

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
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Washington.—Some weeks ago when the Treasury was parading a lot of names of well known individuals before a joint congressional tax committee, I discussed the purposes of the investigation and reached the conclusion that the whole affair was staged. If I remember correctly, I called it a vaudeville stunt, designed by the Treasury to save its face for having made bad guesses as to tax collections. The tax collections, as everyone knows, were much below New Deal estimates and somebody had to be the goat. So, it was natural to make rich men the goat by calling them tax evaders.

At the same time, I reported to you the fact that there was a difference of opinion among Treasury subordinates. Some of them wanted to make a great show of names of individuals who had resorted to practices not prohibited by law in order to reduce their taxes. I did not know at that time how serious the disagreement was within the Treasury. It has only lately come out into the open. As a result, two important Treasury officials have quit their jobs and have gone back to private life. I refer to Morrison Shafroth and Russell L. Ryan, chief counsel, and assistant chief counsel, respectively, of the bureau of internal revenue. These two men know more about tax evaders and tax avoiders than anybody else in the Treasury but they had one grievous fault. They wanted to be honest about the whole situation. That was a fault because being honest did not make possible a flamboyant display of hatred for taxpayers who had employed legitimate means to pay as little tax as the law permitted.

As far as I can ascertain, Messrs. Shafroth and Ryan wanted to cooperate fully with the higherups in the Treasury in so far as a tax investigation by a joint congressional committee would point the way for improvement of the law. They knew, as many others know, that the internal revenue laws have holes in them. The smart lawyers and smart taxpayers naturally have taken advantage of these holes in the law because they are human despite the fact they are rich. So, the chief counsel and his assistant proposed to Secretary Morgenthau and Treasury General Counsel Herman Oliphant that the investigation be made along lines of a scientific character, that close study be given to some of the methods that had been employed to avoid taxes. In other words, Shafroth and Ryan were anxious to develop legislation on the basis of the experiences which they had had and loopholes they had found to be in common use. But their fault was honesty, as government officials would not be denied the vaudeville performance and the columns upon columns of publicity which Mr. Morgenthau and Mr. Oliphant, not to mention President Roosevelt, desired to see.

I stayed through all of the hearings before the joint congressional committee. They ran for fourteen days. Each day the Treasury trotted out another official as the witness before the committee and he was armed with a prepared statement which he read for some two hours to a committee that sat back in easy chairs and smoked cigars in comfort—while newspaper men avidly wrote stories about rich men, some good and some bad, who had committed the heinous sin of paying as little tax as the law permitted.

The resignations of Shafroth and Ryan rather convince me that the Treasury stooped to about the lowest level it has reached in recent years. Of course, it was not the first time in our history that income tax has been used for political intimidation. Reprisal is a strong word to use about government officials but I cannot escape the feeling that the Treasury used that investigation as a method of reprisal against many men who had opposed the New Deal.

I reach that conclusion on the basis of a review of the names which Messrs. Shafroth and Ryan refused to parade before the committee but which the Treasury itself used as the principal actors. Not more than three of the eighty-odd names presented to the committee had contributed to the Democratic national campaign fund a year ago. The tactics were not far from those employed by the late Huey Long in enforcing his will upon the people of Louisiana.

I can add to this a statement of the fact that Under-Secretary Magill, who had charge of presenting the so-called evidence before the committee at the capitol, believed the Treasury was not following an entirely wise course in the methods it employed. But Mr. Magill went along with the scheme and there were many of the correspondents

covering that hearing who felt he tried to do the job fairly. So now Morrison Shafroth and Russell Ryan are back in private life and in their places are men picked by Mr. Oliphant, men who are likely to obey orders regardless of the whims of Mr. Oliphant and Secretary Morgenthau.

