

# Your Right to Know--The Battle Goes On and On

By HENRY C. MacARTHUR

SACRAMENTO — (CNS) — Gradually, laws pertaining to the peoples' "right-to-know" are being strengthened, and this a good indication that while legislators sometimes may not be wholeheartedly behind the exercise of this right, they are at least attempting to conform to the demands of their constituents in legalizing what should be inherent.

Ever since adoption of the Ralph M. Brown Act in the early 1960's, bureaucratic segments of

government in various parts of the state have been seeking ways and means to circumvent the provisions of that act, which required open meetings, and subsequent amendments to the act, which called for disclosure of public records to the public unless specifically prohibited by statute.

Yet the legislators and other government officials who believe in the public's right to know have not ceased to attempt strengthening of the laws pertaining to this right, and in a

20-year period, have met with much success in guaranteeing the right.

However, there still is no conclusive guarantee in some fields, as stubborn officials, in the belief that the public's business is exclusively the government's business, dream up ways and means to keep that business secret almost as fast as new laws are enacted.

This is why Sen. Milton Marks, R-San Francisco, has introduced additional bills at this session of the legislature to fur-

ther the principle that agencies of government must conduct their operations in public.

One measure introduced by Marks requires that committees and sub-committees of local agencies must conduct their operations in public.

Another applies to state agencies, and a third would require each member of an executive session to execute an affidavit that at such session, only those matters permitted to be

discussed by law in executive session, were considered.

This proposal, which is new in the long battle for open discussion, conceivably could serve to convince unbelieving officials that the demand of the people for open meetings, is a real demand, and not one that can be circumvented by trickery or evading the requirements of the Brown act on technicalities.

The requirement may seem onerous to those officials who are concerned with observance of the law, but at least, it would avoid the procedure of govern-

ment agencies splitting into sub-committees to keep government business secret, and also of calling executive sessions for a legitimate purpose under the law and later transforming them into a session where business the people are entitled to know is discussed.

Senator Marks happens to be one legislator who is thoroughly convinced that the right to know is inherent, and also one who considers there should be no loop-holes in the law which

would allow closed sessions of state and local agencies.

He says there is no reason why a sub-committee of a public agency should avoid the Brown Act by having less than a quorum of its members present.

As to the measure requiring affidavits, the senator said this would "make it certain that the shield of secrecy will not be permitted for matters which are required to be discussed in open meeting."

Eventually, officialdom may get the idea.

Your Right to Know  
Is the Key to All Your Liberties

## Comment and Opinion

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### Artful Dodgers

The practice of hiding notices of public works to be performed from the people whose property will be involved and who will be asked to pay the bill has been growing at an alarming rate in recent years.

Notices inviting bids for highway programs under the Division of Highways illustrate the point.

A recent bulletin from the Department of Public Works listed highway construction projects throughout the Southland, including a \$500,000 project for San Diego Freeway landscaping in the Torrance-Carson areas.

Unless a contractor happens to run across one of the obscure little building trades papers which are supported by the Division of Highways advertising (at rates greater than most community newspapers charge), he will have no chance to bid on the job.

Historically, the call for bids on public works projects is done to inform the public and the taxpayer that public funds are being expended on a public construction contract, where the project is located, and about how much it is expected to cost. Hiding the notice in a small trade paper with an unreported circulation certainly defeats this intent.

We believe the Highway Commission policy which puts all such bid notices out of the reach of the communities involved is in error and suggest strongly that it be corrected.

Certainly the contractors have a right to be given proper notice of the projects being planned. Just as certainly the public has a right to know what the projects are and how much it will cost. The present policy denies the public this right.

### Tuition a Must

The state legislature is once again slated to open debate on proposals of charging a tuition fee at the colleges and universities throughout the state.

There is actually little to debate — a tuition fee of some kind, be it graduated or across the board, should be levied now.

Taxpayers throughout the state certainly, by now, have had their fill of watching the college campuses go up in smoke. They should be tired of seeing a handful of professional agitators disrupt an entire campus for days, weeks and even months.

A tuition fee would serve to weed out some of these professional students and make room for youths really concerned about getting an education.

Obviously, a tuition plan, estimated to bring in some \$35 to \$37 million annually, would take some of the burden off of the state's taxpayer.

Opponents to a tuition plan have always been concerned about the minority student and his inability to pay. Yet, they fail to mention the literally hundreds of state scholarships that go unused every year because of a lack of applications.

The basic requirement for these stipends is "need."

We believe that quick action by the legislature in approving a tuition plan would reflect the taxpayer's feelings.

We're tired of the financial and civil chaos on our campuses — and we hope the legislators are too.

