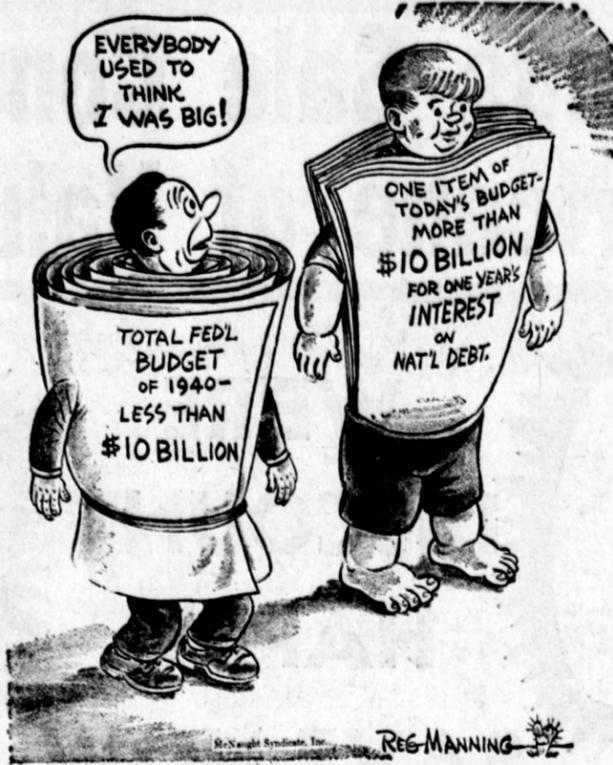


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Just A Growing Boy



New Assessor Speaks

Los Angeles County's new assessor, Philip Watson, revealed in person to a luncheon audience of Torrance industrialists this week the thinking back of the reforms he has under way in his office. Although he discussed his program with a degree of candor not usually associated with a political office of such magnitude, Mr. Watson must have impressed his listeners, if their comments made following the meeting were indicative.

The new assessor is personable, to be sure, but he seems to be carrying out the campaign promises, that won him what many labeled an "upset" victory over an outstandingly popular political figure, in a very forthright manner. He has a long, hard row ahead and his personally established goal of complete equalization of assessments within three years seems optimistic at this time.

Watson the candidate called deputies of the assessor's office "snoopers" a distasteful breed of Americans if there ever was one. Under his new regime, he says with a twinkle in his voice, they are dignified only as "deputy assessors."

Assessor Watson emphasizes the fact that his office does not have anything to do with creating tax rates. The office is concerned only with establishing fair and equitable evaluations on the millions of real estate parcels and personal property in Los Angeles County. This can be done, he believes, by eliminating some archaic practices that have "just grown" like Topsy, installing automation and streamlining of methods generally.

With the federal government committed to deficit spending, it becomes more and more imperative that every other tax levying body throughout the county must strive for economies. Certainly the majority of individuals and corporate taxpayers in Los Angeles have about reached their capacity.

The 'Awful' Difference

Last December, as in a legion of past Decembers, the American people bought Everests of Christmas gifts. The stores, as always, were loaded with an infinite variety of wares. The buyer was limited only by his own tastes, judgments, and pocketbook.

The American retail store, large or small, chain or independent, provides a perfect contrast between an economic system based on free competition and free choice, and an economic system based on official decree.

In the Soviet Union, despite its vast population and its wealth of natural resources, the shortage of consumer goods has become so acute that Premier Krushchev has been complaining, and official heads have rolled. In Red China—also with a vast population and a wealth of natural resources—only subsistence items, food included, can be found in the stores, and even those are in tragically short supply.

Now we have another example, far closer to home. A short time ago Castro's government nationalized all of Cuba's shoe and clothing stores, and established a tight system of rationing—most Cubans can't obtain shoes at all. Then, just before Christmas, according to an AP wire dated Havana, it was ordered that all goods, of whatever kind, can be sold only to mothers of infants or expectant mothers. The AP quotes a leading Cuban newspaper as stating that should a woman's "pregnancy not be evident, she must have a medical certificate to demonstrate it." How would you like to walk into an American retail store—and be greeted with an order like that?

