

# Press-Herald

GLENN W. PFEIL . . . . . Publisher  
REID L. BUNDY . . . . . Managing Editor  
Sunday, February 20, 1966

## The Appalling Erosions Of Moral Standards

(The following editorial is reprinted from the San Francisco Examiner. The guidelines set down by the Examiner for its own use express eloquently those which guide us at the Press-Herald)

- What has happened to our national morals?
- An educator speaks out in favor of free love.
- A man of God condones sexual excursions by unmarried adults.
- Movies sell sex as a commercial commodity.
- Book stores and cigar stands peddle pornography.
- A high court labels yesterday's smut as today's literature.
- Record shops feature albums displaying nudes and near nudes.
- Night clubs stage shows that would have shocked a smoker audience a generation ago.
- TV shows and TV commercials pour out a flood of sick, sadistic and suggestive sex situations.
- A campaign is launched to bring acceptance to homosexuality.
- Radio broadcasts present discussions for and against promiscuity.
- Magazines and newspapers publish pictures and articles that flagrantly violate the bounds of good taste.
- Four letter words once heard only in barroom brawls now appear in publications of general distribution.
- Birth control counsel is urged for high school girls.

Look around you. These things are happening in your America. In the two decades since the end of World War II we have seen our national standards of morality lowered again and again.

We have seen a steady erosion of past principles of decency and good taste.

And—we have harvested a whirlwind. As our standards have lowered, our crime levels and social problems have increased.

Today, we have a higher percentage of our youth in jail . . . in reformatories . . . on probation and in trouble than ever before.

Study the statistics on illegitimate births . . . on broken marriages . . . on juvenile crimes . . . on school drop-outs . . . on sex deviation . . . on dope addiction . . . on high school marriages . . . on crimes of passion.

The figures are higher than ever. And going higher.

Parents, police authorities, educators and thoughtful citizens in all walks of life are deeply disturbed. They should be. For they are responsible. We of the older generation are responsible.

Our youngsters are no better and no worse than we were at the same age. Generally, they are wiser. But — they have more temptations than we had. They have more cars. They have more money. They have more opportunities for getting into trouble.

We opened doors for them that were denied to us. We encouraged permissiveness. We indulged them. We granted maximum freedoms. And we asked for a minimum in respect . . . and in responsibility.

Rules and regulations that prevailed for generations as sane and sensible guides for personal conduct were reduced or removed. Or ignored.

Prayer was banned from the schoolroom and the traditional school books that taught moral precepts as well as reading were replaced with the inane banalities of "Dick and Jane."

Basically, there are just two main streams of religious thought in these United States. Those who believe in a Supreme Being. And those who do not.

The first group far outnumber the second. But — this nation that was founded on the democratic concept of "majority rule" now denies the positive rights of many to protect the negative rights of few.

As prayer went out of the classroom so, too, did patriotism.

No longer are our children encouraged to take pride in our nation's great and glorious past.

Heroes are down-graded. The role played by the United States in raising the hearts and hopes of all enslaved peoples for a century and a half is minimized.

We believe this is wrong. We are convinced that a majority of our citizens would welcome an increase in patriotism and prayer and a decrease in the peddling of sex, sensationalism, materialism and sordidness.

In the months ahead we will intensify our efforts to fight back against the appalling vulgarization of sex.

We do not propose prudery. Neither do we propose wild-eyed, fanatical patriotism.

In both areas, we propose to address ourselves to the problems as we see them with calm reason and respect for the rights of those with views contrary to ours.

As a newspaper we have an obligation to reflect life as it is, not as it ideally might be. We will, therefore, continue to print all the news. That which is sordid and tawdry we will treat in a manner suitable for a family publication.

Over the years we have refused to accept advertising which we felt exceeded the bounds of good taste. We will pursue this course with greater dedication in the future.

Our test will be our own standards of good taste. We do not claim infallibility. Readers have felt we erred in the past. Others will undoubtedly feel we do so in the future. Such errors of excess—if they occur—will be in spite of our efforts. Not because of them.

If the general public is as deeply disturbed as we are by the decline in national morals and in national pride, let it speak out.

Together we can put down the sex peddlers without lifting the bluenoses. And, with God's help, we can put prayer and patriotism back in our classrooms. And in our hearts and homes, as well.



