Herald and News

Editorial Page

Recognizing The Problem

One of the hottest, and bitterest, controversies in the last Congress had to do with the problem of medical care for the elderly. The Administration's proposal was Medicare—a plan under which everyone drawing social security benefits would have been eligible for a variety of government-paid medical services. An impressive bill of particulars against Medicare was drawn by its opponents, who held that it would mark a long step toward government domination of medicine; that it did not take adequate account of the actual need of the individual, but, rather, took a shotgun approach to a certain selected group; that it would not cover millions of elderly people who are not within the social security system; that the costs would be enormous, and, probably far beyond Administration estimates, and that it would result in the concentration of federal power and authority at the expense of local government.

Medicare got nowhere. But it will be back this year, probably in a somewhat changed and possibly expanded form. So—whatever happens to any particular bill—the problem of how to ensure a better life for the nation's elderly people—not only in medical matters but in other associated ways—will again be a major issue.

The American Medical Association's Board of Trustees has now proposed an eight-point program designed to deal with the problem of the elderly in its many ramifications. In announcing it, Dr. Percy Hopkins, the board's chairman, said: "It recognizes that some of the aged have problems, some need help. It also recognizes that most of them aspire to be independent, self-reliant, useful citizens who want challenges and opportunities. They do not desire to be classified as a mass problem."

The specific points of the program cover many latitudes. Among them: 1. A re-evaluation of attitudes toward the elderly in order that they may be given the chance to use their time, talents and capabilities in worthwhile activities that encourage self-reliance and independence. 2. Support for, and implementation and revision of the existing financial assistance to the elderly who need it to meet the cost of medical care. 3. Changes in the income tax laws, to liberalize medical care deductions for dependents over 65. 4. To assist in the continued expansion of health insurance and prepayment plans—Blue Shield and Blue Cross—which have shown an "explosive growth." 5. More flexible retirement policies in business and industry, so that productive workers who wish to can continue at their jobs instead of being forced to retire at an arbitrary age. 6. Encouraging construction of additional nursing homes. The number of beds in these homes has increased dramatically since 1954—from 180,000 to more than 338,000. But still more are needed. 7. Expansion of community programs for the aged, under state and county medical society leadership. These would be broad programs including, in addition to health services, development of recreational facilities and job opportunities, and so on. 8. Increased attention to measures aimed at prevention, cure and rehabilitation in the area of mental illness among the aged. This particular problem, says the AMA report, ". . . presents a unique challenge to the medical profession. . . . The aged occupy a disproportionate number of beds in mental institutions. Many of these people are not mentally ill and should not be languishing in these institutions which are serving in too many cases primarily as custodians of the aged."

This broad program certainly proves that the medical profession is not in any way indifferent to the problems of the elderly—and that, instead, it is most vitally concerned with finding the right solutions.

High Cost Of Politics

(Press-Herald, Portland, Maine)

As the cost of politics grows, politicians and their parties adopt novel and often desperate measures to finance election campaigns.

The talk of Washington recently has been the gala put on by the Democrats to pay off a million-dollar debt left over from the 1962 elections. This was not the ostensible reason for the double-decker affair; party faithful who gathered from all over the country assumedly were celebrating the second anniversary of President Kennedy's first inauguration. Moreover, they paid handsomely for the privilege. Seven hundred Democrats paid $1,000 each for a dinner at the new International Inn in the national capital. At the Washington armory another huge throng paid $100 each to see a floor show, but no dinner. The President and Vice President and their entourages showed up at both occasions, and the whole thing was an apparent success.

Massachusetts, on the other hand, which produces more droll politics than any state we can think of, is still chuckling over the testimonial dinner the insurance industry planned for State Insurance Commissioner C. Eugene Farnam.

This was apparently a good-will affair intended to improve insurance firms' relations with the state government and the legislature. But sponsors overlooked the fact that only recently the lawmakers, fed up with purely political "testimonial" dinners intended to pay election debts or build a campaign fund for the future, enacted legislation against the practice. So, after a ruling by the New Attorney General that the dinner would violate the law, it was called off and ticket money returned to about a thousand Bay Staters.

