

Medford Mail Tribune

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Congress Mired Down

Congress is a tortoise. But there is no hare in sight to goad it into a faster pace. Why does it move so slowly? Why doesn't it seem to care whether it does its job or not?

DOESN'T anyone care? Aren't there throngs of concerned citizens who watch in amazement while the national legislature stays in session past the normal June adjournment date, past July 4, drags on all through the dog days of summer, past Labor Day, past Halloween, past Veterans Day, and with little prospect of accomplishing anything more — except recessing for Thanksgiving and Christmas?

On Veterans Day Congress was also in recess. The San Francisco Chronicle said, "but hardly anyone could tell the difference. Congressmen did nothing Veterans Day, but then they haven't done much of anything in the windy days when they were in session."

THE CONGRESS is trapped. The most vicious problem is the seniority system, which puts the most durable, as distinct from the most able, men in control of the powerful committees. Committees can prevent legislation from coming to the floor for a vote in either house, even when it is clear that a majority of the members want to vote on it.

THIS frustrates, this emasculates, the representative system, when a single powerful committee chairman can flout the will of the Congress. And it is both anachronistic and terrifying when someone like Sen. Eastland, a vintage racist, is chairman of the committee which will consider the Civil Rights bill — if, that is, it ever gets from the House to the Senate.

IT IS EQUALLY reprehensible when a man like Sen. Byrd, whose fiscal ideas are out of the last century, can delay — perhaps even deny — a badly needed federal tax cut.

And now it is seriously proposed that Congressmen vote themselves a \$10,000 per year raise, on top of the \$22,500 plus expenses, allowances and other prerogatives they already enjoy.

THE CHRONICLE, in musing on the non-record amassed by Congress this session, pointed out it is easier, and saves space, to list what they have done, rather than what they haven't. And it concluded:

"The record has been so disheartening that even Sen. Thomas J. Dodd, a Democrat from Connecticut, called the session to date a 'fiasco.' The Senate reacted with such horror, and trampled upon Senator Dodd so thoroughly, that he apologized. Then everyone relaxed again.

"There were two other accomplishments by this set of lawmakers. They granted honorary citizenship to Winston Churchill. They also proclaimed National Harmony Week, April 15-21."

We can hardly wait until April 15. — E. A.

Do It-Then Quit

There's one thing to be said for the Oregon Legislature, now in Salem sweating out what to do about the state's fiscal crisis.

At least it accomplished more in 141 days than Congress has so far all year. And the salaries — even with the boost they gave themselves — are a lot less.

We suspect that if the people of the United States had a chance to slap down Congress, as the people of Oregon did the state Legislature, the results would be no less devastating.

THERE IS no machinery for doing this. But the same effect would be achieved if every interested voter would take pen in hand and, in no uncertain terms, tell their Senators and Representatives just what they think and want — briefly, succinctly, and to the point.

IF SOMETHING like this were to happen (and it won't) it would do more to restore the waning faith of the American people than anything else that could happen.

Going back to Senator Dodd for a moment, here is part of what he said:

"We are not doing the people's business. . . . No wonder the Senate has been denigrated. . . . We are worried about scandals that beset us. We are worried about criticisms that confront us. Our business is to revive in the people's minds the idea that the Senate is the best body in all the world to protect a free people."

That, sir, is going to take some doing. — E. A.

"Boss, Do You Want To See Government Get Ahead of Private Enterprise?"



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.

Crossing Accidents: To the Editor: In Sunday's Medford Mail Tribune I read the letter of Mrs. L. J. Rentz concerning the picture on the front page of the Medford paper Nov. 7. When this accident happened I was a member of the switch crew at Jackson St. I can assure Mrs. Rentz that the members of the crew, as well as all trainmen and engineers, do all in their power to avoid crossing accidents even to the risk of their own safety and employment.

Whenever a motorist receives a signal from a railroad man he has violated company rules and risks discipline. The railroad is forced to give such instructions as too many times a signal has been claimed to have been one to proceed after an accident happens. When one is given it is at personal risk for your protection or accommodation.

That night at Jackson St. I was warned by a Medford police officer not to turn my back "on a motorist for a second." The point is well taken, as many disregard all safety to themselves and others and even try to force by trainmen and police at accident scenes.

In my report I stated I thought both occupants of the car had been drinking. This is true of the majority of crossing accidents which I have seen in Medford in the last 20 years. The car you saw pictured under a box car had run by a warning bell, red crossing light in a wig-wag on the driver's side of approach and struck the fifth car from engine in a cut of 12 cars.