### SACRAMENTO REPORT

## Solon Explains Reasons For Stiffer Arson Laws

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL  
Assemblyman, 46th District  
My Assembly Bill No. 13, introduced Feb. 10, during the current First Extraordinary Session, makes the offenses of assault, battery, and assault with a deadly weapon on a fireman punishable in the same manner as when committed on a peace officer. The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Criminal Procedure.

My Assembly Bill No. 14 makes the ownership, possession, manufacture and transportation of a fire bomb ("Molotov cocktail") a felony rather than a misdemeanor. This and my A.B. No. 13 are both amendments to existing sections of the Penal Code of California.

My Assembly Bill No. 15 is entirely new. It provides that the ownership, possession, or transportation of incendiary materials or devices with intent to eventually commit arson is a felony.

My Assembly Bill No. 16 also is entirely new. It makes the willful and malicious interference with or shutting off of water being supplied to fight a fire punishable by imprisonment for not less than five years.

My Assembly Bill No. 17 is another entirely new concept in the war against criminals. It makes the willful and malicious breaking, obstructing, or cutting of firehose used or to be used on a fire punishable by imprisonment for not less than five years.

My Assembly Bill No. 18 is another new approach to the arson problem. It increases the minimum penalty for arson from two to five years imprisonment and deletes the previous maximum of 20 years imprisonment. The reason for cutting down the maximum term of imprisonment from 20 years to five years is that it has been very difficult to get juries to vote a conviction when it meant that the judge could sentence the criminal to 20 years in prison at hard labor. A minimum penalty of five years is a mandatory penalty and will tend to reduce the number of arson jobs in California.

The oldest of all reasons for putting people in jails and prisons is to punish them. Part of the theory behind this is that it will scare other people into being good citizens. The punishment or vengeance theory is at least four thousand years old.

Another reason is to reform criminals. For example many state prisons in the United States are officially designated as reformatories. Very few people have ever been reformed or rehabilitated by long jail or prison sentences. They usually learn new crimes, sink to the level of the lowest dregs of the prison population and come out worse than they were when they first went behind bars.

A third reason is to keep criminals out of circulation so that they can not continue to commit crimes. Although I do not pretend to be an expert in this field, it is my personal opinion that this is the best of all reasons. Putting criminals away gives the law-enforcement officers an opportunity to catch their breath before they have to go out and catch some more malefactors.

Several weeks ago, in a previous column, I touched briefly on the background for the above bills. Several years ago the University of California at Berkeley announced that its Extension Division would conduct a seminar on arson. I tried to enroll as a student but was informed that I was not qualified to be a student but was qualified to be part of the temporary faculty.

This suited me because instead of spending money I received money. I lectured on the identification of burned bodies by various methods including fingerprint identification.

This gave me an opportunity to hear and visit with some of the outstanding authorities in the United States on the subject of arson and other crimes related to fires. At that time I realized that California needed new laws on these subjects but learned that the people were not yet ready for them.

The armed insurrection in the Watts section of the City of Los Angeles awakened people all over California to the importance of fire prevention, the danger of fires and explosions from the so-called Molotov cocktails, and the problems of firemen trying to extinguish or control fires when mobs prevented them from doing their duty.

There is a clear and present need for the enactment of the above bills into law this year. You can obtain free copies of these bills by writing to the Legislative Bill Room, Room 215, State Capitol, Sacramento 14, Calif. Send a stamped envelope to the Legislative Bill Room if you want fairly fast service.

Any time a dinner party starts falling apart on the subject of Viet Nam, all the hostess has to do is switch the conversation to traffic safety. Everybody is in favor of that — even the Communists.

Politicians especially like that subject. Nobody can vote against a man who is firmly against broken legs and whiplash. The current mood is to blame automobiles for traffic injuries. New York is working on a new design for cars. It's figured that for \$4 million, we can build a safer model, complete with periscope.

I don't know much about cars. They all look safe to me. But I know a little about drivers. And I figure if all the other nuts and drunks would walk, I could make it down the freeway without any trouble.

Abe Mellinkoff

### HERB CAEN SAYS:

## He's Now Feeling Better --In a Sick Sort of Way

CAENFESSION: When ever one of my peerless predictions turns sour, I get sick to my stomach, which is why I go around looking half-sick most of the time. But as the drama begins to verge on trauma, I reach into my files for the antidote — the following set of quotations:

"Diem is a true patriot, dedicated to political and religious freedom" (Dulles, '55). "With a little more training, the South Vietnamese Army will be the equal of any" (Secty of the Army Brucker, '55). "The militant march of Communism in Viet Nam has been halted" (Nixon, '56). "The situation in Viet Nam is improving" (Acheson, '62). "Government forces clearly have the initiative" (Rusk, '63). "The corner has definitely been turned toward victory" (Arthur Sylvester, '63). "We shall achieve victory in 1964" (Tran Van Dong, '63). "The end of the war is in sight" (Gen. Harkins, '63). After the foregoing, even a lousy columnist can feel better, in a sick sort of way.

