

Press-Herald

GLENN W. PFEIL Publisher

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Sunday, February 27, 1966

GUEST EDITORIAL

The Traffic Game

By WALTER R. KOENIG, Chief of Police

All too often the first thing a police officer hears from a traffic violator is "that isn't fair" or "that isn't sporting." The violator often doesn't deny that he committed the violation but complains about the means used to catch him. Citizens complain about the use of radar, police motorcycles and unmarked cars to enforce traffic laws.

It's usually the habitual violator who wants to make a game out of traffic enforcement. He is the good guy and the traffic officers are the bad guys. The violator has his own set of rules on how the game is played. The citizens who fall into this group are a minority, but a noisy minority. They argue that all policemen should be in plainly marked black and white police cars and out in the open. This will give them a "sporting chance" to see the police before they commit the violation. They argue that the sight of a police car is enough of a deterrent.

No one can deny that the sight of a patrolling police car is a deterrent to the potential violator. It is a deterrent because people know they will be cited if caught. Only by strict enforcement can the sight value be maintained.

The most effective tool available to law enforcement is the traffic citation. It is a proven fact that as the citation rate increases, the accident rate decreases. Experience has shown that generally a warning policy does not work. Many traffic violators do not intentionally break the law. Saying "I didn't intend to hurt anyone" doesn't bring back a lost life. For these people a citation may have saved a lot of heartache by bringing to their attention that their driving habits are slipping. It's easy to fall into a haphazard driving pattern and after the accident happens is too late to correct it.

We cannot and will not play games with traffic violators. Human lives are not a subject for game playing. Our highways are becoming a slaughter house for Americans. Traffic deaths in this state alone cost the lives of thousands each year. Many more thousands suffer disabling injuries. Not only the lives of the victims are affected, but those of families and loved ones.

Recently the President of the United States made public an announcement that he was deeply concerned over the rising death rate on our nation's highways. In essence he said that if local jurisdictions fail in their responsibilities the federal government will step in.

Traffic control is a local problem that should be handled at a local level. California has led the way in traffic safety for some time. Southern California in particular has a traffic problem that is unequaled in the world. It necessarily follows that we must have a traffic safety program that is equal to the problem. What are we doing about it?

First of all, we're not playing games. We are using radar, two wheel motorcycles and unmarked cars. The California Highway Patrol is doubling its manpower. State officials have authorized the patrol to use unmarked cars and radar. Torrance has used radar for some time for speed enforcement and traffic surveys. Both Torrance and the Highway Patrol, as well as many other agencies, use two wheel motorcycles in congested areas.

Radar is a valuable tool for effective enforcement, but the backbone of Torrance's program is its two wheel motorcycle squad. Their ability to get to the violator makes them invaluable to an effective traffic safety program. Torrance selects officers for traffic enforcement duty who are traffic minded. A training period is set up for them prior to their being assigned field duties. Each officer must have a thorough knowledge of traffic laws.

Specialized accident investigation units are on duty around the clock. A close liaison is maintained with the city traffic engineer's office. Traffic officers give lectures to civic groups and schools. In-service training is given to all officers regularly.

Statistics are kept in cooperation with the National Safety Council and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. From these, trouble spots and potential trouble spots are located, and officers are assigned to work these trouble areas.

The seriousness of the problem is evidenced by the increasing strictness of courts in traffic matters. Larger fines and jail terms for continual violators are common. More liberal use of probation and license suspensions is being used. Courts are maintaining a closer liaison with traffic safety groups.

Insurance companies, which are carrying the brunt of the financial burden imposed by the increasing accident rates, are cancelling policies and raising rates to astronomical heights. Company officials are getting more and more involved in traffic safety programs. To save lives and injuries also means to save money for insurance companies.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles is considering requiring a physical examination prior to issuing a license. They have reduced the maximum term of driver's licenses from five to four years—less for older persons. Strict adherence to license suspension and revocation policies is maintained.

As you can see, a lot is being done to try to save lives. The most important thing is to try and get the public to comply voluntarily with traffic laws. A lot more can, and will, be done in this unending effort to stop deaths. Our efforts would be fruitless if we attempted to save lives by playing "the traffic game."



