

Some Surgery Needed

If the committee system is the backbone of a legislature—and it surely is—California's is in need of some corrective surgery.

Those millions of Californians who voted for Prop. 13 two years ago in the belief it was giving them an efficient and full-time legislature, at good salaries, would be dismayed if they watched an afternoon of committee functioning in Sacramento.

In partial defense of the lawmakers, it is not entirely their faults. They become victims of their own circumstances.

On three, and sometimes four, afternoons a week, the committee system in the legislature is working like a three-ring circus. There is so much going on you can't see it all. And neither can the legislators.

A typical situation occurred in the important assembly ways and means committee recently. The W&M committee has 19 members, thus requiring 10 for a quorum. It is one of the real workhorses of the lower house, in terms of the number of bills it must consider.

On this particular afternoon, Assemblyman Robert W. Crown, D-Alameda, was able to retain an attendance of just 10 members. Thus he told most bill authors that, if they had one vote against their bill, they'd better come back at a later time.

Dozens of bills were put over for two days, with the authors facing the same situation when they returned two days later.

Assemblyman William T. Bagley, R-San Rafael, attempting to miss the mid-afternoon logjam, scheduled a meeting of his judiciary committee for the evening, to hear an important bill on public records. Of the eight members of the committee, Bagley and two others showed up for the session. The result: no meeting.

For the most part, the poor attendance at committee sessions is not because the legislators are playing hooky. The problem is that the legislators have bills they want to present to other committees. And they may have to sit around for hours awaiting their turn.

It becomes a sort of musical chairs game—members of one committee are absent from their meeting because they are attending other committee sessions waiting to have bills heard. But the members of that committee are absent because they are back at the first committee waiting in line.

Of course, it always can be pointed out that, the fewer bills that are approved by committees, the fewer the new laws passed. And, the fewer the new laws passed, the better off the public in general.

This is a specious argument. While too many laws are passed, no doubt, it appears to be the intent of the people that the legislature should pass all laws and give full consideration to all proposals.

In reality, many of the logjams of May and June are spawned in February and March. In those months, the legislature operates at a pace that could be described, at best, as leisurely. They begin on a Monday afternoon and quit before noon on Thursday.

This means a full two days of the week—Monday morning, Thursday afternoon and all day Friday—are lost. If this time were spent in serious committee work during February, March and even most of April, the hang-up on bills would not be of such proportions in late May and June.

Such does not seem to be the way, however, a legislator may introduce a bill in January but he delays having it heard as long as possible in order to build up support. In some cases, the delay in bringing the measure to hearing is to collect as much mileage as possible from publicity.

Whatever the causes or cures, the committee situation is one which seems to be faltering more and more as the status of the legislature is increased.—E.S.C.

Opinions of Others

We are grimly conscious of the violence in the streets with its drama and tragedy, but we fail to get equally aroused with the student agitators who are eroding our values of fair play, citizenship responsibility and property rights. . . . It is becoming increasingly difficult for politicians to express their views on college campuses and get a fair hearing without being greeted by violence or intolerant demonstrations. . . . We have differences in this country and that is what makes it great. We need these differences, and we must see that the right for men to express their views, no matter how unpopular, is not encroached on.—Santa Paula (Calif.) Chronicle.

Morning Report:

I would like to say a word for Richard Nixon, in fact two words: "Cheer up."

He is running an effective, well-organized campaign from coast to coast. He is winning primary after primary. But the worst thing that can happen to a politician is his sorry lot. He is being ignored by both his friends and his enemies. If this sort of thing continues, he may win the Republican nomination this summer, and even the election in the fall, and nobody will know about it.

The Democratic candidates are understandably busy attacking each other. It seems that Governor Rockefeller, a candidate who is busy not campaigning, and Governor Reagan a non-candidate busy campaigning, should fill the silence gap and start talking about Mr. Nixon. It's their patriotic duty.

