

# Press-Herald

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## The Right to Know

Assembly committee hearings on the subject of public records last week should be of more than passing interest to all of us who believe the public has a right to know what public officers are doing.

The hearings are being held as the Assembly Interim Committee on Government Organization studies a bill introduced last year by Assemblyman William Bagley, a San Rafael Republican, and Milton Marks, a San Francisco Republican.

The Bagley-Marks Bill would eliminate the unwieldy texts presently used to determine public records. Its place would be a specific definition of a public record and a shifting of the burden of proving the need for withholding a public document to the authority seeking the exemption.

A public record in the proposed bill now under study would be any government document except those (1) related solely to internal personnel rules and practices of an agency; (2) interagency or intra-agency memoranda or letters dealing solely with matters of law or policy; (3) personnel and medical files and similar matters, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy; (4) investigatory files compiled for law enforcement purposes until such investigation is concluded and final disposition is made; (5) records specifically exempted from disclosure by statute.

While newspaper representatives appeared to speak for the bill, it is significant, we believe, that representatives of the League of California Cities and the city attorney from Inglewood and from Oceanside expressed general disapproval of the proposal.

It would be inferred that those who are charged with the responsibility of conducting public business might be happier operating behind closed doors. We are convinced this isn't true in most cases, but such laws as the Bagley-Marks proposal are needed for the rest.

The public's right to know what is going on in public offices is as precious as any we possess. This bill—or at least its principles—should be a part of the safeguards offered to the public.

## Welfare: a Way of Life

Public welfare should not be encouraged as a way of life.

Operation of public welfare—California style, at least—appears to many of us to do just that: make it easier to be idle and eating than to work.

Some idea of the magnitude of the problem faced by Californians is shown in figures used recently by Supervisor Kenneth Hahn when he called for a major shake-up of the Los Angeles County Department of Charities.

This department administers a budget of more than \$500 million a year, most of it for public assistance, Hahn reported. It has nearly 20,000 employees and its operations are larger than 30 of our state governments. All of this in a time hailed by our leaders as the most prosperous and booming years this nation or the world has known.

In addition to direct public assistance, the Department of Charities budget finances the county hospital system, nursing school, psychiatric facilities, the Bureau of Adoptions, the Bureau of Public Assistance, and the Bureau of Resources and Collections.

Having an increasing impact on the functions of these offices will be the county's part of the "Great Society" programs—Medicare, food stamps, and the poverty programs.

We think it should be obvious that something must be done to streamline California's welfare programs. Those in need must be helped, but the man who is working should be assured that he is not being forced to support his neighbor just because the state and the county make it painless.

Several questions have been raised by prominent Californians about the whole welfare program. We're convinced it is time someone followed through.

## OTHERS SAY:

Now that Medicare has been added to the burden of the taxpayers, a letter writer to the Salem Capital Journal has seriously come up with the suggestion that "Casketcare" be the next federal project. Wonder what ever happened to the ridiculous American notion that citizens who are not mentally or physically handicapped should have self-sufficiency as their goal?—Corvallis (Ore.) Gazette-Times.

We are attempting to analyze the antipoverty war. Sometimes with caution, most of the time with curiosity, and often with a bit of suspicion, the disclosure that congressmen have been passing out government jobs to their relatives under the antipoverty program and elsewhere smells of hanky panky. Seems there's a lot of politics in this thing. Also the taxpayers are digging up to furnish money to thousands of families who don't need it.—Storm Lake (Iowa) Pilot-Tribune.

Once upon a time, the sports seasons were clearly defined. There were certain accepted standards that the baseball season would last from April through September. Football would take the spotlight from that time until the holiday season, and then basketball would take over for the next few months. No so, anymore. . . . It appears that as long as Gus Fan is willing to pay the admission price and the sports magnates can rake in their television and radio receipts, there are no more clearly defined sports seasons, and more is the pity.—Bristol (Conn.) Press.



## August Is Worst Month For Touring in Europe

MEXICO CITY — They're already preparing for the 1968 Olympics here, and it's a question whether the hotels will hold everybody. (You could try making reservations now. But I wouldn't bet on anybody remembering it when you arrive.) I'd be inclined to rent a house in Cuernavaca and commute — one hour by fast freeway. Houses are in the luxury class—swimming pool and servants — but sometimes can be had at reasonable rents.