SACRAMENTO REPORT

Tear-Gas Pistols Illegal In State, Solon Reports

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL, Assemblyman, 46th District

Several ladies in the 46th Assembly District have asked me if the tear-gas pistols, made to resemble fountain pens, now being advertised in some magazines, are legal in California. The answer is NO, they are not legal in California. Not only are they illegal, but when a tear gas is discharged from a gas pistol it can do the person holding the gas pistol more harm than the person who is supposed to be discouraged by a cloud of tear gas launched in his direction.

The advertisements show a lady alone at night holding what looks like a fountain pen in her outstretched gloved hand. The fountain-gas pistol is aimed at a man who needs a shave and wears a cap. Dotted lines represent the tear gas hitting the tramp in the face, thus discouraging him from snatching her purse or kissing her on the cheek. Such advertisements are very costly but apparently some ladies buy such merchandise else the purveyors of this junk would not run the ads.

Just to be certain that I am correct, I asked the Honorable George H. Murphy, Legislative Counsel of the State of California, for his legal opinion on the subject. He issued his Opinion No. 216 on Feb. 21, 1966. The concluding summary of his opinion reads as follows:

"Therefore, we conclude that the knowing possession of fountain-pen tear-gas guns is illegal in California, unless: (a) possession is by members of the police or the military and for official use in the discharge of their duties, or (b) possession is authorized by a permit issued pursuant to Section 12423 of the Penal Code."

Section 12423 of the Penal Code is the one regarding permits to carry concealed weapons.

Actually, no law enforcement officers and no military personnel would even consider carrying tear-gas pistols made to resemble fountain pens. They can and sometimes do carry either pistols or guns made for discharging tear gas on riot duty. Such weapons are not firearms in the ordinary sense of the term. In other words, they are made to fire tear gas and not cartridges containing bullets.

Returning to the advertisements in magazines for the sale of fountain-pen tear-gas pistols, the advertisers are mail-order houses located outside of California. Whether they ship their wares into California by express, mail, or other means of transportation, they are engaged in interstate commerce and cannot be reached by any California state law.

In several of my books on antique and semi-antique firearms for gun collectors I have described and illustrated various objects made to discharge tear gas and even bullets. Some are made to resemble pencils, others fountain pens, and still others canes and umbrellas. Without exception, such objects have been grouped under the heading of "Freaks and Oddities" with warnings that their ownership and use is illegal in many states, and also that they are more dangerous to the users than to the intended targets, human or animal.

The same ladies who wrote to me about gas pistols also asked for advice about carrying pistols or revolvers for self-protection. Here is a summary of my reply:

Any adult can walk around with a pistol or a revolver in plain sight but if it is in any way concealed, such as being placed in the glove compartment of a car,

it becomes a concealed weapon and falls within the State law against concealed weapons when the owner does not have a permit issued by a police chief or sheriff.

Second, whether a man or woman is being molested, the attacker usually has the advantage of knowing in advance what he intends to do, whereas the person attacked is caught by surprise so fast that he or she has little or no time to draw, aim or fire a pistol or a revolver.

It may seem facetious, but I am serious when I recommend that ladies obtain old-fashioned, long hatpins, wear them in their hair, and use them for self-defense when necessary. This is what our grandmothers did.

For men, I sometimes suggest that they carry either a machinist's ball-peen hammer or a large monkey-wrench. Both may be useful tools in case the car breaks down and also they can be used to give an attacker a bad headache when lowered quickly on his cranium (skull).

All of these helpful suggestions for the interested citizen preclude the necessity for enacting new California laws, I am glad to report.

WILLIAM HOGAN

Auchincloss Novel Dives Into Jungles of Finance

I have not read most of Louis Auchincloss's very successful upper-middle-brow novels such as "Powers of Attorney" (the law); "The Rector of Justin" (private schools); or "Portrait in Brownstone" (old New York families). I picked up his new one, "The Embezzler," after being alerted by the trade paper Publishers Weekly that it is "an unforgettable, unsparing portrait of a New York broker . . . an enthralling mixture of big-time financial plays, marital scandal, and society gossip, seasoned with marvelously funny epigrams."