### Other Opinions

Technology is capable of marvelous things and has only begun to face the challenge of squeezing the utmost production from present food sources and discovering new ones. But one thing technology cannot do, and that is to add one inch to the size of the earth or one particle to the finite supply of resources the earth possesses.—*Pomona (Calif.) Progress-Bulletin.*

This nation has been "married" to the kind liberalism that has brought forth the welfare state philosophy, intentional deficit spending, and has brought us to the brink of socialism. . . . The people have learned that liberalism breeds the permissive society which would, unchecked, destroy our system of government.—*Cambridge (Md.) News.*

### Red Carpet



ROYCE BRIER

## New Pulsing Space Clues Baffling Our Scientists

In the 19th Century, astronomers believed they understood celestial mechanics, that is, the structure and functioning of the universe, so-called.

They knew our star system, the Galaxy, was in spiral motion, but they did not know its magnitude. They knew stars underwent a birth-aging-death process. They considered what they called nebulae, filmy areas of light, some in spiral form, adjuncts of the Galaxy.

In the 20th century they discovered the nebulae were star systems like the Galaxy, independent of it and far removed

from it. This postulated an incalculably large "universe" than had hitherto been conceived. They also learned a great deal more about the life-aging-death sequence. The aged star was as different

from the younger, as the doddering old are from vigorous middle age or infancy. Our sun is middle-aged. The observed changes of star-life opened an entirely new field in astronomical theory.

In 1054 A.D., Chinese astronomers noted a brilliant new star-like object, brighter than Venus at sunset, visible in full daylight. Then it faded. It required almost 900 years to identify it with a long-known glow called the Crab Nebula, which is in our Galaxy about 6,500 light years distant.

A nova is an explosion of an old star, which suddenly increases its brilliance several hundred times. We observe many yearly. A supernova is of another dimension, a light increase of several thousand times. It occurs about three times a millennium in our Galaxy. We know this because we see supernovae born in other galaxies.

Crab Nebula was a supernova, the glowing gas debris of a star. It is 30-40 trillion miles in diameter now, and still expanding. Big telescopes resolve several bright points in the nebula, possibly fragments of the original star, but not much headway was made in understanding them.

Pulsating stars having periods of hours or days have been studied for years. But two years ago, astronomers pursuing stellar idiosyncrasy, observed objects which flash in seconds, or split-seconds.

These are called pulsars, and each has its own, infinitely accurate, timing. Among several theories, one was that these ob-

jects are what are called neutron stars, a sort of cinder of a former star, its atoms packed to inconceivable density. They may be smaller than earth, they apparently spin rapidly, and they were discovered by radio astronomy, which sensed their bright and dark phases. One in the Crab signaled about 30 times a second.

The other day this body came into range of optical telescopes, discovered by Drs. E. Joseph Wampler and Joseph S. Miller in the Lick glass on Mt. Hamilton. They produced pictures of the object, one beside a non-pulsar, the other of the non-pulsar alone.

This is one of the most puzzling cosmic phenomena of our age. How a tangible heavenly body could flash, disappear and reappear 1/30th of a second later, boggles the human mind. It doesn't look like something to be explained rationally.

Astrophysicists will try, though. In trying, they may learn a new physics is necessary to explain pulsars. We all may learn that the universe, so-called, never was what we thought it is.

### Morning Report

The nagging bit about the wholesale hi-jacking of airplanes is that neither the mightiest countries in the world nor their international association, the United Nations, can stop it. The International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations is so bugged that their members are threatening to strike.

That only makes our feeling of impotency all the greater. The airlines are the products of great brains, great money, and great skills. But a handful of Communists and nuts—the two groups are not completely one and the same—could bring the whole thing to a grinding halt.

The sad fact is that our mighty technology is an easy prey. A century ago, a hijacker could grab the reins of a stagecoach and go hell for leather. But the horses would tire in five miles and he would be captured.

HERB CAEN SAYS:

## Blind Man Verifies Name; Shows a Driver's License

Of human interest: This good-looking young blind man, led by a Guide Dog and accompanied by an older woman, walked into Jimmy Stewart's Treasure House on Sutter one day last week, in search of cutlinks.

Jimmy set a tray of links on the counter, and the young man ran his fingers over them. "These feel good," he decided at last, fingering a pair of gold nuggets. "I'll take them." So saying, he pulled out a checkbook and handed it to the woman, who filled in Stewart's name and the amount. Then the blind man extracted a rubber stamp and "signed" a facsimile of his signature.

"I suppose you'd like some identification," he said, and Stewart replied "Well, yes, that would help." At that, the blind man reached into a pocket and tossed out the counter — a driver's license!

Stewart looked at the woman with raised eyebrows. "Oh, it's his, all right," she whispered. "He was blinded in Vietnam." The purchase validated, the young man walked out with his new cutlinks and his old driver's license — still valid, but forever worthless.