It should be noted that Republicans raised the question of violation of federal law (the Hatch Act) against Kennedy's gala, but were only laughed at for their presumption. (The GOP is now planning a $500,000 Goldwater dinner of its own.) This does not necessarily prove that the Kennedy administration's ethics are showing. It does, so far as we are concerned, ring an alarm bell over the increasing cost of running for public office in this country, meanwhile noting for the record that hardly anyone is doing anything about it, in a constructive way.

Perhaps this is tiresome repetition, but the nation ought not to drift into a situation whereby only rich men can afford to run for high public office, in the states and the federal government, unless they are willing to accept help from special interests that inferentially has strings attached.

There is something of a Roman circus atmosphere about a lush Washington affair that attracts 700 persons able and presumably willing to shell out a thousand dollars each for the privilege of saying "I was there." It causes us some anxiety, looking toward the future, but it and similar events will continue until public opinion recognizes the potential risks involved, too.

BERRY'S WORLD

"Why can't we keep up with the Salingers instead of the Kennedys?"

Almanac

By United Press International

Today is Monday, March 11, the 70th day of 1963 with 295 to follow.

The moon is approaching its last quarter.

The morning stars are Venus and Mars.

The evening star is Mars.

On this day in history:

In 1888, the great blizzard began in New York City and snow fell for four straight days.

In 1930, William Howard Taft became the first President of the United States to be buried in the National Cemetery at Arlington, Va.

In 1941, President Roosevelt signed the hotly debated lend-lease bill and immediately ordered goods sent to Britain and Greece.

A thought for the day: British statesman Sir Winston Churchill said: "I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

EDSON IN WASHINGTON . . .

State Taxes Penalize, Hobble Business

By PETER EDSON
Washington Correspondent
Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

WASHINGTON (NEA) — While Congress and the country crab against tax reform and new trade czar Christian A. Herter prepares for negotiations with foreign countries to lower tariff restrictions on international trade, American businessmen are faced with a crazy quilt of state and local income, sales and use taxes which have the same effect as tariffs on interstate commerce.

The abuse arises when one state levies an income tax on the business done within its borders by merchants, manufacturers or other concerns located in other states. These out-of-date businesses also may be required to collect sales and use taxes on their goods sold in the taxing state.

Forty - seven states now levy one of both of these taxes on business originating in other states. The total take on these taxes is over $5 billion a year, from both local and out-of-state sources.

Thirty - six states collected $4.5 billion in use taxes in 1961. Thirty - seven states collected $1.2 billion in income taxes.

Business gripes against these taxes as they apply to interstate commerce. The administrative cost of complying with a code of over 100 fat volumes of conflicting state tax laws is necessarily great. There is a duplication of taxation by the state in which goods are manufactured and the states in which they are sold.

Companies doing interstate business are faced with tax liability which often leads to heavy assessments for back taxes, interest and penalties. Companies in some cases are forced to pay traveling expenses for inspectors from other states who come in to audit their books.

All this trouble may in some cases make small business reluctant to try to expand their operations into other states.

A Special House Judiciary subcommittee on State Taxation of Interstate Commerce under Rep. Edwin E. Willis, D-La., has been quietly investigating these practices for over a year. It has assembled voluminous data from all 50 states and from thousands of business firms all over the country.

This material now is being analyzed by the committee's staff under Murray Drabkin. A report will be made before July 1. Then it will be up to Congress to decide what to do about the situation.

Under the U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Section 8, only Congress has the power to regulate interstate commerce. Many businessmen now feel, however, that state taxes interfere with their doing business across state lines and restrain trade.

More than 300 Supreme Court decisions—and perhaps thousands in state courts—have tried to draw the line between what constitutes a tax on interstate commerce and what is a permissible business tax.

The Supreme Court has recognized that it is institutionally incapable of solving this question as a broad national policy. But in 1959 the court held that a state can tax a reasonably apportioned share of the income from a business whose only activities in the state are in furtherance of interstate commerce.

The court also decided that a state could tax a business which maintained a sales office within its borders.