Another instance of official action that seems to indicate a bad trend in government lately has occurred. This incident was propagated by the federal power commission, one of the numerous federal agencies that is supposed to be largely judicial in character but which is equipped at the same time with administrative powers. The facts are these:

There was a group of men who served as directors of the Associated Gas and Electric company. These same individuals were directors for numerous corporations that are subsidiaries of that same company. The federal power act provides that the commission may require directors of one power company to divest themselves of connection with any other power companies—one of the strongest features of the law. The commission is empowered to make its own investigation of these interlocked directorates and then on its own motion may require such directors to appear and give the commission satisfactory reasons why they are holding places on the boards of more than one corporation. This also is a sound provision of law and undoubtedly works to the benefit of all consumers of light and power.

Before I proceed further, let it be definitely understood that I have not a great deal of respect for the Associated Gas and Electric company. Its record does not warrant my respect as an observer. Undoubtedly, however, its management complies with the terms of its corporate charter but as a great public utility it has obligations to the public beyond the terms of its charter and it is my opinion that the moral obligations are such that this age demands full observation of them.

This brings us to the crux of the power commission action. Late in September Vice Chairman Seavey of the commission had ordered the group of directors referred to above to show cause why they should not be compelled to relinquish various positions on other boards of directors. A hearing date was set. A few days before the hearing date, the directors in question resigned the positions to which the commission objected and then their attorney issued a statement which said, in effect, that they had resigned because they were convicted in the minds of the commission before the commissioners had heard the case. He used rather strong language, perhaps too strong in expressing his views.

Upon publication of the attorney's statement, Vice Chairman Seavey promptly ordered him to appear before the commission to give his reasons for the statement and to defend himself against disbarment from practice as a lawyer before the commission.

Now, lest I be misunderstood, I do not know the attorney, Mr. Paxson; I know nothing about the merits of the case in question. But it is significant that an agency of the government suddenly decides that it can prevent a man from earning his living because he criticized members of that agency.

Occasionally, situations develop in national politics that provide a real laugh. One of them is not at hand. It results from the nasty controversy that swirls around the head of Hugo Black of Alabama, newly appointed associate justice of the Supreme court, who is charged with being a member of the Ku Klux Klan.

Terrible as is the charge and worse if it eventuates that Mr. Justice Black still is subject to the oath of the invisible empire, there is humor in the way a lot of senators and other government officials are running to cover. It has been almost a scramble among Democratic senators to let the public know by issuing statements that they would not have voted for Senator Black's confirmation as a member of the court if they had known he was a klanman. It makes one laugh again when one recalls how carefully the majority of the Democrats in the senate refused to hear evidence or hold any sort of a hearing concerning Mr. Black's qualifications. They did this by voting down a motion for hearings.

It is not pleasant to contemplate how the senate so many times passes on judicial appointments with the carefree abandon of a boy on his way home from school.

LOWER BIG BEND MISS FLORENCE RUSSELL

Mr. and Mrs. Joe King left at six o'clock Monday morning for the mountains above Unity to hunt deer. They will stay week. Mr. Ketchem is taking care of things while they are away.

Mr. White was taken to the Ontario hospital last week following a stroke.

Miss Rose Christiansen was visiting old friends in the neighborhood Sunday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Stradley returned Wednesday from a visit with their son Elmer and family in Arcadia.

Mr. and Mrs. Rawleigh Hardman and infant daughter of Ontario visited with their aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Joe King one evening last week.

Mrs. Edward Abbl and Mrs. Roe Miller were Ontario visitors Thursday morning.

The Jolly Janes met with Mrs. Luit Stam Thursday. A very pleasant afternoon was spent sewing.

Myrtle, Helen and Fern Hatch were hostesses.

Mrs. Harvey Russell and daughters spent Saturday in Nyssa with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Services.

Junior Lowe of Nyssa spent the week end with his aunt and uncle Mr. and Mrs. Harry Russell.

Mrs. M. M. Greeling and Mrs. Roy P. Perry were business callers Tuesday morning in Big Bend.

A large number of Big Bend high school students took the bus to Nyssa for the Freshman reception last Friday night.