A Bargain Bettered

One of the best bargains Californians have, their public utilities, now are able to offer an added benefit—a substantial cut in natural gas rates. This reduction, totalling approximately \$16 million, comes as a result of long effort by the gas utilities and State Public Utilities Commission to get the chief out-of-state supplier, El Paso Natural Gas Co., to submit a new rate filing with the Federal Power Commission. This has been done, and the FPC has approved.

According to officials of Pacific Gas & Electric Co., which provides gas to most of Northern California, and Pacific Lighting, whose two subsidiaries, Southern California Gas Co. and Southern Counties Gas Co. supply the southern part of the state, the rate reduction will mean a savings of about 10 to 20 cents a month for the average user.

What's wrong with making an issue out of the promises made by a politician after he's elected to office, from the President of the United States on down.

Personal bankruptcy laws are so loose a man can be free to buy a new \$3500 car only days after he is legally shed of his obligations.

A man may threaten and yet be afraid himself.

Opinions of Others

Hitler's first step was to seize the German school system, then the newspapers and radio stations, and then to burn the Reichstag. It was the seizing of the schools that put the Nazi state on its way. From then on Hitler and Goebbels directed the curriculum and thus the guidance of thinking, starting with youth.—*Shreveport, (La.) Times.*

As a citizen, you are a shareholder in the United States. Do you take an active interest in its government, studying proposed legislation, spending programs, et cetera—while they are still being discussed, or do you just gripe about them afterwards?

Carry the analogy into everything of which you are a part—and then ask yourself whether or not you are an investor.—*Birmingham, (Ala.) Union Labor News.*

ROYCE BRIER

Soviet Visitor Can't Ditch Own Police

You never saw the late Joe Stalin bouncing around the United States, plodding our cornfields or lamenting the prohibition on Disneyland. He left that to Comrade Khrushchev.

Ever since the Comrade's less distinguished comrades have been visiting in small groups, technical, farm or cultural. All reach New York, and some reach Pittsburgh or Detroit, or even the West Coast.

These are in the main lonely groups, due to the language barrier, though there is also a political barrier. Yet they are no more lonely than comparable American groups herded about the Soviet Union.

A Briton, Frenchman or Latin American comes here freely as an individual, say on business or in some intellectual pursuit. Many have scattered friends here, and if there is a language barrier, it is not too difficult.

You can see them occasionally in some public place, and they are not lonely. They can go anywhere an American can go, even to Disneyland, and their governments have no interest in them, nor has ours, if their visas are in order.

This severe segregation of Russians from the American hosts, and the reverse segregation of Americans in Russia, is a hell of a way to run a world. The normal restrictions are not applied intelligently, but peevishly. Russian officials have a spy-camera neurosis, and American officials are suspicious and offish, and by osmosis this reaches the travelers and their hosts.

V. P. Nekrasov, Soviet playwright, has just written about a visit here two years ago with a score of teachers and journalists. The group had a leader, of course, designated by Moscow.

Nekrasov felt let down, but more by his own bureaucratic system than by the Americans.

A Bookman's Notebook

'That Summer in Paris' Tinselled '20s Memoir

Morley Callaghan is the Canadian journalist and novelist, who in the years just after the first World War, worked with Ernest Hemingway on the Toronto Star. Hemingway encouraged his friend to continue to write fiction. Later, in France, Callaghan joined the famous expatriate literary set, and Hemingway introduced him all around.

In "That Summer in Paris," Callaghan presents "memories of tangled friendships." It is another version of a famous story... the literary 1920s in Paris... and it is a good one. Callaghan, among other things, acted as Hemingway's sparring partner in those days (Scott Fitzgerald once held the towel). He wrote for the little magazines in Paris. A very able writer, Callaghan never reached the great public reputation that some of his contemporaries did with their work. But he was a part of that Paris, all right, as these anecdotes and sparkling literary reminiscences show.

While all this may suggest the old Sinclair Lewis title, "The Man Who Knew Coolidge," the book is further documentation on a revolutionary period in American letters that seems to become more romantic as the years recede. Sudden thought: Will the

1960s, say, be remembered with such minute documentation by the literary historians? Who boxes with whom today—Norman Mailer, Herbert Gold? Most writers now would not be caught dead at a bullfight; historically, it would not be proper. Irwin Shaw skis in Switzerland. But who this side of Robert Ruark would dare to hunt big game near Kilimanjaro now?