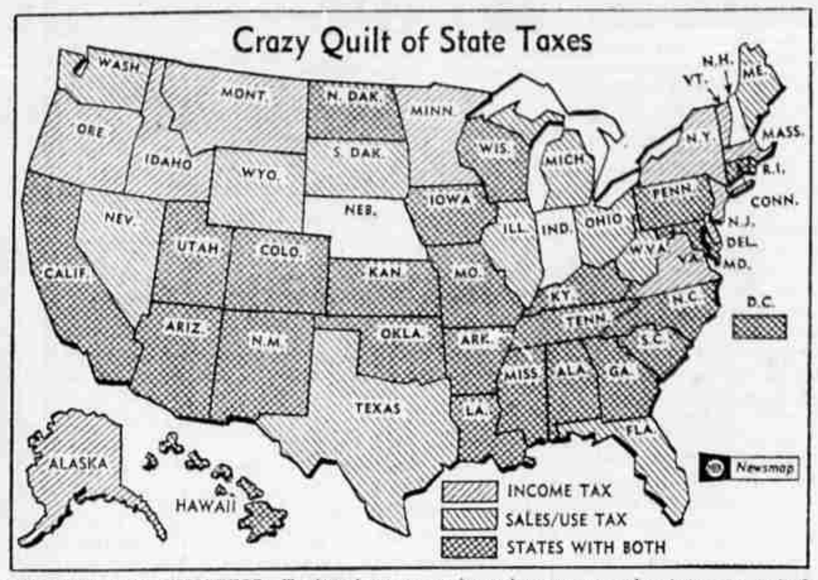
Subsequently, the Supreme Court declined to review two cases appealed from state courts which upheld the power of a state to tax the income of an out-of-state business engaged solely in interstate commerce, even though it maintained no offices in the state but only sent in salesmen to solicit business.

The laws of the 47 states in this field now present a wallow of confusion. No exemptions are made for small business. In some states taxes are levied only if the manufacturer has a branch plant in the taxing state. In a few states, taxes are levied on an out-of-state manufacturer if he merely advertises in the taxing state. In still other states, if a manufacturer sells only through local dealers and not directly, there is no tax.

Taking its first step to clarify this maze, Congress in 1959 passed its first law on the subject. It prohibits taxation of interstate commerce if the only activity of an out-of-state manufacturer or merchant is solicitation.

This law also sets up a congressional study—now being made by the Willis committee—to determine whether additional legislation is necessary and recommend what it should be.

But Congress may not act on this before next year — maybe after it gets through reforming U.S. tax laws.



PROBLEM FOR CONGRESS—Taxing income or imposing use or sales taxes on out-of-state business firms has become big business for almost every state. Newsmap shows states which tax income, those which have use/sales levies and ones which have both types. Only three states—Nebraska, Indiana and New Hampshire—do not have such taxes. Because interstate commerce is affected, Congress may be called upon to clear up states' taxing powers in this area.

STRICTLY PERSONAL

By SYDNEY J. HARRIS

A man I used to know some years ago died in New York recently, and when I asked a mutual friend (who happens to be a doctor) the cause of death, he answered "Secrecy."

This was a most provocative reply, and I pressed him to let down the medical barriers and explain what he said. It was really quite simple—and, so the doctor added, fairly common.

The man had had two ailments, one affecting the heart and the other the blood. He went to separate doctors for treatment—and did not tell either doctor about the other ailment, because he did not want to be too severely restricted in his diet, his work, or his social life.

As a result, the regimen prescribed for one of the ailments adversely affected the other, and he was carried off before either of his physicians knew what was happening.

This may seem a bizarre little tale, but it occurs more often than the layman realizes. More than a century ago, F. B. Winslow, in his book, "Physic and Physicians," wrote: "Secrecy is commonly mixed up in medical affairs. Some great city practitioners have little closets to indulge this feeling of fanciful patients who do not want to be seen by their fellow sufferers."

Winslow goes on to relate the case of the Comte de Virey, "who carried this mystery so far as to make the slightest indisposition a state secret."

One day the Count called a surgeon to dress a wound in his leg; and when a similar one broke out on the other, he sent for a different surgeon, so that the disordered state of his limbs might not be known. "A circumstance," adds Winslow, "which was the cause of his death."

As an ironic footnote, to a person who inquired for the Count shortly after his death, his secretary said, "He is dead, but he does not wish it to be known."

