

The Library Crossroads

Torrance has arrived at another of those important crossroads.

Since 1936, the city's library service has been provided through contract with the Los Angeles County library system—a contract which is the only one now in existence in the county.

Under this system, Torrance has provided facilities for the libraries, and the county has provided personnel and books.

This is all ending, however. The county has refused to renew the contract after June 30, 1968, and the city is left with two choices. It can establish its own system or it can become a member of the county system and pay the full county tax rate for libraries (currently 17 cents per \$100 of valuation).

The City Council chose to establish a Torrance library system, and must now set out to employ personnel and purchase books and materials.

Torrance needs a central library, the branches need to be expanded, and the city must purchase thousands of books—the basic tools of a library. To do this, the City Council—acting on the recommendation of its staff, the Library Commission, and several community organizations—has proposed a bond issue for \$2,350,000 to meet these immediate needs.

The Press-Herald believes it is a reasonable figure and well within the ability of the community to support. Revenue from the bonds would be used to buy and process the new books; construct a new central library building; construct a new branch library; and enlarge and improve existing branch libraries.

Officials say the bond payments probably could be maintained from current revenues, and most certainly could be serviced for the money which will be required to continue the contract with the county after the June 30, 1968, cutoff date.

The Press-Herald urges that the voters on April 18 approve the library bond measure. It is the best way we know to get the libraries we so desperately need.

Opinions of Others

The President can halt strikes against the public interest for a cooling-off period while strikers and management reconsider their situation, and, hopefully, reach a meeting of minds. But this law is applied usually to strikes that impede the economy, or deprive large areas of transportation that might choke off supplies and put masses of people at the mercy of the strikers. But what about local strikes that sometimes are just as mean for much smaller but as helpless a group of people? The law halting strikes against the public interest should be extended to the states to enable governors to halt them when they are obviously causing distress to innocent third parties.—*Santa Paula (Calif.) Chronicle.*

As one reads the latest Economic Reports of the President and his Council of Economic Advisors, one is struck more by the change of tone, as compared with previous reports, than by any of the specifics. These documents seem much less assertive than the Economic Reports of previous years—less confident that the recommended policies are the only right answers to national problems, less certain that the course of the economy in the coming year has been correctly foreseen, and less dogmatic in the assertion of which objectives should get national priority.—*George Hagedorn, economist and National Association of Manufacturers vice president.*

JAMES DORAIS

State Asking Smokers To Cough Up Tax Money

One of the more important tax increases reportedly being considered in an effort to balance the State's budget is a healthy hike in cigarette taxes from 3 cents a pack to 8 cents a pack. Such an increase is estimated to raise additional State revenues of \$84 million a year.

There is considerable question, of course, as to whether it would really be a "healthy" hike. For as all smokers know, every cigarette pack is now required, by act of Congress, to carry the warning: "Caution: Cigarette Smoking May Be Hazardous to Youth Health."

Thus, quite a dilemma is posed to the conscientious citizen who wants to do his part to make sure that the State of California continues to meet its obligations: Is it his patriotic duty to smoke? Or does he owe it to his health not to?

Anyone seeking the answers might be advised to read a new book which purports to give "the scientific facts in the smoking vs. health controversy": "It Is Safe to Smoke," by Lloyd Mallan (Hawthorne Books). Much of Mallan's book is

devoted to testimony developed at the U. S. Senate committee hearing on the U. S. Surgeon General's report on "Smoking and Health." Contrary to the public impression, a great deal of opinion from highly qualified experts in several fields of medicine and research was sharply critical of the Surgeon General's finding that there is a causal relationship between cigarette smoking and various diseases, including lung cancer.

Typical were these comments by Dr. Douglas H. Sprunt, chairman of the Department of Pathology at the University of Tennessee:

"To date, no one has produced cancer of the lung in an experimental animal with tobacco smoke or with condensates extracted from tobacco smoke . . . It is true that cancers have been produced on the skins of animals by various condensates of tobacco smoke, but skin cancer in experimental animals can also be produced by a number of innocuous substances, such as sugar, beef, etc. I do not think one can attach any great significance to this work.



HERB CAEN SAYS:

Let's Nominate Him for 'Father of Year' Award

The Juvenile Justice Commission in S.F., after checking the Fillmore and Avalon Ballrooms, has recommended against lowering the age limit for attendance at public dances from 18 to 16, and the Commission's report is certainly illuminating for its opacity.