This is idle musing, surely. But the people Callaghan writes about seem to have been members of some private club, all on a mass literary-emotional binge. What Callaghan deals with is nostalgia. For instance, Callaghan recalls: "But that first night, sitting there as strangers (the bar Coupoles), wondering hopefully if Joyce, or Pound, or Fitzgerald, or Ford Maddox Ford, someone we would recognize, might pass by, we didn't feel lonely or out of place. The corner was like a great bowl of light, little figures moving in and fading out, and beyond was all of Paris..."

Yet in these memoirs, we do see Sinclair Lewis putting on a vaudeville show, and the boxer Hemingway spitting blood. Joyce plays a record of Aimee Semple McPherson, the Los Angeles evangelist, for the laughs. Hemingway had to be the champ in every-

AFTER HOURS By John Morley

Inside Washington Notes Cover Varied Subjects

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Farewell to "Cuber." Covering President Kennedy's State of the Union message it was apparent that the record jokesmiths had gotten under his skin.

Gone were the "Cuber," "Africker," and nearly all the other Bostonese "er," which were as personal to him as a toothache, but furnished both the amateurs and pro reconteurs with a lot of material. We're sorry to see them go, for it was a part of his charm and gave up simple Californians a chuckle now and then.

On Cutting Taxes The President is proposing a whopping \$13.5-billion tax cut over three years... and \$6 billion at annual rates beginning this year.

He knows he'll never get it, but it sounds good to the voters.

It appears that his theory is that a tax cut will infuse the U. S. economy with extra dollars to spend.

But how can we be sure? A taxpayer with a wife and two children, earning \$3,000 a year, now pays \$60... under the proposed law he'll save \$18.

One earning \$10,000 now pays \$1,372; he'll have \$304... one earning \$25,000 now pays \$5,824; he'll save \$1,114... all under the standard deductions.

How many of these people will spend the savings and how many will put it in the bank?

The banks are already loaded with idle funds. That's our trouble. Federal free-wheeling spending has frightened investment capital.

Slight of Hand Economics We watched the President light up the roster with reference to a "domestic Peace corps," "medicare through social security," "federal grants for development of transportation, natural resources, etc."

Tax cuts are meaningless as a stimulus to the wage earner who will save \$18 to \$50 a year, then have it all or more withheld from his pay for "medicare under social security" and to pay the interest on further deficits. It doesn't make sense.

A domestic Peace corps at the established cost of \$9,100 a year per volunteer, as confirmed by Peace Corps Director Shriver, would put us further in the hole of deficits.

Notwithstanding the lofty purpose of improving the Indian reservations, urban redevelopment, creating centers for delinquents, schools for the mentally retarded, etc., it just isn't possible to do all this and cut taxes, too.

Maybe we missed his point... but the President's costly new "public-aid program" is not consistent with his promise to "hold total expenditures for all purposes other than defense, space and fixed interest charges below this year's level."

Traveling across the country to Washington, it seems that the higher temperatures in the North and sub-freezing night in the South indicate that many weather bureau boys flunked their geography.

We understand the President's humanitarian instincts to meet certain needs of people through federal projects. But certainly not at the danger of economic chaos when chronic welfare-spending keeps piling up deficits upon deficits, at a time the country, he says, is "prosperous." If we can't pay as we go during "prosperity," God help us during recession.

Republicans are strongly lining up for Governor Rockefeller here for 1964. His family is at least 10 times richer than the Kennedys... and that's what it takes these days... lots of "oil."

The Congo Mess The state department word around the capital is that Katanga's Tshombe is through. Maybe so, for the time being. But if we know Africa, they will have to kill or lock him up. For the interventions of UN troops paid by U.S. tax dollars and forcing reintegration is not the way to influence Congolese.

It's the same kind of high-danded UN politics that handed Indonesia to Sukarno... then West New Guinea to Su-

karno, and tolerated Nehru's violent seizure of Goa.

UN Representative Ralph Bunche's statement that he will give Tshombe a last chance to surrender Kolwezi peacefully is just as phony as the rest.