In regard to crossing gates, State Rep. James Redden of Medford had a bill prepared to require these gates on main crossings. As State Legislative Representative of the Order of Railway Conductors and Brakemen I worked with him on this matter and was prepared to back his bill. Upon investigation we found we already have statutes giving the PIC authority to demand such installations. We also found the railroad willing to give the best of cooperation in such installation. However, most cities have a found the share of cost to them as provided by law to be prohibitive in most cases.

Medford has made a far better record on crossing accidents, however, than most other cities. We in train and engine service will continue to do our very best to prevent every accident we can. Please help by taking it easy at such danger points and help us save your life.

Marion S. Felter, Vice Chairman and Legislative Representative Oregon State Legislative Committee of the Order of Railway Conductors and Brakemen, Ashland, Ore.

Inspired Prophets: To the Editor: I would like to discuss a question or two with Miss Burnham about her letter in Sunday's Mail Tribune. I am a firm believer in a supreme intelligence we call God, that the Bible declares is an immortal celestial being, with a body, parts and passions. And he clothed the spirits of Adam and Eve with the material parts of this earth, which he had also created from substances that had always existed.

Science claims much of it came from the extreme heat in the sun. Be that as it may, in the meridian of time allotted to this earth from the eternities, as we know it in our time, God sent his Son "made of a woman, made under the law" — Gal. 4:4. And in the image of his Father in Heaven we call God. This son had supernatural powers, also like his Father. He walked upon the water of the Sea of Galilee, stilled its turbulent waves, filled the nets with fish, fed the thousands, raised the dead unto life, and so many other miracles too numerous to mention.

We have the New Testament that has endured the test of time for nearly 2000 years, for a witness and testimony that it is true. However, it could be destroyed, but its teachings can never be destroyed.

Miss Burnham says "The supreme ruler of the universe is nature." Did nature then inspire the Prophet Nahum in 2:3 that the uniforms of the British soldiers would be "Red"? . . . And we in our day would have automobiles "with torches and would justle one another in the Broadways"? And Isaiah could see our time of passenger trains — Cha 5:26. And he also saw our planes that could fly like doves to their windows. 60:8.

I think it makes more sense to believe God inspired his Prophets as the Prophet Amos indicates in Cha 3:7. Miss Burnham says "The supreme ruler of the universe is nature." The Apostle Paul in Romans, seventh chapter, seems to indicate Satan then is in cahoots with nature.

John F. Peterson, 611 S. Holly St., Medford.

Pocketbook Issues in Common Market and GATT Will Affect Americans, Europeans

And, unless the Common Market community makes some sort of amends, the United States threatens retaliatory tariffs on two dozen or more items imported from Europe.

At stake is much more than the frozen chicken market. The United States annually sells to Europe more than a billion dollars worth of agricultural goods. And the fear is that a high protective tariff system eventually could bar a large portion of that total from Europe.

The Geneva arbitrators may come up with a decision this week. For the future of the Common Market, and its ultimate hopes for a politically united Europe, the problem under study in Brussels is even thornier.

Foreign ministers of West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg are attempting to agree upon a common market agricultural policy.

French President Charles de Gaulle, with ambitions to make France the breadbasket of Europe, has hinted he may pull out of the Common Market altogether unless agreement is reached by the end of the year.

De Gaulle's chief opposition is the West German farmer. German agriculture is less efficient than the French, but enjoys the most government protection of any in Europe. In West Germany, the farmer also is a potent political force.

A current proposal would aid the French farmer but is estimated to cost German farmers \$140 million a year. The chances for agreement before the end of the year seem small indeed.

But upon agreement also hinges the chance for success for even more important negotiations scheduled for May, 1964. This is the meeting of GATT nations at which the United States hoped to negotiate across-the-board tariff cuts up to 50 per cent.

One way or another, it affects every pocketbook in the U. S. and Europe.

In the Day's News

By FRANK JENKINS

Forty-five years ago Monday was a day that no one then alive will ever forget. It was on that day that German representatives signed a truce between the Allies and Germany.

The signing took place in a railroad dining car in the Forest of Compiègne, in France. The signing of the truce marked the end of actual fighting in World War I.

It touched off the wildest and happiest celebration that the world had ever seen. There was a curious sidelight to the celebration. The news of the signing leaked out prematurely, leading to what was known as the False Armistice. The celebration began with the first hint of the signing of the truce. People went wild with joy.

There came the news that it wasn't true. The shock was terrible. But it didn't last long. The signing of the Armistice was shortly confirmed, and the celebration was resumed where it had been halted. It went on and on.

