

Press-Herald

GLENN W. PFEIL Publisher

REID L. BUNDY Managing Editor

Sunday, June 13, 1965

A Welcome Decision

The recent decision to consolidate the branches of the South Bay Municipal Court into one facility—the fast rising Superior Court building on the Torrance Civic Center—comes as welcome news to those who have believed in and advocated the development of the civic center as the official center of the Greater Southwest.

When completed, the Superior Court building will provide ample facilities for the Southwest Branch of the Superior Court and for the South Bay Municipal Court.

A committee of Torrance area civic leaders headed by Municipal Judge William B. Keene recommended the consolidation. Headquarters of the court now is located on Pacific Avenue in Redondo Beach.

The decision to put the courts together in one center is logical and deserves the thanks of those who will benefit for years to come.

A Job Well Done

The oft-heard lament that public service is a thankless task probably is being raised again this week by members of the Board of Education who have been faced with demands of an exuberant group that certain classroom material be withdrawn from use.

The Press-Herald salutes the Board members for their self-control during the latest confrontation—a 90-minute set-to this week on the issue of classroom records distributed by a particular company.

According to charges leveled by a group calling itself the Torrance Committee of Parents Concerned About Communist Records, the records are designed to "jangle the nervous system." While much of today's music is seemingly designed to jangle the nervous system, it doesn't necessarily follow that it is a wicked Kremlin plot.

The advocates of the removal of these records from use present an articulate case and pursue it with vigor. It is difficult to keep a cool head in the face of such an onslaught.

The Press-Herald believes members of the Board of Education have performed a real service by exercising a reasoned judgment in the face of such pressure. For this we thank them.

Opinions of Others

"We doubt whether Congress, overwhelmingly liberal as it is, will knuckle to the demands of the big unions to repeal right-to-work laws, and force people to join labor unions if they want a job. If they can make this stick, then it would be logical to assume that every individual could be compelled to join a particular religion or a particular political party. Is this kind of infringement upon an individual's freedom of association, a freedom of choice that most Americans want? We certainly would say it is incompatible with a free society."—*Rosholt (S. D.) Review.*

"The following advice has been offered by Juvenile Judge Philip B. Gillim, of Denver, Colorado. 'Always we hear the plaintive cry of the teen-ager, "What can we do? Where can we go?" The answer is, go home! Hang the storm windows, paint the woodwork, rake the leaves, mow the lawn, shovel the walk, wash the car, learn to cook, scrub some floors, repair the sink, build a boat, get a job. Help the minister, priest or rabbi, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, visit the sick, assist the poor, study your lessons. And when you are through, and not too tired, read a good book.'"—*Forest City (Pa.) News.*

"There is at least one U.S. government corporation that makes money. The other day, the board of directors of Federal Prison Industries turned over \$4 million of profits to the U.S. Treasury. The corporation operates 55 shops and 23 factories in federal prisons throughout the country. . . . So, despite the old adage, crime does pay. But not for the criminal."—*Findley (Ohio) Republican Courier.*

FLAG DAY



Why Fly The Flag On Flag Day?



ROYCE BRIER

Stalin Gets a Reprieve From Trip to Perdition

Something funny happened to Josef Stalin on the way to perdition. It wasn't funny funny, and the Russians aren't laughing, but it was funny peculiar.

What was peculiar was that he never quite reached perdition, and probably never will.

Excepting the Russians, everybody in the world knew by 1950 that Uncle Joe was a very wicked man. Some of the Russians knew, also, but the great masses didn't. They were so brainwashed they thought the Purges of the late 1930s were necessary. For Stalin they doubtless were. Being what he was, he was going to make deadly enemies, many no better than he, and he had to fight back or be destroyed, the tiger's choice.

He was a bank robber and all-around thug. He grew up in the dog-eat-dog society of the early Revolution, where a good man could not attain and keep power. The end justifies the means.

He succeeded Lenin by

double-crossing and destroying friends and rivals, finally Trotsky. You cannot blame him for being suspicious as he consolidated his power, but his suspicion had a manic trend. So came war with Hitler, another man with manic tendencies.

You must remember that during the war most of us in the West upheld the myth that Stalin was not a bad fellow at heart. Therefore we cannot fault Nikita Khrushchev and his colleagues for subscribing to the myth while Stalin lived and ruled. So Khrushchev as soon as seemed prudent started Stalin for perdition. They tried to make his a non-person in the Marxian prescription, but his turned out to be a special case.

Looking for a way to non-person Khrushchev, the current hierarchy cautiously arrested the de-stalinization process. The other day when one alluded to Stalin in a speech, it drew cheers.

One thing nobody could do was divest Stalin of the credit for beating the Ger-

mans. Like all dictators he fumbled it badly, but Hitler fumbled even more, and Stalin did win.

The Russian masses knew this. They were there. So you have to expect them to ignore the reality that Stalin was a bad man, which they knew only imperfectly. They have only Khrushchev's word for it, and who is Khrushchev?