"There was a sweet smell, maybe marijuana, maybe incense, in the air," said one. Why didn't he summon the Narcotics Detail or the In-

cense Inspectors to find out? Chairman Michael Salarno reports a girl handed him a sugar cube. Why didn't he

San Francisco

find out if it contained LSD, which is illegal? He also saw "a young man who was disrobed." Why didn't he have him arrested for indecent exposure? Commr. Paul Chow found "no communication" between the dancers,

each one of whom was "more or less an individual." If that's bad, is it worse for 16 yr. olds than 18-yr. olds? The Commissioners also decided "the sound level" was "objectionable." To whom? The Commissioners, obviously. By the way, is it louder for sixteens than eigh-

teens? The sound level of the Juvenile Justice Commission just won't do at all. All those in favor of dropping the middle word of its title . . .

However, before we lose hope that sanity will ultimately prevail, let us go to a meeting of the Permit Appeals Board, which is hearing an application to turn Donovan's Reef, formerly Roberts-at-the-Beach, into a teenage dance club. Here we find a potential nominee for father of the year: John Abraham, who testified he wouldn't allow his daughter near the place. And if she went anyway, he said, "I would have to put a bullet in her head."

Now that's what I call getting the sound level down to a sound level.

San Francisco's Mexican colony, led by Consul General Adolfo Dominguez, objected so strenuously to the big photos of Pancho Villa and Zapata in El Bandido, the new Mexican restaurant on Geary, that the owners took them down — and give the pix to Adolfo. They now hang in his office. ("Villa and Zapata were heroes, not bandits," he says, explaining the objections).

It's been a long time between cannibal jokes, but here's Monsgr. Jim Mulligan with one about the Chief standing alongside the caudron and complaining to the chef: "Have you noticed that since the ecumenical movement began, all missionaries taste alike?"

Let us seek government support for the arts with care, lest we find that we may be directed to attend and enjoy the display to justify the continued support.—Lyle A. Taylor, West Covina.

Morning Report:

Richard Nixon has gone and escalated the war — no, not in Vietnam. The war for the Republican nomination for the presidency in 1968.

George Romney announced routinely enough that he would go to Vietnam. That is an established move for presidential candidates. Even guys running for Congress do that. But just the other day, Nixon told about his upcoming trip abroad. He will first land in London, then move on to Paris, Bonn, Rome — and finally Moscow! If Romney wants to keep up with the Nixons, he'll have to get out of that Rambler and buy a Rolls.

Nixon's trip, of course, is still within the bounds of conventional political warfare. I'm waiting for the candidate who really escalates — and parachutes into Peking.

Abe Mellinkoff

AFFAIRS OF STATE

Days of the Gold Miner Are About to Disappear

By HENRY C. MacARTHUR
 Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO—Although the state division of mines and geology as usual is months late with its reports on the amounts of minerals recovered in California, the March issue of mineral information service at least reveals the miserable condition of the once-thriving industry of mining precious metals.

For the year 1965, the division reports that only 62,885 troy ounces of gold were mined in California, as compared to 71,028 during 1964. When the division gets around to publishing the 1966 production, it expects these to reach 64,000 ounces.

The value of the 1965 production amounted to \$2,201,000 which is a far cry from the days when this was a small annual production from one mine.

The importance of mining as a California industry, as far as precious metals are concerned, started on a continuing decline in the early 1930s, when the federal government called in all circulating gold coins and substituted pieces of paper for hard cash.

Price of the precious

metal was pegged at \$35 per ounce, at which it has been unchanged for more than 30 years. No indications that it will be increased in the near or far future are seen at the present time. All of which resulted in deterioration of

medium of monetary exchange as well as the half-dollar.

Sacramento

the industry to the point where it hardly exists at the present time.

Many of California's old-time miners believe it would be difficult to revive gold mining in this state even if government permitted an increase in prices. Men who knew the business either have died off or are too old to do much mining.

Along with the virtual demise of gold mining in California, the production of silver, its sister metal, declined as well. The 196,787 troy ounces produced in 1966 is valued at \$226,000.

Silver mining never had as big a run in California as did gold, but many mines in years gone by were heavy producers of the metal.

Yet the demand for silver appears greater today than ever before. The silver dollar has disappeared as a

Quarter dollars minted by the government now are "silver coated," as are other coins below dollar value, a debasement of the currency which could be called wholly unwarranted had the value of precious minerals been permitted to go along in normal channels without the interference of government control.

Increases in the production of mercury are noted, and with rising prices for this metal, the flask production has increased. In 1965, 13,404 flasks of 70 pounds and the division of mines expects 15,500 flasks as the 1966 production. Lately, numerous corporations having the mining of mercury as their purpose, have been filed with Secretary of State Frank M. Jordan.

The decline of gold and silver mining does not affect the overall picture and importance of mining in California, as significant increases in production of oil and other minerals are noted. But except for minor activity, it appears that the day of gold mining is of the past.