"We thought of spending sometime in the Italian lake district. Do you know about Lake Como and accommodations?"

I've only driven around Como. I think Lake Lugano is prettier, a blue bowl of water in a setting of green hills. Lugano is a pretty little town. Many hotels in the British-European Grand Hotel manner. I liked the Bristol up on the hill though it's not the fanciest — or most expensive.

Several good restaurants in town with an Italian flavor. A little bit of Italy is encased in Switzerland on the lake and you can gamble there. A fast train runs down to Milan every morning (one hour) and returns in the evening for shopping trips. Avoid August. Seems all Swiss watchmakers take their vacations in that month.

"What would be the best place to go in Europe (after England) in August if you had only one week?"

August is the WORST month. In Paris, many restaurants close. The weather is hot and the French all go to the sea shore — so they're crowded. Rome is hot and jammed with tourists. Madrid is so hot even the Government offices close.

Lisbon and the Portuguese beach towns are cool and not too crowded. Best place I've run into is the Atlantic coast of Spain. Few tourists. Good prices. Weather about 70 degrees. Good beaches. Pontevedra is a fine, old medieval town with narrow streets and arms carved in stone

Men may make passes at girls who wear glasses, but it usually depends on their frames — Emilie Baker, San Francisco housewife.

When you live with your fellow man in strange lands you discover a common bond. — John B. Thune, General Secretary, Oakland YMCA.

Man and his fate must always be the center of scientific endeavor. — Dr. Elizabeth Roboz Einstein, UC Medical Center, San Francisco.

Experts are always talking about the "fog of war" — everything so mixed up you can't tell what's going on. On top of that in Viet Nam we now have the "fog of peace" — well, at least the fog of peace negotiations.

Through the mist comes a clear bolt from Red China calling for more wars and bigger ones "to tighten the rope around the neck of the United States." Sort of reminds one of Hitler's boast he would wring England's neck like a chicken and Churchill's later response when the tide had turned, "Some chicken, some neck."

All in all, it shows why it's so easy to study history. It keeps on repeating itself.

Which brings us to Len Deighton's "The Billion-Dollar Brain." There are some absurdities here, like the

over the doorways. The Government-owned parador has very good rooms. Several interesting fishing villages and the city of Vigo are in driving distance. There's one de luxe hotel (at very reasonable prices) just north on the beach at Isla de La Toja.

"What are the additional charges if we bring back from Europe more than the one quart of liquor we are allowed?"

I'd try one of the Thames-side pubs. A very elegant one is "The King's Head and Eight Bells." (The title alone is worth it.)

"Can we go from London to Deauville by boat? By air? By train?"

Don't know about boat or train. But Air France flies across daily in the summer. (Or did last year. Better ask them.)

"Isn't there an artists' colony near there?"

Never heard of a colony. But a lot of artists go to Honfleur, a colorful old stone fishing village about an hour's drive from Deauville. The Hotel Cheval Blanc there is falling apart. Try the Chat Noir.

"Will Mexico be too hot in July?"

Well, I think it's pretty hot along the coast. Though I don't mind it because you can swim. Mexico City at 7400 feet is warm in the

Quote

A by-product of the continuing cold war is the boom in spy literature, both here and abroad. The Fleming-Bond absurdities, of course, have become history in their degree of popularity and sales records. The appeal of entertainments by John LeCarre and Len Deighton, among others, have become almost remarkable.

The key element here, it seems to me, is "escape" — escape from the realities of international politics, military action, perhaps the real actions of the real CIA, or the INU, which is said to control most all Soviet espionage overseas and of which most of us know nothing.

The spy literature gives us the illusion of knowing what is going on in this curious clandestine trade. The top practitioners in the field write about it coolly, knowledgeably and with sophistication. Their books frequently speak great truths; they are part of the literature of our time, and often are better novels, in the clean, professional sense, than the mountains of gloomy, heavy-handed and overrated fiction that seem to win all the prizes.

Abel Mellinkoff

Morning Report:

Abel Mellinkoff

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