Abe Mellinkoff

That's What Bugs Us About Him



HERB CAEN SAYS:

Everybody Tries to Beat 'Laugh In' Gag Writers

Stand aside, Rowan & Martin, as a local disc jockey inquires: "If Judge Lenore Underwood had married Col. Sam Hickum, would she have been known as Hickum de Judge?" . . . Even members of her own entourage refer to Marlene Dietrich as "The Singing Hun." . . . Housewife upon learning that fresh shad roe is now up to \$4.50 a pound: "THEY taking the pill, too?" . . . Nightmare: Spending a quiet Sunday afternoon at home, drinking a beer and watching TV, when the Beardsleys and the Kennedys decide to drop in. . . . Columnist Radie Harris in the Hollywood Reporter: "Somehow I suspected it would never happen when months ago I scooped the news that Debbie Reynolds would make her bow in the musical, Tattered Tom. And she won't." . . . At the recent Davis Cup finals in Berkeley, Mexico's Rafael Osuna made a fantastic "blind" shot with his back to the ball. "Now that," said Dennis Van Der Meer, "is what I call hindsight." . . . Meet the man who keeps the Oakland sewer lines open: Mr. William Muck. . . . And who's the wize-guy who snuck the name of Hitler's grandfather into the Oakland Tribune's list of Patriotic Oaklanders?

No laughs: Dr. John Summerskill, ousted pres. of embattled San Francisco State College took off for Ethiopia in what a trustee describes as "a complete daze—I've seldom seen a man in worse shape." . . . Sausalito's Sterling Hayden, having completed his first novel after years of torture, is off to . . . Report From Our Man In San Francisco . . . Spain to co-star with Lee Remick and James Coburn in something called "Hard Contract." . . . Even tiny Hanford, Calif., home of a lavish restaurant called The Imperial Dynasty, makes this year's list of Holiday magazine's Restaurant Awards. San Francisco, with 17, is second only to New York in prize mentions, with L.A. placing three, Beverly Hills two and San Diego one. Oakland—The Action City!—fails to place, but what can you expect, when even the all-night diners there close at 11 p.m.

Bodkins' odds: Barnaby Conrad, bankrolled by Mil-

lionaire Gordon McLendon, is putting together a 30-minute TV film on the Kennedy assassination, using the flopped-still technique that worked so well in "Death of Manolete." Among Baraby's finds in Dallas: The only known photo of Oswald being arrested in the Texas Theater. . . . Add Conradiana: The eight-yr-old Santa Monica restaurant called the San Francisco is no more. Its new owners have changed the name to Barnaby's, because they admire him more than our city, and so it goes. . . . When Frank Sinatra says he's going to sing "for an hour" (which he said before a recent Oakland appearance) he means exactly that. Midway in "Chicago," he glanced at his watch, stopped at the end of the chorus, and that was that: 60 minutes to the second. Incidentally, any references to him as The Thin One are now about 25 pounds out of date—if you can imagine a fat Frank Sinatra. But when it comes to doing his turn as "just a saloon singer" (his phrase), he's still 10 miles ahead of the pack, rat or other-wise.

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WILLIAM HOGAN

Modern Nonwars Checked By Husband-Wife Experts

The Postwar Period? This is generally believed to have begun on Sept. 2, 1945, when the Japanese formally surrendered aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. It is true that not a single war has been declared since the nuclear age began. Yet since the Japanese surrendered more than 50 conflicts of major proportions have broken out all over the world—Greece, South Arabia, Cyprus, Hungary, Cuba, Indonesia, Algeria, Laos, right down to the third round, last year, between the Arabs and Israel. To say nothing of Korea and Vietnam.

Carl and Shelley Mydans have taken a close look at this period of technical peace in a vivid and distressing history, "The Violent Peace," a report on wars in the post-war world. Carl Mydans is the noted Life photographer; his wife, a writer and biographer. Many of Carl Mydans' own pictures are included here, although these recorders of modern violence have combed through the work of several other combat photographers for a graphic visual record of limited warfare in our time, plus the work of several correspondents in many fields. The book emphasizes the fact that men have been killing each other in a dismaying number of places during the past two decades and more.

With all the Mydans' dedication, I find this a most depressing series of documents and pictures which stresses the authors' point that "the roots of war are deep in man's heart, lodged in fear, ambition, a thirst for vengeance, hate. . . . Yet it is a remarkable and meticulously researched specialized history which provides a reader a clearer understanding of his embattled times. And if you are up to it, the photographs are stunning.

In Venezuela a priest hugs a dying soldier. . . .

