

Press-Herald

GLENN W. PFEIL Publisher
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Torrance, Calif., Wednesday, August 3, 1966

A Finger in the Popcorn

The long arm of the federal government reached out this week to ban some traditional activities of high school students in Torrance—popcorn and candy sales during lunch and recess periods.

The ban came in the form of a directive from the State Board of Education, which administers the National School Lunch Program of the federal government in California. The directive bans the sale of foodstuffs during the regular school day by any organization other than a school district food services department.

And "food" apparently has been defined as "anything that can be put into the mouth."

Local boards of education were given a choice: comply with the policy or lose federal funds now available through the National School Lunch Program. In Torrance, that would mean a loss of some \$90,000 each year.

The directive came from the state, but most school officials see Uncle Sam's shadow in the background. The admitted object of the new policy is to bring practice in line with federal policy.

The theory behind the new directive is that it is inconsistent to spend tax money for reduced-price and free lunches in the schools while students are permitted to make a profit by selling foodstuffs—usually popcorn, candy, ice cream, and sno-cones.

Student clubs use such sales to finance activities ranging from field trips to awards banquets to senior class proms to graduation gifts to the school. One school official estimates that \$25,000 worth of popcorn is sold yearly in the four high schools.

Such sales will be permitted before and after school and at athletic events when those events are held after school.

State officials see a grave danger when a student may use that 25 cents in his pocket for popcorn instead of lunch. They have sought to remedy the situation by removing the choice—and hang the idea of individual responsibility.

The directive, by its wording, is aimed primarily at the high schools. And in Torrance, high schools are not a part of the National School Lunch Program.

What is really apparent in this newest directive is the truth of an old cliché: federal dollars mean federal control, even when it is quietly passed along through state agencies.

In their zeal, federal and state officials seem to have forgotten some of the benefits of a popcorn sale. Students, through profits derived from these sales, sponsor a variety of wholesome activities and learn to handle money. The result is, we think, a benefit in the total educational program.

Much ado about nothing? We think not. There is a principle here which seems to have been lost in the great rush to "be consistent with federal policy." If a high school popcorn sale can be stopped, what will be next?

This is one instance, we believe, when state and federal officials ought to keep their fingers out of the popcorn.

Judicial Reforms Due

"Of all people in our society, the judge must remain the most incorruptible, because he is the final protector of our rights to life, liberty and property under the law," declared California Supreme Court Justice Louis H. Burke. But, says a report from the American Assembly of Columbia University, "The administration of justice in the United States is in trouble."

Castling light on that trouble, the July, 1966, issue of The Reader's Digest states that "... in state after state there is growing alarm over judges who are sick or senile, corrupt, guilty of unconscionable gold-bricking, habitually intoxicated or otherwise unfit to serve on the bench." By far, an overwhelming majority of judges do not fit this category. The fact that a small number do, however, is disturbing.

Two states have pioneered judicial reform. The most recent is California where a Commission on Judicial Qualifications is empowered to investigate complaints from anyone about courts and recommend action to the Supreme Court which can disbar a judge. The system, which has already removed 30 judges from California courts, has been adopted by some Texas courts and is currently being considered by other states. Its application to federal courts is also being studied by Congress, since federal judgeships are lifetime appointments. There is no room for incompetency in our judicial process at any level.

Opinions of Others

Good kids just don't happen, they are raised that way. Parents, clergy, teachers, and leaders of various youth organizations all contribute to the finished product.—Earle Gilbert in *The Evansdale (Iowa) Enterprise*.

Americans used to shout "Give me liberty!" Now they just leave off the last word.—Lee Call in *The Star Valley (Aston, Wyo.) Independent*.

Village Square: the guy against everything.—Bill Trimble in *The Ellicottville (N. Y.) Post*.

He's Our Prime Suspect



STAN DELAPLANE

Don't Pop Off to Customs Man, He's Heard 'em All

PARIS — The Michelin Guides are wonderful for driving in Europe. The best places to stay and eat in each town. The out-of-way places. Charges. Number of rooms. Does it have a view. Do they charge to garage your car.

They have them for France, Italy, Spain, Germany and the Benelux countries. You can get them in English except for Spain which is in French—but you read most of it in symbols anyway. (The tiny car means garage. The tiny bathtub means with bath, etc.)

On sale at all tourist hotel newsstands. Get the RED, HARD-COVER guide. The green, soft-cover guides only tell historical background. (Spain is red and soft-cover and combines both historical and hotel information.)

"Can you advise me on clothing for September in Rome, Madrid, Paris, London?"

Dress for these world capitals as you would for New York. Rome in September runs 61 to 80 degrees. Spain is 55 to 76. Paris, 50 to 69. London, 49 to 65. Little rain anywhere.

"We are going through Customs (for the first time!) in London airport. We are worried about doing the right thing."

When you get off the plane at London, they usually bus you over to the arrivals building. You line up. They take a look at your yellow health card. The line goes to several immigration inspectors. On the plane, you've made out a landing card. They take that. Look at your passport. Ask you how long you're going to stay in England.