ROYCE BRIER

Too Many Specialists, But No Plain Teachers

Writing about American schools is rewarding in that you encounter correspondents who make you out a liar. This is because schools come in infinite forms, nor can you strike an average, or trend, without landing in the soup. So here goes.

Many years ago in the Midwest they had teacher colleges called normal schools, which are now grandly called "universities."

These normals had a system in which grammar schools were part of the institution, and those learning to teach "practiced" on the grammar kids.

As a grammar kid, the writer recalls that the grownups, 18-22, who conducted the 16 half-hour classes a day ranged in potential from miserable to magnificent. But the average — that word! — was pretty high.

It was all generalized training. You might have a class in botany one half-hour, in arithmetic or civics the next. So you should be a polymath like Leonardo,

and nobody was. Still, the teachers in training learned considerable, and fast, and maybe the kids learned.

Now comes Edward J. Shoben Jr., editor of a national educational magazine, to say colleges today are producing too many specialists, an elite group, and neglecting those with general pedagogic talents. He was

World Affairs

addressing the American Association of Junior Colleges in San Francisco.

He said, "We have slighted . . . the non-affluent institutions serving the poor and less visibly talented, the predominantly Negro colleges . . . those realms of thought and concern . . . under the heading of liberal education." He called for "radical rethinking of the humanizing role of our colleges . . . a more diverse educational experience."

One would like to expand Mr. Shoben's remarks beyond the limitations of his audience, and say he hit it

on the nose with the word "humanizing."

Take an example. There was a guy we doted on. He taught us Scott's verse, "The stag at eve had drunk his fill, where danced the moon on Monan's rill." Pretty sad verse, yet under his voice you could see the moon, and never forget a rill was what we called a creek.

But you watched the kaleidoscope, and it was humanizing. You learned some things still remembered, perhaps some prejudices, which are better than a blank mind. You ranged human knowledge in a primitive way, and got a slice of human nature to boot. All this in a school, which wasn't intolerable, at least not so bad as today with dropouts disillusioned with mathematics when they dreamed of being physicists, emulating the late Dr. Oppenheimer.

The point is there are not enough teachers any more interested in stuffing chaotic little minds with a few bare realities of man's experience.

WILLIAM HOGAN

Reporter Takes on Mac And the Pentagon Maze

A great big \$50 billion-dollar-a-year ganglion of bureaucracy and controversy, the Pentagon is an ideal target for an enterprising journalist in the old muckraking tradition. Clark R. Mollenhoff ("Despoilers of Democracy") is just such a reporter. In "The Pentagon: Politics, Profits and Plunder" he takes on this concentration of power, including its press office which, he tells us, speaks with a single loud voice in seeking to discredit critics, whether they be newsmen or members of Congress.

This is a well-documented and distressing book. It shows us that Pentagon power terrorizes men who are fearful of being identified as dissenters; that few big business executives, military officers or members of Congress are willing to risk the anger of the Secretary of Defense or his influential assistants. It shows that the office of Secretary has become a huge new bureau above the military bureaucracy — in effect a Frankenstein's monster that dominates the national economy. The present Secretary —

known in the Pentagon's darker corridors as "Super Mac" or "Mac the Knife" is treated with something less than sympathy as ruler of this single-headed power structure. For better or worse, the domain has become the biggest, most cen-

Books

tralized bureaucracy in the world, and if at some future date a more sinister character than McNamara were to occupy this position, the Republic could be in very bad "Seven Days in May" kind of trouble.

Mollenhoff deals in bewildering masses of figures and expenditures and looks over such pentagon-supported research centers as Aerospace and the RAND Corp. Nobody knows how many millions of dollars the Pentagon has available each year for espionage, sabotage and other types of secret expenditures. The tax-paying reader comes away from all this with a sense of melancholy and weariness.

The author digs back into the history of the old War

and Navy departments to trace the buildup of the Department of Defense over the years. He investigates old controversies, from General "Billy" Mitchell's unorthodox fight in the 1920s to prove the superiority of air power to Admiral Rickover's unorthodox fight to establish a nuclear-powered Navy. He investigates the Pentagon's spectacular prizes, like the multi-billion dollar TFX war-plane contract which recently went to the Texas-based Convair plant, thereby affecting the economy of the entire State of Washington (Boeing). Mollenhoff concludes:

"The power of the Pentagon is a useful power, an essential power in the world in which we live. But it is a dangerous power which carries within it seeds for destruction of our political institutions and our whole way of life. It needs constant examination, constant investigation and constant criticism from within and from without the walls of the Pentagon. It needs to be curbed periodically. Above all it requires dissent . . ."