Please do not feed the graffiti: "The Maharishi uses Compoz" (Blue Unicorn) . . . "God's will is still in probate" (noted by John Walker in a Berkeley Coop phone booth) . . . "Bishop Pike's new book was ghost-written" (George Himman) . . . "No man loves a crushed flower though it be crushed by his own hands" (women's john, Latitude 38, Sausalito) — and the ladies are more poetic, all right).

WILLIAM HOGAN

## The Impossible Tasks of Hercules and Other Tales

There is a strange little book around titled "Whose What?" by Dorothy Rose Blumberg a New Yorker who enjoys mathematics, puzzle games and curiously obscure research projects. This is a reference book for odd expressions that have entered the American language, among them, Morgan's Raiders, St. Vitus' Dance, Gresham's Law, Queen Anne's Lace, Robin Hood's Barn, Balaam's Ass, Jacob's Ladder, Halley's Comet, King Solomon's Ring, Hobson's Choice and Pandora's Box.

The compiler admits the collection is far from exhaustive. The idea was limited to simple

ground rules: the "who" must be a person, real or legendary; the "what" could be, but not necessarily, something other than what was literally meant by it. Thus, the compiler barred "cat's cradle" and "baker's dozen." In went "Fingal's

Report from Our Man in San Francisco

edgeably: "There's Monroe, the sixth President." "In that case," announces Jimmy "it should be a statue of John Quincy Adams. Monroe was the fifth President." Pete loudly to some passing legislators: "Anybody around here in favor of lowering the voting age to nine?"

Memorable sight Tuesday in Golden Gate Park: Vincent van Gogh walking into the de Young Museum! This would be Vincent W. van Gogh of Amsterdam, the nephew of the immortal artist, who slipped quietly into town to arrange for a showing late this year at the de Young of 70 paintings and 50 drawings from his incomparable collection of Van Goghs, most of them now housed in a Dutch museum. How much are they worth? "Well," replied Mr. Van Gogh, a sprightly man in his 70s, "I've never given it much thought. I am an engineer and have always been fully capable of earning my own living. I do not contemplate selling any of my uncle's pictures, so they are at once valueless and priceless."

Animal kingdom: You should've been there! Here's this Lincoln Continental parked near the corner, and in-

side is the cutest little white monkey, wearing diapers, you ever saw. One window was down a couple of inches to provide air — and pretty soon quite a crowd gathered. A nice old man and a nice old lady got too close — "Cootchy-coo!" — and the monkey suddenly reached out and snatched off their eyeglasses! Two hours later, they were still standing there, waiting for the owner to return and retrieve the spectacles. . . . Then we have Hal Stein of Crane Pest Control, who was called to the Children's Zoo about a job. He walked into the front office and nobody was there. Only one pig, one snake (boxed) and two baby llamas. "Anybody here?" called out Hal, and a voice from the next room cried "Come in!" Business card in outstretched hand, he opened the door to find — a mynah bird. "The discussion was limited," reports Hal, "so I left."

Funny old town: Love is her only name and for two years she has sold Love-burgers at 1568 Haight. But she couldn't come up with the February rent, so early last week she told her hippie clients she'd be closing Friday. That morning, five hippies walked in, opened a hankie on the counter, counted out \$215 and said shyly, "Here, Love." She'll be open through February, at least.

Gratito grabbed by Gar Smith in Berkeley: "By definition, the Selective Service discriminates." And this in the Blue Unicorn on Hayes; "Timothy Leary drinks martinis."

classical data, the meaning of which we all suspect lies somewhere in the back of our minds, or our reading. "Roberts Rules of Order?" Well, yes. But if I were competing for a refrigerator on one of those old radio quiz shows, I'd say Roberts was an Englishman, and I would lose. This manual of parliamentary procedure, first published in 1876, was written by Brigadier General Henry Martyn Robert of Robertville, South Carolina. It was intended to provide "a maximum of liberty within a necessary framework of order," presumably for students at West Point, where General Roberts headed the department of military engineering.

Well, McGuffey's Readers, St. Elmo's Fire, Darwin's Finches, Dido's Lament. There are scores of definitions in this entertaining and informative little book. It comes in a box, labeled "Pandora's Box" (a casket containing all the evils of the earth and belonging to the first woman, according to mythology, to come into the world of men).

You learn quite a bit about "Caesar's Wife" (Pompeia, his second of three), who must be "above suspicion." And a great deal, too, about "Hercules' Labors," the 12 seemingly impossible tasks (originally 10) which the Greek hero was ordered to perform for the King of Mycenae.

This continues to be an intriguing collection of throwaway or obscure historical and

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