A new house is now going up on the J. W. Scott place where the old one burned down.

Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Young and boys and Mrs. Clara Young of Ontario spent Sunday with Emma Young.

Misses Mae Belle, Dorothy and Carl Pond are on the sick list this week.

Mr. George McCart is having a sale Friday.

Mr. and Mrs. Teter and Dale were visitors at the Russell home Tuesday.

KINGMAN KOLONY By MRS. C. E. ELLIOTT

Mr. and Mrs. Page of Council, Idaho, have been visiting at the Allen Curtis home. Mrs. Page is a sister of Mrs. Curtis.

The booster program which was given by the grange was well attended Thursday evening. One of the high lights of the program was a talk by Mr. Larson, county agent, on the work that the various granges are doing in connection with farming. He also spoke on several phases of present day farming. Ice cream and cake were served at the close of the meeting.

The Tom Goodiers were surprised this week by a visit from their friends who live in Calamus, Nebraska. They were Mr. and Mrs. Clay Pittkin, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Lynes, Mrs. Joe McClure and Mr. Smith. Mrs. Pittkin is a sister of Mrs. Price who lives in Kingman and they visited there also.

Kingman Sunday School has grown until it has become necessary for the teachers to divide several of their classes until there are now seven all together.

A joint birthday dinner was given in the Winters home Sunday, honoring Mr. John Govey and Margaret Winters.

The 4-H club leaders and several others are planning to give a home talent play about the middle of November.

The Girl Scouts are giving a play also. Theirs, however, will be ready about the middle of October.

Wade, Owyhee and Kingman will hold a joint 4-H Achievement Day program, Friday evening, November 5th with everyone invited to attend.

The Junior Sunday School class held a party and wicker roast at the sand hill Saturday. Mrs. Lane had charge of the party.

A 4-H Health club was organized in the 5th and 6th grades by Miss Bratton this week. Officers are President, Dudley Kurta; vice pres-

dent, La Vern Glascock; secretary and Treasurer, Virginia Mae Jarvis. Twenty-nine members enrolled.

Among those who attended the State Officers meeting of the grange were Mrs. Conrad Martin; Mrs. Lee Thrasher, Mr. and Mrs. Perry and Mr. and Mrs. M. M. Greeling.

The Robert Overstreet, Jr., family of Boise spent Sunday in the Robert Overstreet home here.

Mrs. C. C. Cotton and Mrs. M. M. Greeling attended the Health club meeting of Malheur county Thursday. They also enjoyed the 12 o'clock luncheon given at the Moore Hotel in Ontario.

BIG BEND NEWS By MRS. E. H. BRUMBACH

Mrs. C. E. Elliott of Kingman, President of the Club Leaders Council of this county visited Bend schools during the week. She announced that 4-H Achievement Day would be celebrated November 5 at Kingman Kolony.

Mrs. Bob Welsh attended 4-H leaders council in Ontario last Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Cartwright were Caldwell visitors last Tuesday. Mr. Wright returned home with them for a visit.

Mr. Wade, State scale inspector spent Wednesday in this vicinity on business connected with his office.

Vernon Parker has been under a doctors care the past week for an infection on his neck and was unable to attend his work at Eder Store in Adrian.

R. G. Larson, County Agent of Ontario was a business visitor in the Bend Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Basil Poe and daughter left Monday for their old home in Missouri having spent the past year working in this vicinity.

Mr. and Mrs. B. G. Roberts entertained their nephew, Mr. Place and family of Wyoming during the past week. They were on their way to California to visit other relatives.

Mrs. Clyde Riggs of Parma spent Friday visiting her mother Mrs. B. G. Roberts.

Mrs. Luit Stam entertained the Jolly Janes at her home Thursday afternoon.

The two Bend school nines had a double header Thursday afternoon in which the lower Bend school proved winner. In the girls and boys mixed team the score was Bend 2, Wade 0. In the boys game Bend 8, Wade 6.