Some of the epigrams are very good, if less than Oscar Wilde-like. For example: "It is always risky for a financial man to be seen entering a church on a weekday." But "unforgettable" it is not as, for example, John P. Marquand's memoirs of Brahmin life, "The Late George Apley," might be. Auchincloss is the nearest thing we have to a Marquand today. He is a good craftsman-entertainer, as Spencer Tracy was a good craftsman-actor in his prime.

HERB CAEN SAYS:

Comedian Jets to Lunch, Flies Back to Rehearsal

Caenfelt: Lt. Gov. Anderson, moving to the offensive: "I have been reading Ronald Reagan's autobiography, 'Where's the Rest of Me?', and I believe I have the answer—in Barry Goldwater's hip pocket!" . . . Danny Kaye just bought himself a Lear personal jet (about half a mill) and flew up the other day for lunch at Johnny Kan's in Chinatown. At 1 p.m., he looked at his watch, arose, announced: "Gotta get back to L.A. — I have a TV rehearsal at 3" (the Lear makes the trip in 45 minutes) . . . Novelist Herbert Gold writes from Hollywood, with, I believe, tongue in cheek: "I am doing a screenplay titled 'Hitler in Springtime'—the story of the nice side of this much-maligned man. For instance, he was a good dancer."

Bay Area Beat: The Sterling Haydens, shopping for a house here (so they can move back from the hated East), have instructed their agent to find something "with very small rooms, because Sterling likes to feel he's aboard a ship." Oh? . . . An unfinished thriller, titled "Two Papers," found among the papers of the late Eugene Burdick, will be completed by John Sherlock, the young novelist whom Burdick befriended. The story is a typical Burdick twister—based on six noiseless, smokeless, recoilless guns developed by the OSS near the end of WW II. That much is true, but in Bur-

dick's plot, two of the guns disappear, and then what? That's Sherlock's problem . . . Rene Verdon, the French chef who quit the White House in a Snit Bourgeois, dined at L'Escargot in Carmel—whose owner, Yvan Nupert, engaged

San Francisco

him in a three-hour comparison of French and California wines. "Have you come to a decision?" asked Yvan after the testing. "Oui," nodded Verdon with a crooked grin. "You can get as drunk on one as the other!"

Barrel's Bottom: Joan Kraus, past Pres. of Planned Parenthood, drew all sorts of compliments on the unusual, dangling earrings she wore to a ball at the Fairmont last weekend. If you looked close, and knew what you were looking for, you'd have noticed that they were intra-uterine devices.

Stanford Research Institute, hired by the National Football League to deep-think the likeliest U. S. city for another team, reportedly has narrowed the choices to Houston, New Orleans and Seattle (sorry, Azusa and Cucamonga), with Houston in the lead because of its fabulous Astrodom . . . Mamie Van Doren, who's playing at Bimbo's (and has had romances with Bo Belinsky and Joe Namath), upon being asked whether she prefers baseball or football players: "It all depends on which sport is in season."

ROYCE BRIER

LBJ Proposes to Build Decent Society in Asia

... to build a decent society for the people of South Viet Nam."

This was a passage in the greeting of President Johnson to Premier Ky of South Viet Nam, on the latter's arrival to confer in Hawaii.

It is a goal, and nobody can take exception to it, excepting the Red Chinese, and even they only take exception to our definition of a "decent society."

But this is not arguable with us; what is arguable is how our brand of a decent society is to be attained in South Viet Nam. The question then arises, is the goal attainable, and this involves a sub-question: Is it attainable by the present methods employed in pursuit of it, to wit, warfare?

Mr. Johnson says those who would "retreat" from American determination to attain this goal by warfare

are "blind to experience and dead to hope." Let us see.

Of the large segment of the American people who oppose the Viet Nam war, no great proportion is calling for outright "retreat," either military or political.

Most of them, indeed, are asking the President to explain how he expects to achieve his "decent society" in South Viet Nam by expanding warfare in the circumstances obviously existing.

The Administration has insisted this is not a civil war, but essentially a war of intervention by North Viet Nam, abetted by Red China. But this is a most implausible definition of the nature of the war. The Viet Cong guerrillas are fragmented

World Affairs

ing for outright "retreat," either military or political. Most of them, indeed, are asking the President to explain how he expects to achieve his "decent society" in South Viet Nam by expanding warfare in the circumstances obviously existing.