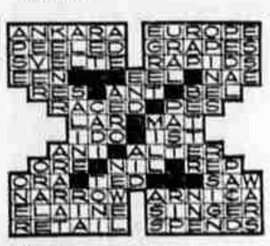
The recalcitrance of patients must be cited as one of the major factors in the mortality tables. Patients who lie about their symptoms, who fail to follow instructions, who pour pills down the drain and toss diets into the fire, who think that merely visiting a doctor or holding a prescription will magically cure them —all these contribute heavily toward the total of medical "failures."

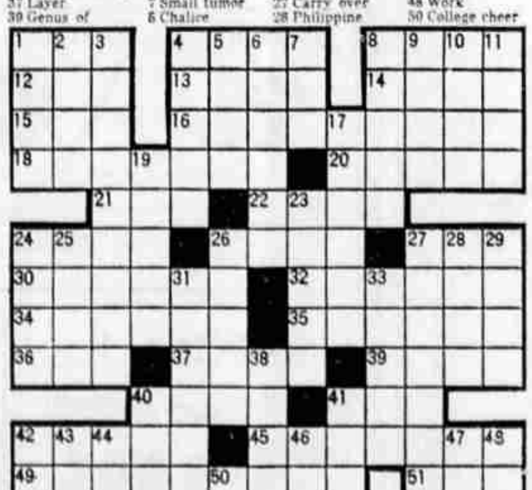
Asked about the reception of one of his comedies on opening night, Oscar Wilde quipped, "The play was a success, but the audience was a failure." Likewise, patients can fail doctors quite as much as the reverse; for all thereapy involves a collaboration of candor.

On the Farm

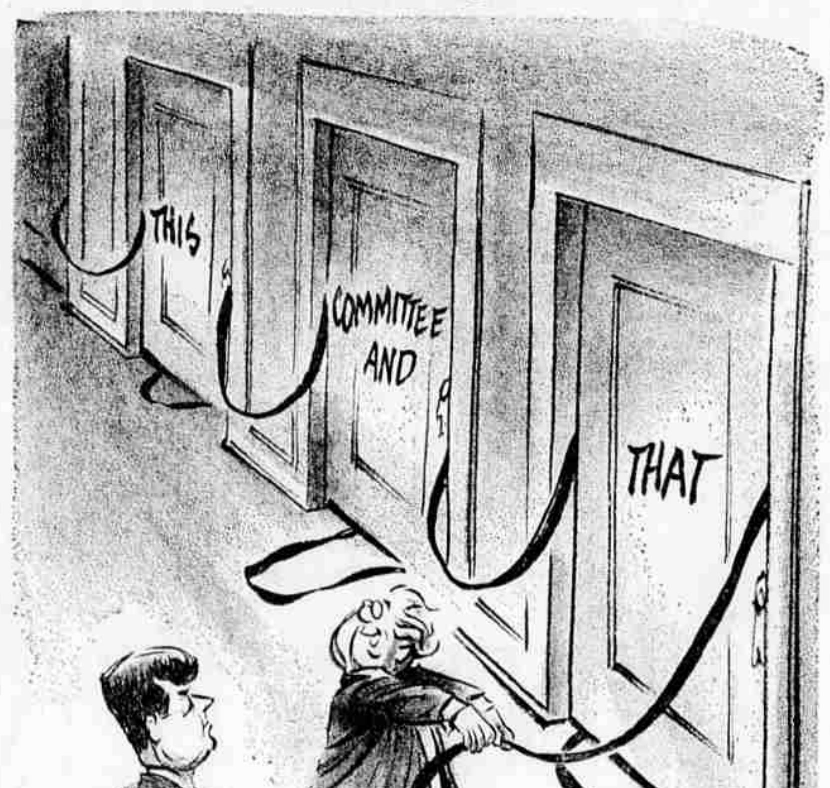
ACROSS
1 Weeding instrument
4 Ground-breaking farm tool
8 Farm crop
12 Sick
13 Uncommon
14 Operatic solo
15 Farm dessert
16 Gelatinous substance
18 Communists
20 Arthurian lady
21 Conjunction
22 Veined gem
24 Poker stake
26 Shred
27 Greek letter
30 Defectively
32 Farm ——
34 Selector
35 Landed property
36 Abstract being
37 Layer
39 Genus of freshwater ducks
40 Asterisk
41 Bitter vetch
42 Retinue
45 Small brook
49 Undervalue
51 Hawaiian pepper
52 European stream
53 Solar disk
54 Poetic contraction
55 Medicinal quantity
56 Farm meats
57 Wapiti