If Washington and Lincoln had been scoundrels we would not revere them as we do, but we would revere their success.

It now appears certain that over the next few decades Josef Stalin will be rehabilitated at home. Another generation, farther removed from his cold brutality, will overlook it, and may even doubt it. Uncle Joe was the true Genghis Kahn type, but you and I can't gnash our teeth over Genghis Kahn. So are the inhuman humanized by time. Most of the great malefactors of history improve with receding years. Curious, but such is man's capacity for illusion.

WILLIAM HOGAN

Unqualified Critic Sounds Off on American Colleges

The social critic John Keats ("The Insolent Charliots") quotes from a speech by Robert M. Hutchins on American colleges: "Their standards are undecipherable, their accomplishments dubious, their pretensions insufferable, their independence a sham, and their appeal to their constituency irrational and degrading."

Keats takes it from there in a bouncy, emphatic, well-documented sociological investigation titled "The Sheepskin Psychosis." This is something in the Vance Packard tradition, rather than high scholarship, in which the author demonstrates how and why Americans have carried a good idea (education) to the point

of obsession and absurdity. What are Keats' qualifications as an education critic? None, he states right off, other than United States citizenship. This may be the only valid credential a good journalist needs, for Keats presents some eye-opening findings as he builds a case on Dr. Hutchins' gloomy appraisal of the education industry. Many of his findings are revealed in tape-recorded statements from students, parents, teachers.

College degrees, he shows, have in many cases become status symbols, just as "name" colleges themselves have become. Many students crowding today's colleges are not ready for a higher education; don't need it, and in too many cases don't get much of an education once they are admitted. One reason: professors, trapped in their own publish-or-perish rat race, couldn't care less about seriously teaching these semi-students and potential flunk-outs.

Americans are oversold on higher education, Keats feels. College is often a place where an adolescent can grow four years older; can have a good time, be kept off the job market a little longer. If it is a job the student expects college to get him (most often the

case), he would be better off in some job-training program, trade, business or technical school. In any event, Keats pleads, let's abandon this sheepskin psychosis.

A grim Keats anecdote: "Because his mother made him do it, John Youth raced out of the house, through high school and straight into a good college and out the other side, into a good safe job. Without pausing for breath, he dashed off to suburbia with a nice, safe wife who promptly produced three quick children, who began running, too."

Sound like a Robert Osborn cartoon? Popular, high-spirited criticism though this is, Keats' book may reshape some stereotyped ideas and attitudes on college education, or the illusion of same. His forcefully stated case is something for parents, and certainly for potential college students, to consider.



Single Tax Proposal Has Some Serious Drawbacks

By PHILIP E. WATSON
County Assessor

The slogans of the single taxers, whether they call themselves incentive taxers, homeowner protective groups or something else, are all the same. And they sound so attractive and plausible it's not surprising the overburdened property taxpayer begins to wonder if the slogans might not work.

"Take the profits out of land speculation." "Tax land into productive development." "Down with slum landlords." "Stop urban sprawl." These are the primary catch-phrases.

What they really mean is the bulk, if not all, of property taxation should fall on land, instead of including improvements and personal property in the tax base as we do now.

Let's take the arguments for a land tax only and see if they hold up.

The chief benefit claimed for taxation based on land only is that it discourages speculation and forces land into productive development. The theory is that a landowner would not be able to afford to pay the high taxes proposed under this system without getting any return from the land; therefore, he would either build something on the land, or sell it to someone else who would build something, in order to have a return with which to pay his taxes.

This theory ignores the economic factors in the market place. Can we conceive, for example, that just because we are taxing land only, the vast vacant area of Antelope Valley would be forced into some kind of development? It hardly seems likely. Land goes into development when there is a need or use for it. At some future time, as the population of the Los Angeles Basin spills inland, I have no doubt all those thousands of acres will eventually go into use.

A much more conceivable consequence of a forced high tax on the vacant acreage in Antelope Valley would be a mass of tax delinquencies. After all, if the present owner cannot afford to hold it and pay the taxes and cannot build a productive structure on it, it is hardly likely that he will be able to find another buyer who would then be in the identical position. And the result of property going delinquent, of course, is to remove it from the tax roll so that it is contributing nothing for local revenue.

The single tax theory also holds that our present system of taxing buildings as well as land encourages the development of slums and discourages new construction, since improving one's property adds to the value of the property, thereby resulting in an increased assessment and higher taxes. So they argue that the present system is an incentive to the individual to let his property run down because then his taxes will be lower.

There are many reasons for letting property deteriorate, but I would doubt that taxes rank very high on the list. It's bad economics. Anyone who did so would be destroying the

Quote

Experience teaches us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficent.—Justice Brandeis, U. S. Supreme Court, 1928.

Free enterprise means that we always recognize the fact that this nation's growth rests primarily on the foundation of individual freedom.—E. Hofer.

