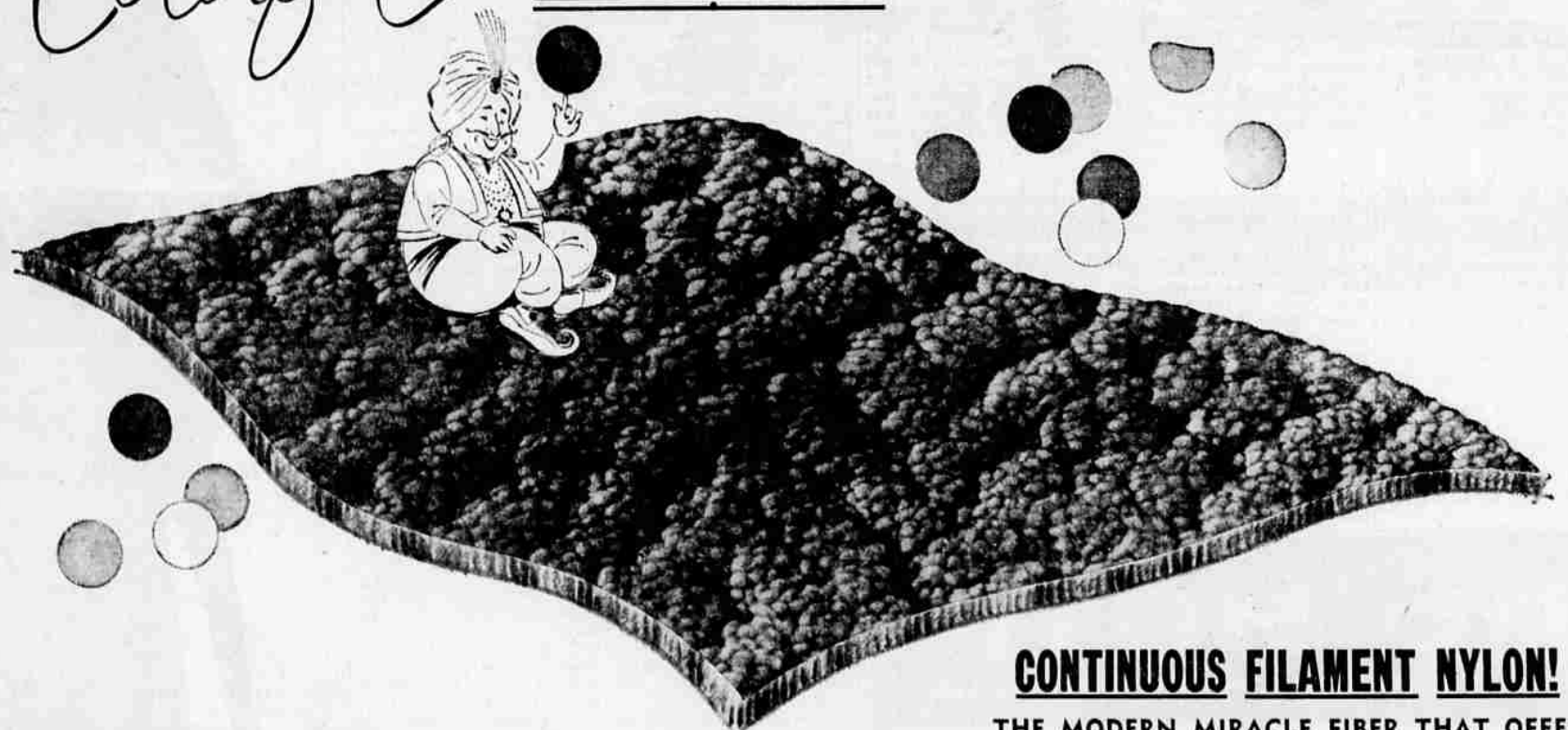
attends so many that it is hard to keep track. You can also see that he is using his time beneficially, and perhaps you can understand, too, why there are not many press releases being sent out by Rep. Dellenback!

Those named were Mrs. Ray Newman, Mrs. F. B. Otis, Mrs. J. H. Gindling, Mrs. Fred Clark, Mrs. N. R. Walters, Mrs. J. A. Dalton, Mrs. Lillian Austin and Mrs. Thomas B. Lynch.

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