The UN wants to prevent bombing Kolwezi, not to help Tshombe save a little face, but to grab the Congo's great industrial center intact, for its destruction will lose millions in revenue.

Political Chiseling of the Law In California the Democrats got by with hiring "pre-cinct workers" at \$10 a head in the last election... but here in Washington the political chiseling goes big-time. Listen to this.

Under sanction of the White House, civil service employes

were pressured to buy tickets at \$100 each for the "gala second anniversary of the inauguration of President Kennedy."

We were invited to one of dozens of cocktail parties throughout Washington in advance of the "gala" as a free-loader, which we didn't accept, after being impressed that outside the press everybody else had to cough up the \$100 for the "gala-ticket."

The implication is plain. Kick in or else.

Under the law these civil service workers are barred from partisan political activity. The law is supposed to protect their pay checks.

President Kennedy, of all people, should never be a party to such flagrant political chiseling.

Our Man Hoppe

Sex Angles In the Capital

—Art Hoppe

For several years now, while working on my book, "Strange Customs in Washington & Other Savage Lands," I've been meaning to get around to writing the necessary chapter on "Weird Native Sexual Fetishes." But I feared a lack of reader interest.

Scientific duty, however, calls. And those uninterested in sex can simply turn to another page. Like Page... well, they can go weed the garden.

Now then, let's those of us who remain begin by asking ourselves: "Is there sex in Washington?" The answer is a ringing: "Yes, but not much."

You see, the natives are divided into, basically, two sexes: Girls and politicians. And the two sexes have widely dissimilar interests. The girls are interested in politicians and the politicians are interested in politics.

As you know, each politician has a personal diety called his image. Which he worships devoutly. Part of this dogma of this strange cult requires that he like girls. But not too much. Thus he must be seen among the other natives occasionally with a girl. But not too often. Twice a week is thought best.

His difficulty arises in selecting the right girl to be seen with. She must, of course, be comely, well groomed and vivacious. But above all, she must be of the right caste. A GS-18 politician (also called "deputy director, etc.") would never dream of dating a GS-6 ("clerk-typist, etc.") girl. Except in her apartment. As in most primitive societies the caste system is exceedingly strict.

The politician must also consider what tribe the girl belongs to. The girls from important tribes such as the White House, Capitol Hill or State are much in demand. But girls from the lesser tribes, such as Agriculture, Interior or Bureau of Mines are shunned and have little to look forward to but hard toil and spinstership.

Once the politician has found a girl who meets the rigorous demands of caste, tribe and general suitability to his image, he invites her to one of the native folk festivals. They enter the room arm in arm, he gallantly removes her coat and waits until all the other natives have had a chance to whisper, "Who's that with what's-his-name?" Then he leaves her.

The reason he leaves her is to go to make contacts and talk politics with all the other politicians present. Because this is his vocation and only interest in life.

The girl, meanwhile, is left to talk to all the other girls all the other politicians have brought in order to make it appear they like girls. Each girl, of course, does her best to imply that the politician who brought her is madly in love with her and wishes to mate with her.

So, therefore, both sexes—girls and politicians—are constantly promoting the myth that the other sex is interested in the opposite sex. And, over the years, this has given rise to the misconception in the outside world that there is a good deal of sex playing among the natives.

Actually, if it were not for a constant flow of immigration from the civilized world, the natives would have long since died out.

Naturally, as in all backward societies, there is a small group of enterprising natives who are attempting to overthrow these traditional sexual taboos and fetishes. Night and day. Should they succeed, we would be faced with a frightening population explosion. At the moment, however, the danger appears remote.

Morning Report:

This \$13 million tax cut they are talking about giving us is not going to be all gravy. No patriotic citizen can just take his savings and put it into the cookie jar or under the mattress. No sir, we have to go out and spend it fast. Preferably on hard goods that will get the national economy moving ahead. With vigor.

Well, Mr. President, I checked this house—room by room. Already in place I find an electric knife sharpener, refrigerator, can opener, dishwasher, hair dryer, laundry, pencil sharpener, vacuum cleaner and phonograph.

There seems nothing left to plug in except me and this typewriter. Comes the tax cut, we both pledge to do our part.

Abe Mellinkoff