WHAT a day it was! The world was mad with joy. NEVER AGAIN would there be war. The world had learned its lesson. In every mind was the prophecy of Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

AH, ME. What an anti-climax. World War II was followed by the horrors of World War I. And the horrors of World War I were mild when compared with the horrors of World War II.

AND BUT— The memories of that wonderful 11th day of November, 1918, will never be forgotten by those who lived through it. The dream was shattered. But the wonders of it will never die. It just may be that the memories of that beautiful and wonderful day when it seemed to us that war had been banished from the earth may eventually lead us to peace—the prophesied beating of the swords into plowshares.

At least let's hope so.

Strictly Personal

By Sydney J. Harris (c) Field Enterprises, Inc.

ADVERSARY: The man at the cocktail party came up and introduced himself. "I've been wanting to meet you for a long time," he said, "for purely selfish reasons. I'd like you to write something about divorce lawyers."

"Always looking for usable material," I replied with glib insincerity. "Just exactly what would you like me to say about them?"

"Well, I happen to be one," he explained. "and I'd like you to refute the popular belief that divorce lawyers stir up more trouble between parties. I've tried to reconcile many more couples than not, and most of my colleagues have tried the same."

"That's an interesting viewpoint," I murmured. "Tell me more."

"We're not looking for business," he continued. "We have all we can handle. And we get our fee whether the couple is reconciled or not. It might not be quite as large, but it's much more satisfying to us."

We continued chatting for a few minutes, and I promised to think about the matter. I was absolutely convinced that he meant what he said, and so do his colleagues. They really believe that they try to reconcile couples wherever possible — and on the conscious level they prefer such an ending to divorce litigation.

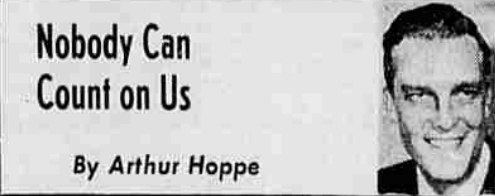
What they fail to see is that the "adversary system" in itself promotes bitterness and tension and self-interest on the part of both the contestants — and these tendencies run counter to any true reconciliation.

The chief function of an attorney is to protect the interest of his client. While on the one hand the lawyer may be urging the couple to settle their differences, on another level he is there to see to it that his own client gets the best possible "deal" in financial and legal terms.

These two attitudes are basically incompatible. "Reconciliation" means giving at least as much as you take, and even a little more. It means sacrificing some self-interest, subordinating one's selfishness, and engaging in a human transaction rather than in a financial one.

Even with two attorneys who consciously desire a couple to reconcile, the parties are enveloped in an atmosphere of contest, in which trust is replaced by suspicion and personal feelings are corseted in formal and legal restrictions. Nor is the lawyer to blame for this; it is the very element in which he works, and he is not doing a good job as a counsel if he fails to provide for every safeguard.

There is a basic contradiction between love and equity; the former is a matter of pure risk-taking, the latter depends on guarantee and contracts. There is no "justice" in a marriage; to work, it must go beyond mere justice into the mystical realm of "mercy."



Nobody Can Count on Us

By Arthur Hoppe

We keep having these tie-ups on the autobahn to West Berlin. Mr. Khrushchev says any one of them could lead to a nuclear holocaust and the end of civilization. True. But fear not, neither side will ever yield.

As you know, the Russians get to check every convoy of troops we send over the autobahn to West Berlin. And if there are more than 30 passengers in the trucks, they have to get out, line up and be counted. A typical Cold War agreement. Very simple. Theoretically.

But take the last tie-up. Along come 12 U.S. trucks. "Stop!" says the Russian colonel. "Aha!" he peeks inside. "Aha!" he says, "you've got one, two, three, four, five. . . 44 soldiers in those trucks. That's more than 30. Now that I've counted them, they've got to get out and get counted."

"Hold it!" says the American colonel. "You counted the drivers, too. Drivers don't count." "So, okay," says the Russian colonel, "we don't count the drivers. You got one, two, three. . . twelve trucks. Twelve trucks, twelve trucks. Twelve from 44 that's let's see, 32. Hah! Everybody out!"

"Well, whatever, I'm glad we didn't blow up civilization. This time. But don't get me wrong. I'm sure we're all willing to die for our right to have two drivers in every truck. Just as all Russians are willing to die for the egalitarian principle of one truck, one driver."

Moreover, if you're looking for a reason to destroy civilization, it's as good as any. If you're looking for a reason.



"It's political persecution. I wasn't speeding . . . he doesn't like my bumper sticker!"