Now you go to the Customs room. All the baggage from your plane is piled on counters. Get yours together. An inspector comes along. Asks if you have anything to declare. How many cigarettes? Any presents? Liquor? Sometimes asks you to open a bag, sometimes not.

Answer just what he asks.

Travel

Don't be funny—he's heard all the nervous jokes. He puts a chalk mark on your bags. A porter takes them downstairs. You stop at the airport bank and change some money—get a dozen shillings, you'll need them. Go down and claim your luggage. The porter takes it out to the taxi rank. Tip him a shilling a bag.

Ask the starter the fare to London. The airport is JUST outside the city regulations. So the taxi driver can make his own deal aside from the meter reading. The fare (last year) was correctly 40 shillings. They'll probably ask 50. If it's over that make a loud complaint. Taxi tip is 10 per cent.

"You should correct your statement that everyone must be vaccinated for entering the U.S. or foreign countries. Some people can not do this for religious reasons or because they are allergic."

As I read the enclosure from the World Health Organization, you CAN enter without vaccination if you are not coming from an infected area. But you must report at stated times to local health boards for examination. Thanks for the info.

"Where shall we shop in Ireland for linens, Waterford glass and so on?"

Morning Report:

Just after "Women's Wear Daily" scooped the pants off the Nation's newspapers with what Mrs. Johnson will wear at Luci's wedding the Associated Press snapped back with a description of Mr. Johnson's pants. Journalism is a jungle. The President's trousers for the big event will be striped gray and black, no cuffs, and just long enough to cover his socks (black).

For those who care, I have a little news beat of my own. The President's pants will be held up by suspenders (six buttons) and a belt as well. We are living in perilous times.

If this information gives aid and comfort to either Ho Chi Minh or Mao Tse-tung, I'm sorry. Should the CIA want me, I'll be waiting.

Abe Mellinkoff

HERB CAEN SAYS:

It Isn't the GOP, It's The Dems That Worry Pat

Certain members of the University of California Board of Regents have been trying to get prominent "moderate" Republicans to sign a pledge that the University will be "kept out of partisan politics" in the gubernatorial campaign with no results to date. Typical reaction: "We'd rather not sign anything. We'll just talk to Reagan about it—he'll listen to reason" (wipe that smile off yer face) . . . Speaking of which, Governor Pat Brown isn't as worried about the Repubs as he is about the Good Democrats who threaten to sit on their hands between now and November . . . The current Federal Employees Bulletin takes an awful swipe at San Francisco's Acting Postmaster Lim P. Lee—"off to a poor start, uncooperative," etc.—but the word from Washington is that Chinatown's Lim will be confirmed anyway.

As Uncle Sam's off-duty sailors drive out of their base on Treasure Island these nights, bound for a big time in the big town, they are greeted by a new neon sign that flashes: "Drink, Drive, and Die!" But have fun anyway . . . A happy drunk who must have seen "A Thousand Clowns" once too often looked up at

the mammoth Comstock Apts. on Nob Hill late at night and hollered: "Awright, rich people, everybody out for rifle practice!"

I don't know what it means but I like it (graffito etched in a Stockton Street Tunnel staircase): "Mirth Goes Rickety Pergus" . . . Press release: El Matador intended to go topless a month ago, because of slow business but Landlord Joe Vanness said "I'd rather have you stay rent-free, instead."

San Francisco

Nize, right? Except, what Joe really said was "You put in topless and I'll find a way to bust your lease!" . . . Something new on the Bay: the Ice Follies Yacht Club. The skaters, most of whom have taken places on the San Rafael Canal, have added 14 boats to the Bay's fleet. Definitely more startling statistic, while we're at it: the Follies have drawn more than 2,100,000 out-towners into S. F. since they first opened here. It may not be Culture, but it's definitely money in the bank . . . Hypnotist Anton Szandor LaVey, who lives on California St. with his pet lion, Togare, buys 70 lbs. of chicken (for Togare) every week from a poultry com-

pany. The other day, the cashier at last spoke up: "I've finally figured it out—you've got a Jewish mother with a lot of sick friends!"

Book reviewer Peter S. Prescott in *Women's Wear Daily*: "For your silly season jollies read Lonfrano Rasponi's 'The International Nomads,' which purports, with leaden mien, to explain today's 'jet set society.' If Rasponi accomplished nothing else, he proves two important points: It is disastrous to write seriously about these people, and with a few exceptions, it is wiser not to take pictures of them." Excellent advice, which, if taken, would mean a drastic curtailment of certain slick magazines and society sections . . . The motion is dead for lack of a second.

File & Forget: Pvt. Eye Hal Lipset, who nailed the Shreve jewel thieves in Spain, rates a two-part spread in "Revue," Munich's Life-style magazine, which describes him in big type as "Der Super-Schnuffer!" . . . Science note: Just think, if we all live long enough, we'll see the time when laser beams are used to destroy garbage like this ("They're coming to take me away, ah-HA!")

ROYCE BRIER

Incredible Bungle Gave U.S. Its First Spy Hero

Nathan Hale was 20 years old when he volunteered to cross from Jersey to Manhattan to spy on the British. Though an intelligent youth, he had no espionage training, and he made an incredible bungle of his assignment.