DOWN
1 Body parts
2 Hodgepodge
3 Grain ——
4 Scrutinized
5 Endure
6 Prayer
7 Small tumor
8 Chalice
9 Algerian seaport
10 Rebel
11 Cartoonist
17 Archaeological pictographs
19 Lethargic
23 Finer
24 Section of a church
25 Midday
26 Middle East nation
27 Carry over
28 Philippine aborigine
29 Employs
31 Missive
33 Japanese city
38 Printing mistakes
40 Cubic meter
41 Levels
42 Prosecuted
43 Bring to ruin
44 Roman date
46 Ledger entry
47 Wicked
48 Work
50 College cheer





"Relax, We're Following Through On Your Program!"



Letters To The Editor

Pay Scale

In the February 21, 1963, issue of the Herald and News was an article where the Chamber of Commerce opposed Senate bill No. 1281, which would reduce the number of hours served by firemen from 72 hours to 56 hours per week.

In expressing opposition to the bill Mr. Orth Sisemore referred to a letter from City Manager Bob Kyle, in which it was stated that the city would be required to hire an additional 12 firemen at an annual cost to the city of $54,000 if the bill were passed.

I would like to take exception to the statement supplied to the Chamber of Commerce by City Manager Bob Kyle. I don't know how he figures as the salary for 12 additional firemen, at the low starting salary of $365 per month would only be $55,360 per year, but to bring the fire department up full strength if this Senate Bill No. 1281 passes would only require the hiring of 7 additional firemen (not 12) at $365 per month, at a yearly cost of only $30,660.

As the low starting salary of $365 per month, for the first four years is such a low scale of pay, I doubt very much that the city could hire the seven needed firemen at the low wages, let alone hiring of 12 firemen.

The average work week all over the nation is 40 hours, and for the city manager or Chamber of Commerce to feel that these firemen should continue to work a 72-hour week is out of reason, not to the best interest to our city or property owners.

As a member of the Klamath County Taxpayers League, I have made a six-month study of our city fire department, and the efficient way it is run, and some of these firemen have up to 23 years of service, they are skilled in their work, and have the know-how to fight any fire, and to save lives when persons are trapped in burning buildings. Now how long can these men continue to go on working 72 hours per week at such a low rate of pay without getting disgusted and seeking employment elsewhere? Then if we had a green horn fire department, and they had to answer the call to a major fire, what kind of a job could they do? I shudder to think what would happen when such a fire got out of control because of the lack of experienced fire fighters.

I believe that the city manager and the Chamber of Commerce should feel just as proud as I do of our city fire department and city firemen, and instead of trying to make serfs out of them, should look to their welfare and do everything in their power to improve their pay scale and working hours.

Rollo J. Shaw
1012 Eldorado Ave.

Disagrees

The front page "In the Day's News" column of the Herald and News of Feb. 3 lauded the cattlemen as people that ask for or give no quarter. So that must make them great people.

The article, however, is at fault —or false. I think the cattlemen have a very strong lobby in Washington and spend a lot of money to further their ends. Not only that. These people take up a lot of time of our public servants, such as county extension service employes who are paid by the public at large.

I made a trip around the small water impoundments last year, and found poison scattered all over in spoonsful and not a trace of any birds or small game. Nothing but cattle and poison. All this, no doubt, furnished by county extension services and scattered by the cattle people.

If you doubt my word, look for yourself. I've seen it in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and other Western states. It's all over the grass, and in some places is down to the grass roots.

I am not trying to condemn the cattle people. What I am trying to bring out is that they are not the holy of holies, but just people, and they are just as greedy as the rest of us—the spirit of "I'll get mine and if there's anything left you can have it—but remember, I come first."

Paul R. Oshanic,
P.O. Box 541,
Klamath Falls.