SAY, THAT WASN'T A bad gambit of Ronald Reagan's, suggesting that the John Birch Society be investigated by a committee on un-American activities. There's nothing about the Birchers that any committee would find un-American. A board of psychiatrists might be more to the point . . .

ROYCE BRIER

## Renewed North Viet Nam Bombing Called Mistake

We must carefully discriminate between the President's decision to resume bombing in North Viet Nam, and his continuing decision to carry on the war. The bombing decision is immediate, and but one of many phases of the long-range purpose in southeast Asia.

Presidents are entitled to mistakes in judgment, and Washington, Lincoln and F. D. Roosevelt made them. But at the time a major decision is made, there is no consensus, to use the fashionable term, as to whether it is wise or unwise. Contemporaneously, one can only judge a presidential decision by the present appearance of the elements involved in it.

With this reservation, one can only have an opinion that Mr. Johnson's decision to resume bombing was a mistake on two principal grounds. One is psychological

opinion that renewed bombing is a mistake, is that it is only a repetition of what, in the plain reality manifest in the past, was a mistaken judgment.

High-level strikes were initiated last year in the belief that they would so cripple the antagonist that he would lose heart and enter peace negotiations. Secretary McNamara repeatedly testified to this belief, and submitted it as a factor in the fair promise of victory and settlement.

But neither in individual or in international relations is "Look what you made me do!" invariably a sound reason for punitive action. It may be in the case of a Pearl Harbor. It may be only a justification crutch in some international relations.

Yet possibly an even more direct element in an

World Affairs

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never believe parents who say about their children's TV habits: "We only let them watch the GOOD programs"; there aren't any GOOD programs . . . The classical musical scene, summed up: The critics are tired of the old symphonies, the audience is tired of the new ones . . . I used to say, "How did we ever get along without ballpoint pens?"

San Francisco

and then along came Pen- tels, and how did we ever get along without THEM? . . . When I hear somebody sounding off self-righteously about the off-beat habits of certain types, I remember Mrs. Patrick Campbell's wise words: "I don't care what people do as long as they don't do it in the streets and frighten the horses."

WHEW: Actually, we applaud Mobil's "We Want You to Live" safety ads, but I'm not too sure about that one labeled "Highway Hypnosis and How to Snap Out of It": "Keep a window open" . . . "Get out even if it's raining and walk around the car a few times" . . . "Play music you don't like on your radio" . . . "Worry about something; an ulcer is better than an accident" . . . "Buy some noisy food, like potato chips or pretzels. Munch" . . . "Imagine what you'd do if the car in front

of you stopped short" . . . "Blow your horn at something real or imagined." Look, do you suppose they would settle for a tiny little accident?

NOTES FROM ANYWHERE: Franklin Murphy, distinguished chancellor of UCLA, was leaving through his Feb. issue of Playboy and paused appreciatively at the foldout — the February Playmate, Melinda Windsor (38-26-38), described as "a psychology major at UCLA." Thus titillated, he researched the subject, and discovered that Miss Windsor is not and never was a student at UCLA. However, he doesn't plan to request a correction. "It's good publicity — I guess," he guesses, being a psychology major himself . . . Slice of wry: Frank Sinatra whose albums sell big, has never had a single record made that made it as a best-seller — and looky here: Daughter Nancy's "These Boots Are Made For Walking" is now No. 4 and rising . . . Not so fast, not so fast! Mme. Sally Stanford's boudoir memoirs, "Lady of the House," won't be in the bookstores till around March 1, and already there's a suit waiting in the wings. Her nasty cracks about the late Humphrey Bogart ("a foul-mouthed pugnaucious drunk," etc.) have aroused the ire of Bogie's nephew, Walter, who is even now in consultation with barristers.

When asked my tax res- sioner's assis- tant to the on- local go- man gres- sionabil- problem- erty tax- portance- form an- orien- group th- of the p- The r- tax stud- work- in ad- reforms- mended-

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Automated date maker — as the girls go by, select your number, press the pedal and zap!