Miss Wilma Caldwell spent the week end with friends in Boise and Caldwell.

Mr. and Mrs. John French of Roswell, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne French of Boise and S. G. Tuning of Roswell were callers in the Lester French home Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Brumbach and Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Welsh were guests of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Case of Arena Valley Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Baldrige and children of Emmett were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Baldrige.

Mrs. M. M. Greeling of Kingman spent Tuesday in the Bend in the interest of Christmas seals.

The Edson Stansell ranch which was rented by C. E. Pond has been sold to a Mr. Baldwin of Nebraska.

Mr. and Mrs. Grant Rinehart and Miss Lucille Rinehart of Nyssa and Mr. and Mrs. Vern Shoemaker of La Grande were week end guests in the R. L. Haworth home.

Mrs. R. H. Hatch and Mrs. B. G. Roberts attended the grange school of instruction at Boulevard Hall on Monday, at which time State Master Ray Gill and other state, district and county officers were present.

Mr. and Mrs. Will Van de Water of Wilder were guests in the Haworth home Sunday.

The friends of Mrs. M. Maxwell of Orchard Tract were grieved to hear that a fall caused her to break her shoulder blade. She is under the care of Dr. Cole of Caldwell.

Wade P.T.A. held a very interesting meeting at the home of Mrs. R. L. Haworth Friday afternoon. Twenty three members have signed up so far, among them several new ladies who have moved into the Bend during the past year.

A pie social and Halloween party is planned for Friday evening, October 29 to which all are invited.

The County Council meets at Ontario October 23.

Mrs. F. A. Miller will be hostess for the November meeting. A dainty lunch was served by Mrs. Haworth and her mother Mrs. M. E. Rogers.

SUNSET VALLEY MRS. L. E. NEWGEN

L. B. Landreth got a \$5 prize at the Nyssa Sale Yard Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. John Case made a business trip to Nampa Saturday.

Ed. Mortison spent Sunday at the Newgen home after an early morning pheasant hunt with Bill Bollho. Shorty Black has a new well finished Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Cox and family of Talogo, Okla., are visiting Mr. and Mrs. Morty Wixen. They expect to locate here. Mr. Cox is Mrs. Wixen's brother.

Ed Mortison went with Will and Don McGinnis, Don Linville, Ted Newton and Cecil Smith to Steen's Mountain deer hunting. They

brought back four deer.

Mrs. Bill Bolitho called on Mrs. Leslie Ditty Thursday afternoon.

Joe Glenn and Melvin Given had supper Sunday evening with Jake Kollen.

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Ditty made a business trip to Walla Walla, Wash., last week. The trip was too much for Mr. Ditty and he has been confined to his home since their return. He is reported some better at this writing.

Mr. and Mrs. Grover Cooper of Oregon Trail spent Sunday with the L. B. Landreth family.

Mr. and Mrs. Terra called Sunday afternoon at the Newgen home.

Ellis Givens spent Saturday night with Bob Newgen and visited Sunday with his many friends of this community. He is being adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Cooper of Oregon Trail and says he is very well pleased with his new home.

L. E. Newgen attended business in Ontario Monday.

District Attorney Biggs of Ontario met with Mr. Newgen, administrator, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Roberts and Mr. Kollen, appraisers, at the Givens ranch Wednesday to arrange a sale for the personal property there. The date of sale will be announced later.

Mr. and Mrs. Morton Urick and family of Ontario visited Sunday afternoon at the Newgen home.

On Monday Mr. Ransome started cutting clover for Mr. Terra.

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Schweizer and Mrs. C. A. Abbott of Nyssa went to Boise on Saturday.

The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Kollen who has been under the care of Dr. Belknap of Ontario is improving rapidly.

On Monday evening such strange noises came out of the Roy Rookstool barn that Mrs. Rookstool fearing that her husband had met with an accident and was in agony, dropped everything and rushed out to do what she could to relieve him. She found Roy practicing a new yodel.

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