SACRAMENTO SCENE

Governor Outlines Jobs For New Special Aides

By HENRY C. MacARTHUR Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO—A somewhat unusual press conference was called by Governor Ronald Reagan recently, apparently for the sole purpose of introducing special representatives of the governor's office in the state's six multi-service centers, as community relations consultants.

The press conference was opened by Lynn Nofziger, the governor's press secretary, who informed the press corps that only one question regarding the presidency would be allowed, and when one member of the press started to ask that one question, Paul Beck, another secretary, said Nofziger's comment was "meant to be facetious."

The ban on presidential questions, which have grown more than tiresome over the past several months, however, did not keep Governor Reagan from slapping the national Democratic administration rather hard during the introduction.

"This administration," he declared, "has promised little except to listen to their (the minorities) grievances, and then attempt, with the framework of the law, to make certain they have the same rights, and opportunities and the same chance to share in the good things of California that every citi-

zen of California should have." . . . Then he compared the California administration's efforts with the national administration's work along the same lines, delineating it as a program of broken promises, sudden changes, and bureaucratic activity which he indicated was not

in the best interests of the minorities. Asked just what the special coordinators are going to do to earn the \$900 per month the taxpayers will pay them, the governor explained they will report directly to his "Secretary for Human Affairs," who is Robert Keyes.

He also explained that one of the requests he has heard most often in meeting with minority groups is for more communications with the governor's office and more awareness of the minority problems. "These new appointments," he said, "not only provide the communications but also a part of their jobs will be to help break down the barriers that exist in any bureaucracy, and to rid state government of any vestige of discrimination. "I have great faith in all

State and local government are equipped already to handle minority problems, through the department of employment, industrial accident commission, division of housing, national guard, local police, and so on ad infinitum. But with elections coming up, more bureaucrats seem to be needed for "communication."

ROYCE BRIER

Opposition to the Draft Won't Lessen, He Claims

It is a theory here that any presidential candidate can pick up 8 to 10 million votes this fall by giving top priority to a pledge to end the draft.

These votes in part would come from college students coming of age in November, and their girl friends. But far more would come from the adult families of high school boys approaching 18.

True, there are other great issues facing the people, including the Vietnam war interlocked with conscription, but people vote with their emotions.

Yet a President cannot end conscription, he can only pledge to work for it, for it is a law and Congress makes it. Furthermore, the present reason for maintaining the draft is exceedingly complex, and closely related to the historical stage of the

nation. Many agree the draft should be "reformed," but few are willing to tackle its abolishment.

Many of the grounups of the country, and most of the politicians, have been startled and indignant in the past two years by the violence of feeling against the draft.

But they can save their Opinions on Affairs of the World

indignation, for again, the violence of feeling is inextricable from the nature of the war which the draft feeds with shooting manpower.

In the Civil War there was violent opposition to the first draft imposed on the Americans. But these primitive draft laws, North and

South, leaked like a sieve, and indeed, nine tenths of the fighting on both sides was by volunteers. The simple fact is that both sides believed they had to win the war, or die—and one side did die.

In both world wars there was draft opposition, but an overwhelming majority of the people were convinced they had to win the wars, or undergo a catastrophic decline in national fortunes. For let us imagine Adolf Hitler winning everything, and living into our time—where would we be today?

The underlying, the doom-

ing, cause of the rising hatred of conscription now is that an immense segment of the American people do not believe their fate rests on that dirty mess in Vietnam. All the pious sophistries of the President and Secretary Rusk have not convinced them, and the sophistries fall on more deaf ears every day.

The practical difficulties of straightway ending the draft are many: for example, if the Vietnam war must go on, it cannot be fought by volunteers without doubling or tripling the basic pay of the men. But try to convince a Congressman this would work.

Yet the practical aspects are beyond brief discussion. What may be discussed is that Americans are repelled by the principle of conscription. Their grandfathers emigrated here to escape European conscription, to be free men and women living their own lives. Now their grandsons and granddaughters are caught in the same trap, and they say the hell with it.

They say the hell with it if they are going to be trapped in wallowing around among the hordes of Asia, trying to change their Asian ways. It can't be done, and only some hard-shells in Washington think it can be done, or should be attempted.

If you are going to die, you had better die for America, and you had better be dream-sure that is what you are dying for. What's so strange about that?