He may or may not have said he regretted he had but one life to give to his country, but in any case he was our first spy hero. A spy, of course, can only be a hero to his side.

General Washington used a few spies he hired himself, but excepting Hale and Indian scouts, Americans had very little consciousness of espionage for many a year. Both the Union and Confederate armies employed thousands of spies, and it was an ideal setting due to the homogeneity of the population, but no important battle or campaign in the Civil War was ever materially influenced in its course by espionage.

Now we come to the modern world and we use the omnibus term, intelligence.

In this century our enemies or antagonists have set great store by it, and scatter their agents about, trying to introduce them, or suborn them, in our laboratories or statistical bureaus.

To counter this, we have used military intelligence, the FBI, and since the war a special outfit called the Central Intelligence Agency.

World Affairs

There is no visible evidence the latter has substantially advanced the American interest, though to be fair we must note the Agency cannot reveal its activity, general or particular.

Without a doubt most of the Western peoples are fascinated by the melodrama attendant on spying, hence when a "spy" is accused, there is a big news hullabaloo about it. There have been scores of such cases in recent years, the latest a retired army officer accused of selling secrets to the Russians. But these

cases arise everywhere in the Western world, and embassies, including the Soviet, seem to be the foci of them.

It is an unanswered question, however, whether the actual injury done by spies to their opposites is commensurate with the enormous public sensation which ensues on a capture.

It may be averred that Fuchs, the physicist-detector of the last decade who turned over atomic data to the Russians, essentially aided their nuclear program. But it is quite impossible to prove it, because nuclear espionage on a world scale is simply lost in the sea of nuclear mystery imposed by the major powers.

It is as persuasive to argue the Russians already had all but a few scraps of what Fuchs fed them. Certainly many physicists acquainted with the nuclear situation of the 1950s, thought it likely. But nobody knows, perhaps not even the Russians, because technological knowledge today suffers from a rapid rate of flux and obsolescence.

All this is not to contend that espionage is trivial, or that we should give it no attention when it is used against us. It is to argue that the chances are very slim any spy, or spy group, is really capable of changing the flow of events between nations. It is to argue that in any breaking spy case, the wordage spoken and printed is likely to be far out of proportion to the intrinsic importance of the case.

Mailbox

United Way Aid

Editor, Press-Herald
As chairman of the Public Information Management Committee for United Way, I want to thank you personally for your always generous cooperation with our organization and, in particular, for your use of our "stewardship report" showing where funds are allocated for services throughout Los Angeles County.

All of us appreciate your support and interest. We have had scores of favorable comment from volunteers in your area about your use of this material.

FRANK G. GILLET
Chairman

WILLIAM HOGAN

An Ugly LST Is the Hero Of This Saga of the Sea

A rousing tale of World War II naval action in the Mediterranean, "The Ninety and Nine," by William Brinkley, would appear to be the Navy novel of the year, is "Mister Roberts" and "The Caine Mutiny" were in the seasons they were published.

If not as taut a performance as Thomas Heggen's "Mister Roberts," or as memorable a drama as the Herman Wouk, this is a first-rate example of the genre. It is Brinkley's own handling of a wartime theme, accurately drawn from his own wartime Navy service in these waters as his previous novel, "Don't Go Near the Water" was based on his observation in the Pacific.

I suspect that anyone who knew about LSTs, or Landing Ship Tanks, in those now remote times (three wars back) would find it irresistible, and devotees of wartime naval fiction should enjoy it very much indeed.

Winston Churchill once put it this way: "The des-

tinies of two great empires . . . seemed to be tied up by some goddamned things called LSTs." It was a strange type of vessel unknown before that war, a 328-foot long workhorse with little keel, one of the most uncomfortable, graceless, and least maneuverable vessels known to man.

But she could run up on a beach, drop her snub

Books

prows, unload tanks, mules, nurses, Aqua Velva, ammunition, anything, and did. Unlike a cruiser, or carrier, she was not a glamorous vessel. She worked so close to the beaches that she was often under fire of enemy tank guns, especially at Anzio, during the Italian campaign, where Brinkley's story takes place.

LST 1826, a veteran of North Africa and Sicily, now makes the constant run from Naples or Pozzuoli to Anzio during that murderous ground action. A number of standard types populate Brinkley's large cast of

characters; Lieutenant Adler is the Jewish skipper. A variety of Italian civilian types is woven into the vignettes of Brinkley's "Ninety and Nine." There are two central romances, a court-martial (this becomes a standard device in naval novels).

As the narrative develops, it loses some of its jaunty and humor to become a more serious drama and tragedy than the reader expects. If this suggests a basic flaw in Brinkley's design, the author manages to keep his material under control and his central narrative believable.

While "The Ninety and Nine" is not designed to compete for the big literary prizes, it is strong, masculine entertainment that certainly at some point will be translated into a stirring movie. It is professionally brought off, and for giving the ugly LST and a representative crew its due, Brinkley as writer and old Navy hands deserves a "Well done!"