General Grant and Sherman could "win" the civil war in America because they could see and feel the armies of Lee, Johnston and several lesser commanders. But in Viet Nam there are no such armies to exhaust, surround and capture, and end hostilities.

This circumstance, which is at the root of our stalemate, makes the realism of President Johnson's "decent society" highly suspect. Even if we could occupy the land and force a peace, how will it be maintained without permanent occupation?

Books

lucky symbol of his era? A reader's sympathies remain with the cocky, aristocratic broker even though he was considered a symbol of financial iniquity, of the rot in old Wall Street before the cleansing hose of the New Deal.

"The Embezzler" is a workmanlike excursion through the financial jungle of a generation ago and an introduction to some of its glossy denizens. It appears to be a standard Auchincloss performance, and as such should have a built-in audience waiting for it. I found it to be a fairly empty book, however. I felt suddenly nostalgic for Marquand's investigations of inherited conformity, for "George Apley," "H. M. Pulham, Esq.," and "Point of No Return."

Notes on the Margin . . . Janet Travell, M.D., is writing a "chatty autobiography" which New American Library will publish in 1967. She was President Kennedy's physician until the assassination, and President Johnson's until March 31, 1965.

ruining the hoped-for high intellectual tone. Local War Makes Good: the ABC television network now has a weekly series titled "The War in Viet Nam," about which a network spokesman told me in dead seriousness: "Just think, this will be the first war in history to have its own series while it's still in progress." World War II, of course, is already on tape, and will be released as soon as a sponsor can be found.

Oh Yes, the Items: It's just possible that Dr. Eric Berne, the S-F-Carmel psychiatrist, has written the best-selling book ever produced here. His fascinating "Games People Play" not only has been among the top five national best-sellers for months (over 300,000 hardcover copies in print), it will soon be made into a Broadway musical. If this psychiatrist has any problems, they aren't financial . . . Stanford Research Institute, hired by the National Football League to deep-think the likeliest U. S. city for another team, reportedly has narrowed the choices to Houston, New Orleans and Seattle (sorry, Azusa and Cucamonga), with Houston in the lead because of its fabulous Astrodom . . . Mamie Van Doren, who's playing at Bimbo's (and has had romances with Bo Belinsky and Joe Namath), upon being asked whether she prefers baseball or football players: "It all depends on which sport is in season."

in thousands of villages where they erupt daily. Each village is a base for small, secret jungle action. The South Vietnamese forces cannot sort out these subversives from the loyal, so how can the alien American forces fight there?

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Here appears another root of the trouble. The successive governments of Viet Nam have been unable or unwilling to give the masses government they want, or think they want. Hence there is perpetual revolt, put down in this village, erupting in that.

President Johnson presumably discussed with Premier Ky establishing this "decent society." The following sentence may be apt: "The government of the United States expects this aid will be met by performance on the part of the government of South Viet Nam in undertaking needed reforms." It is in a letter to President Eisenhower to President Diem, dated Oct. 23, 1964.

Quote

University reforms will always be needed . . . but let us not applaud the lesson in anti-democracy that students everywhere have learned from the recent events at Berkeley. — A. Grendon, UC biophysicist.

It is time Americans recognize Communist tactics. They deliberately create situations that call for the police to step in so they can hurl the charge of police brutality. — Mrs. L. E. Morin, Sepulveda, Calif.

Morning Report:

It has fallen to a Congressman from California to come up with the secret weapon that will win the war in Viet Nam: permanent yellow paint. This breakthrough was made by Craig Hosmer, from Long Beach.

As we all know, the big problem facing our GI's is how to tell friend from foe among the rice paddies. All Vietnamese look alike — or at least they have in the past. But now Congressman Hosmer would paint all enemy Vietnamese yellow. Any soldier — except those suffering from color blindness — would know who to shoot.

No new weapon, however, is perfect. This one, too, has a slight handicap. Somebody has to go out first and paint the enemy. And the cost of cleaning up defectors would probably be prohibitive.

Abe Mellinkoff