

Press-Herald

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A Councilman Explains

Jet-plane junkets to the fun spots of the western hemisphere by the city's councilmen were upheld this week by Ross A. Sciarrotta Sr., who claimed many money-saving measures instituted in the city were the direct or indirect result of conferences and conventions.

While Mr. Sciarrotta's defense of those trips for which he has drawn public money is entirely reasonable, some of the conclusions he drew about their benefits may be disputed by those taxpayers who like to get the most for their bucks.

As a point, it might be argued that the U. S. Conference of Mayors meeting in Hawaii could shed little light on Torrance's intercity traffic problems — unless the mayors also were aware that some of Torrance's neighbors build barricades or plant steel pipes in the middle of the street to stop cars moving from one city to the other.

It might be reasonably assumed that the city's financial staff — whose current budget for salaries and supplies totals \$454,214 — could have come up sooner or later with the idea that rubbish and water billing could be combined for a slight savings to the city. In fact, we're not so sure it wasn't a finance department idea rather than the result of a junket by a city councilman.

The Press-Herald has maintained in the past that the travel budgets for councilmen have been stretched beyond what might be reasonable. We're not interested in comparisons to other cities, not in whether the city owes its councilmen such transcontinental junkets as a fringe benefit to assuage their hurt at being forced to serve for menial wages.

We here make it plain that we have no argument with Mr. Sciarrotta's defense of those trips he made. Nor have we an argument with his offer to swear that those councilmen showing up for the conventions were conscientious about attending the sessions.

We'll agree this far: if all the councilmen who draw city funds to attend conventions actually attend the sessions, the taxpayers' only worry is whether it's worth the thousands of dollars it costs each year.

It'll never come to a vote, as such, so each councilman will have to answer for his own trips at the polls when he stands for election.

The call for a 12-year study of the trips might be more interesting than some of them might guess. Particularly if someone could come up with a list of those actually attending the sessions for which money was advanced.

It's something to think about, isn't it?

Opinions of Others

A news article recently told of two children who sounded a false alarm in a downtown area. One was four years old, the other five. Children at such ages are full of pranks. Yet, their education must begin early in the world today. Children must be reminded, continually, that they should not attempt to play near fireboxes found on street corners. A false alarm which brings apparatus and men to an area has the risk to the firemen of a true alarm. Firemen lose no time in answering an alarm from a fire call box. Reminding children to keep away from that unusual-looking red box on a street pole is a public service which parents can provide.—Norwalk (Conn.) Hour.

Don't cuss the weather; nine-tenths of the people couldn't start a conversation if it didn't change once in awhile.—Harold P. Beason in the Smith County (Kans.) Pioneer.

It is high time for an abrupt termination of the all too prevalent "sweetheart" arrangement between government and business. When someone has indicated, in no uncertain terms, that he intends to cut your throat, it takes a fool to hand him a knife. Government control of a business while permitting the owners to retain nominal ownership and the taxpaying privilege is fascistic, while outright appropriation and ownership by the government is communistic.—Harington (Tex.) Star.

ALSO THEIR GRANDCHILDREN!



And They'll Keep Stopping Me



LETTER FROM VIETNAM

There's Time to Think During the Long Night

By DAVID V. JESTER
The night being sleepless, continues without mercy bringing contemplations of life, happiness, and sorrow. Lying here, viewing the surrounds of makeshift beds laden with protective netting, shelves and clothes lockers encasing mildewed apparel.

The thoughts of the basic difference between day and night are brought before me. Remembering the days with work and nights filled with activity, fun, and — of course — the inevitable weekend appeared, bringing forth journeys, parties, and freedom all of which are taken nonchalantly and with out the slightest of thanks. Life in the States has been taken for granted for so long it seems useless quest to inform the people of their wrongs.

A person who has committed the same outlandish acts, and then through the grace of God, is shown how other civilizations live and how they appreciate one (if any at all) daily meal of rice . . . begins to realize his wrongs and starts to condemn others of his freedom-loving country.

He, of course, remembers that he is just an enlightened American but that light will dim, of course, on his return and again become just another ungrateful soul that clutters the vast herd.

How is a switch made to stay on constantly. Bringing a constant ray of light carrying with it memories and ex-

periences and also a reminder to give thanks, however minor it may be — grateful that you have it. Always think back and remember the bowl of dried rice that supports a body similar to yours with twice the output.