Never in the history of this democracy have we seen the entire economy of a state—from the fields to the grocery shelves—dependent on the unknowable whims of one man 2,500 miles away.—Assemblyman Alan G. Pattee, Salinas, on Labor Secretary Wirtz's bracero stand.

value of his own investment in order to minimize the relative small amount of taxes.

Nor does experience seem to prove that our present system markedly has discouraged new construction or improvements of existing structures. Again, the primary purpose of a tax

should be to raise necessary revenue for the operation of government, not to reorganize our society.

As for correcting bad assessment practices where they exist, they can be corrected within our existing tax structure at far less cost and danger to the average property owner.

HERB CAEN SAYS:

Quaint Way of Making Change

LITTLE OLD UGLY American, me: When I was in Mexico City a few months ago, I'd smile a supercilious Northamericano smile whenever the girl at the newsstand in my hotel would say: "We have a coin shortage—please take your change in Chiclets." Ach, how quaint. Couple of days ago, I was in a bakery and the girl behind the counter said: "We have a coin shortage—would you mind taking your change in cookies?" Ach, how quainter yet.

QUOTESVILLE: Paul Krassner, editor of The

Realist, and novelist Norman Mailer were in town recently and Krassner attended publisher Jack Viotor's monthly discussion group at Trader Vic's. When Mailer's name came up, he warned: "Careful what you say about him—he's my father-in-law." What? Egad, sir, how can this be? (After all Krassner is 33 and Mailer is only 42). Explained Krassner: "I married his adopted daughter. She's like 23." Oh. "And anyhow, we're separated, although we live in the same duplex in New York. She has the upper floor, I have the lower. We have a deal. She gets to use the kitchen downstairs, I get to go upstairs to watch Huntley-Brinkley." THIS is the avant-garde? . . . Ah yes, Huntley-Brinkley: A Gen'l Electric exec discussed S.F.'s rapid transit project—not too rapid, is it?—on Chet and David's show the other day. Said the GE'er: "Yes, it will have automatic ticket sellers, automatic ticket takers, automatic train. Everything automatic. The only thing that can possibly go wrong is people. If we could carry machines instead of people, we'd have no problems at all."

MY KIND OF TOWN: Ronnie Kemper, the composer-singer-pianist whose "Cecilia" was such a hit (such a long time ago), has made his first record in four years, on the Posh label. He says he wrote the tune for his ex-wife, Kay, now married to a doctor. Its title: "What Are You Going To Do With Somebody Else That You Haven't Done With Me?" And now a few words from the psychiatrist . . . Mai Tai Sing, queen of Chinatown's saloon society, is in Hong Kong—never more than a few inches from Actor Jess Stone (Corinne Calvet's ex), who's making a movie there titled "Strange Portrait."

LEARN SOMETHING every day (thank ya, Joe Slavsky): There are 293 ways to make change for a dollar. Don't waste your time. Take his word for it.

TAKE DEEP BREATH: Something new has been added to the gloriously Victorian law offices of Melvin Belli Esq.—a life-sized photo of Yvonne d'Angers (the topless doll he defended in court), 44" strong, clad in naught but a G-string, and lovingly inscribed, "To the Savior of Twin Peaks, from the Queen of Tarts to the King of Torts." Tip to tourists: the over-exposure is clearly visible from the street . . . Tony Bennett, who left his heart in S.F., is coming back to collect it and some loot to boot; opens July 8 in the Fairmont's Venetian Room . . . Cartoonist George Lichty spots a strange bobble in the new collection of letters by the late comedian, Fred Allen. His letter to Abe Burrows is dated March 17, 1958. Allen died in 1956 . . . The biggest lottery in town would seem to be the tickets for the July appearance of the Royal Ballet. Nobody in charge will announce which performances feature the big attractions—Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev ("in keeping with our no-star policy," unquote). So you buy your tickets and you takes your chances.

MODERN LIFE: Robert Trent Jones, the famed designer of golf courses, with his son and his associate, Don Boos, were flying a chartered plane into L.A. airport the other day, and heard an illuminating conversation between the tower and two hovering jetliners. Tower to first jet: "We have observed your presence in the area for some time. Any difficulty?" Pilot: "Negative." Tower: "Please advise control as to your delay in commencing approach." Pilot: "The movie isn't over yet." (Laughter all around). Second jet pilot to tower: "Then do you suppose we could make OUR approach? We don't have a movie, just a schedule." Advance, friend.

Morning Report:

Mr. Johnson is now engaged in a spitting contest with Congress. He said he would like to cut excise taxes by \$4 billion. The law-makers said that was fine as far as it goes, but it didn't go far enough.

So Congress, on its own, cut the excise load by another billion dollars. Then the President allowed as that was O.K. with him. Now, at the next elections, both sides can take credit for a cut of \$5 billion.

This agreement between Democrats left the Republicans out in the cold as they are still calling with hoarse voices for a balanced budget, a fine principle. But not fine enough to win five votes at the polls against a tax cut.

Abe Mellinkoff