OH!! The radio is sound-

Spec. 4 David V. Jester, 22, was graduated from Torrance High School in 1964. Now serving in Can Tho, Vietnam with the 51st Maintenance Company, he put down some of his thoughts on the situation he finds in Southeast Asia recently and sent them to his mother here.

ing a memory-making song that makes home a subject of wishful thinking, a longing to be back there that tears the heart apart. A hatred so deep dwells in the heart of every "short" soldier, of this country, its heat, its dampness, and its people that everytime he sees a slanted eye he unconsciously (tightens his stomach and clenches his fists.

Enough of this!! The following morning brought with it a gloriously refreshed feeling. A feeling that tells the world that you expressed what you felt during the previous night.

The sunrise is an inspiring sight here in Vietnam. The

sky is an overcast of thin black clouds with sections of azure visible. Below this, to the east, brilliant colors of orange and yellow are visible and glow as though the earth had opened up exposing its center.

The day proceeded as usual, beside, the fact that it was ten degrees hotter than the previous. The bodies of the laboring men glistened with drops of sweat while they worked moving mounds of sand from one section to another and then back once more.

Our labors done, the sun at last gave a surrendering plunge as it set behind the fields of rice, setting aglow once more the foreign sky with a rainbow of indescribable colors.

Before the hour of twelve had passed, I was presented with several unanswered questions. I asked myself: "Why do people try to ruin other persons just to advance themselves into a position that they know nothing of?"

Once again I realized this question delved into individual personalities. That subject is very hard for me to understand. I try to realize their situation, but the answers never appear. It's wrong, in my estimation, to consider yourself in command of fate, to know all of the answers and expect no rebuttals. I feel that an intelligent person will listen to opinions and then express his own and, judging between the two, find which is right and then follow through with action and completion.

Looking at myself, I see few objectionable qualities. But!!! From the viewpoint of even my best friend, I most likely have an uncountable amount of faults that glare in the faces of all. In the prospect of having these errors in MY personality, I look fervently for errors that are committed daily . . . without my self-knowledge of such.

Morning Report:

It's silly to claim that Lyndon B. Johnson is trying to sabotage efforts to end the war in Vietnam. It's silly because, not counting our guys getting shot at over there, nobody stands to gain more from peace.

Just for starters, he would save the political embarrassment of having one son-in-law sitting out the war by way of service in the National Guard. Then, there is the family problem of having his son-in-law-to-be due soon for shipment overseas. Added to that, LBJ has to raise our taxes 10 per cent to help pay for the war and drop any number of great vote-getting programs because he is short of money.

Votes — yours — are more important to Mr. Johnson than red corpuscles — his. He'd gladly give up some of the latter to grab some of the former.

Abe Mellinkoff

Memories that bless and

CAPITOL NEWSMAKERS

Busy No. 2 Man Keeps Mum About Presidency

By EDWIN S. CAPPS
Capitol News Service
SACRAMENTO—Lieutenant Governor Robert H. Finch is but a heart beat and 268 electoral votes from being governor of the nation's largest state.

To this point, Governor Ronald Reagan's run at the presidency in 1968 is in the nature of a Korean conflict or a Vietnam war — it's undeclared, with hawks and doves as to whether it's a reality or a dream.

As for the No. 2 man in a state where there's a considerable gap between the first and second positions, Finch is not saying anything. Neither is he putting on an act that he doesn't think anything is in the works.

"We don't discuss the presidency," Finch said, in noting that he normally has lunch with Reagan at least once a week and has ready access to see him. "I was the first on election morning (in 1966) to say that, in the interest of party unity, Governor Reagan should be a favorite son candidate from California."

"But I have 'bought out' of getting involved in these discussions," he said. "Anything else I'd say would be self-serving."

After nine months in office, Finch has been acting governor for 30 to 40 days — "the last time I checked it was more than 30 days." Finch said he had been asked by Reagan, as a policy matter, not to leave the state when Reagan was to be absent.

Should Finch and Reagan be absent at the same time, Senator Hugh M. Burns, D-Fresno, president pro tempore of the state senate, would be acting governor, a role he played a number of times under the previous administration.

Under this policy, if there is no change in the senate leadership in 1968, Finch would not be able to attend the Republican national convention as a member of Reagan's slate, assuming that Reagan's favorite son dele-

gation is elected to go to the convention.

"I have been a delegate or an alternate at five conventions," Finch said, "so I would not mind having the honor go to some deserving person."

As far as Reagan's favorite son candidacy and the delegation, Finch said it was important that the slate of

The Men in Action on the Sacramento Scene.

delegates be a broad-based one.

"If the purpose is party unity, obviously, we have to bring everybody into the tent," he said.

During his highly successful campaign last year, which culminated in his polling more votes than any other candidate, Finch had charged that his predecessor, Lieutenant Governor Glenn M. Anderson, was a phantom official and no one knew what he was doing or could find him. Finch was asked if he felt the public was aware of his office and himself now.

Finch said he spent at least two days a month at University of California board of regents meetings and another two days in his position as a member of the state colleges system. In addition, there's at least one day a month on the state lands commission, at least one day on the job placement training council, which he heads, and four days a month on governor's cabinet meetings.

"I've made more than 150 major speeches so far this year," Finch said. "Judging from the speeches and their reaction, and from the other commissions to which I've been assigned — the Commission of the Californians and others — I would think so."

Finch, whose office calls for him to preside over the state senate when possible, said he believes that, over the long haul, the lieutenant governor should become a totally administrative official. He should be an execu-

tive right arm of the governor.

Over the years in California politics, governors and lieutenant governors seldom have set records for being personally close. Finch was asked to comment on reports that he was "left out of" the Reagan circle or, conversely, that he worked closely on the team.

"On any state policy matter, I feel that I am fully consulted," Finch said. "I don't always win my point but at least I have the chance to make it."

"There is no problem with access to the governor," he said. "Also, under the broader cabinet approach in his administration, there is a good opportunity for all of his top-level administrators, as well as myself, to keep in close contact."

Finch said he finds his hours in presiding over the senate very enjoyable but not very productive. He said he feels there is a 50-50 chance the Republicans will make a move to oust Senator Burns and elect a GOP president pro tempore. The party line-up in the senate is now 20-20, which affords Finch the chance to break tie votes.

Finch already has done this once but it's doubtful many occasions will rise in the future as the Democrats could avert it by having one member not vote.

On the matter of senate organization, Finch said he felt "we're (the Republicans) going to take a real hard run at electing a president pro tempore next year." He noted there are currently four candidates for the job on the GOP side. Finch discounted any coalition which would team Democrats with Republicans to elect a speaker.

"I'm concerned that any Mickey Mouse arrangement might result in a similar situation in the assembly," Finch said. "Any working arrangement between Republicans and Democratic ultra-liberals wouldn't last two weeks."

HERB CAEN SAYS:

Hippie Girl Had Flat Opinions, Great Legs

I was sitting at Enrico's Coffee House with a 21-year-old hippie girl from Berkeley who had an annoying and flat opinion on everything (i.e.: "Classical music is a drag—who needs it?"). Actually, I would have invited her to get lost early in the game, except that she had fantastic legs of unbelievable length and symmetry; Dirty Old Man might as well have been a girl. She left of her own accord when, after one of her didactic diodes ("Nobody listens to opera any more"), I snapped: "Do you plan to remain all your life?" At this she retorted: "You're just jealous because I'm young and beautiful. I'll bet YOU'd like to be 21 again." "Baby," I said in my best Humphrey Bogart imitation, "I wouldn't even like to be 50 again."

How tell the kids of today about the glories of the bridgeless Bay and the curving beauty of the ferryboats? The steam train that

curricued its way to the top of Mt. Tamalpais? They were part of a generation's innocence: we thought, fags were simply "stiffed," that all the dikes were in Holland, and that girls were divided into two groups — those who Did and those who Didn't; anybody who went to a psychiatrist should have his head examined, as Sam said. As for not trusting anybody over

THOSE.
Status symbols: About 15 yrs. ago, there was a certain kind of phony who put a TV aerial on his roof even though he didn't own a set. Then came the people who have ski racks on their cars even though they don't ski, and the men who sprinkle salt on their toupees to simulate dandruff. Now Bob Shirrell of Santa Rosa introduces the new champ: a guy who drives around with all his windows up so people will think his car has air-conditioning. "This past summer," he reports, "he almost suffocated his family."

Report From Our Man In San Francisco

The hippies and other youngsters are getting their own kicks in their own way, and good luck to them. At 16, I had my first shot of bootleg booze in an upstairs speakeasy in Sacramento and at 18 I was turned on to my first marijuana cigarette by a Sacramento Police Sergeant who smoked one, too. Benny Goodman came to McFadden's Ballroom in Oakland and I haven't heard a more exhilarating sound before or since, and that goes for the Rolling Stones. We drove Model T Fords that would run over you while you were cranking them, but they were worth the trouble. We were probably all neurotic as hell but we didn't know it because there was nobody around to tell us.

Alan Grey Says . . .

Forty million dollars . . . To help control rats . . . Has just obtained approval . . . From our Washington bureaucrats . . . This money is available . . . To towns throughout the nation . . . With programs to eliminate . . . Their vermit population . . . The usage of this money . . . Has minimal justification . . . When ignoring the basic problem . . . Substandard sanitation.