

Torrance Herald

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Float Funds Needed

Word from the Junior Chamber of Commerce this week indicates that funds are still needed for the city's entry in the annual Pasadena Tournament of Roses parade, less than three weeks away.

Response to the efforts of the Jaycees and community service clubs to raise funds through sales of roses recently was less than spectacular.

Other public fund-raising events have been equally disappointing.

It would appear that there is no great public demand from the citizens of Torrance to be represented in the traditional Pasadena parade with a float.

That is beside the point at the moment, however. The city is committed to have an entry, design of the entry has been completed, much of the building done, and the machinery is all set to complete the float in the hectic hours before the parade next Jan. 1.

Still needed is more than \$500 to complete the project. The HERALD, like many others in town, is underwhelmed with the idea of having a city float in the parade. We question whether the city gets value received from its troubles and expenses.

For the 1962 parade, however, the city is entered in the parade, has expended several hundreds of dollars and committed itself to hundreds more, and needs still more.

We urge that the citizens and civic organizations get behind the Junior Chamber of Commerce in its efforts to finance the project. The days are short, and the money is needed today.

As for next year — unless there is an upsurge in enthusiasm for the entry, backed by substantial contributions, we'd say "skip it."

Opinions of Others

A Liberal is a guy who thinks the world owes him a living . . . A Conservative knows the world owes him a living — but he also knows he has to work like the devil to collect — *Farmingdale (N.J.) Booster.*

About the only thing that's the matter with promoting good old-fashioned Americanism is that it seems to offend good old-fashioned Communists. — *Bishop (Calif.) Inyo Register.*

In the good old days we used to walk to school, thereby getting fresh air and exercise. Now we have to have school buses pick up and return the youngsters. Because of the lack of exercise, we must erect gymnasiums and provide physical education instructors. The last, and best, is the case of the Westmore, N.Y., father who won a contract to tote his own two daughters to a private school in the family Cadillac. Dad collects \$1,300 for this service. — *Melrose (Mass.) Free Press.*

Morning Report:

The Russians, having shot off all the nuclear bombs they could spare, have agreed to sit down for another conference to ban testing of atomic weapons. This makes sense.

The earlier conference went on for one month short of three years and got nowhere. It didn't even beat the runs of "Oklahoma!" or "My Fair Lady." The comparison may not be fair, however, because there is nothing to hum after you leave a disarmament conference.

But in the interests of economy, I suggest we build a permanent conference building in Geneva instead of leasing space from the Swiss.

Abe Mellinkoff

ROYCE BRIER

Reds' Siberian Blast Turns Out to Be a Pop

Western man's introspective pride in his technological capacity started with the steam engine. It was going strong with the coming of electricity, but really became obsessive with atomic fission. We are particularly overbearing at having found the star-energy process. At first we thought we could explode the planet, but the hydrogen bomb let us down. Still, everything is in its infancy. In 1908 something hit over forested northern Siberia. It burned or felled 700 square miles of trees. Scientists thought it was a meteorite, and lately the kooky thought it might be an interplanetary bomb. After some study a Soviet scientist, K. Florensky, thinks it was the nucleus of a comet.

This counters the modern theory of comet nuclei, but as men have ever been scar-

ed of comets but never snared one, it would be nice for the Russians to have a first. The Siberian fall is reported as the biggest natural wonder since Krakatoa volcano in Indonesia blew an 18-square-mile island to smithereens in 1883. That one was heard in Asia 2,000 miles away, and the tidal wave reached Cape Horn.

A few years ago it was fashionable to say Krakatoa had an energy release several hundred times that of the Bikini bomb. Our own Meteor Crater in Arizona is a half mile wide and 500 feet deep, and the impact also outdid a hydrogen bomb, but drilling has failed to uncover the meteorite.

A few years ago the biggest of all known craters was found in the wilds of South Africa in the Johannesburg

area. This one is 26-33 miles in diameter, but its original depth is unestimated because the meteorite fell millions of years ago and soil erosion has almost obliterated the crater.

Scientists estimate the energy release at 1.5 million megatons, or 1.5 trillion tons of TNT, doubtless more TNT than technological man has yet produced. Anyway, it was about 28,000 times as big a wham as Comrade Khrushchev's proud 57-megatonner.

You would guess all Africa got a jolt that time, and dinosaurs died by the millions. It is possible of course that far larger meteorite falls have occurred, many lost in the seas, or craters now eroded. It is too bad technological man wasn't around to see what can be done by an expert, but while there's life there's hope.

But the Way You Are Saying It—



THIS WILD WEST by Lucius Beebe

Cynic Checks Statistical World; Offers a Shudder

At heart a cynic and basically distrustful of mathematics on the ground that its fabric may well comprise total and absolute error, I am the sort of churl who drives advertising copy readers to drink and brings dark despair to people who advance powerful arguments backed by imposing arrays of figures.

If I see a gasoline advertisement to possess six secret ingredients calculated to lend it the potency of 90 proof bourbon or a brand of baker's bread with eight specially healthful components, I am the sort of curmudgeon who says "Name them!"

Surveys that claim attention to the melancholy circumstance that alcoholism impairs the national economy to the extent of \$5,000,000,000, I rudely greet with "How do you know?"

Statistics have always seemed to me the mathematics of mendacity, lies with affidavits, the elaborate machinery of falsehood and deliberate deception. Show me a man who quotes figures to prove a point and offers in evidence statistics to advance an argument, and I'll show you somebody who, for whatever reasons may motivate it, is out to sell you a spurious bill of goods and trad spurious bill of goods and trade on your gullibility. Hell isn't entirely paved with good intentions; much of its par-

quet is covered with phony statistics.

No better evidence can come to hand than spiraling mathematics of hysteria that have been the pattern of the current fallout - doomsday-survival assault on American credibility.

I know damned well that when an expert says flatly that 56 per cent of a given community will perish instantly in an all-out atomic attack, or that fallout will produce fatal casualties of 769 out of every 1,000, or that a piano crate sheathed in tar paper and stocked with two weeks worth of enchiladas and ginger pop will provide a survival ratio for its inmates of one out of two, that the man who invokes this sort of things is a fool, a knave or an exhibitionist, or a combination of all three, and the newspaper that reports his statistics of Armageddon down to tenths of one per cent is not giving its readers the break of reasonable appraisal of the news to which they are entitled.

The editor who quotes, without intelligent questioning of its validity, any statistic placed in evidence by any government agency, advertising firm, politician, aspirant for office, medical "expert," efficiency "expert," sociologist, temperance advocate, race agitator, social reformer, or other generally recognized merchant of mendacity in wholesale and retail quantities is betraying his trust to his constituents.

All quoted statistics of any sort should be preceded by the word "alleged" like an inexperienced reporter trying to avoid libel. Figures trying to prove something should be identified as perilous as poisonous medicines are identified by skull and crossbones. All figures are at best guesswork; most are purely and simply mendacious and calculatedly false.

Until recently, I had felt that I was alone in the world in being aware that when I am confronted with arithmetic in any factual application I am confronted with a lie, that my total disbelief in figures was a special and unique perceptiveness on my part, not granted to others, no matter how intelligent or experienced in the overall falsity of what are presented as "facts."

There is, however, a wonderfully instructive compen-

dium of intelligent cynicism in the current issue of Fortune, a periodical you would in ordinary circumstances incline to associate with the fabric of total falsehood as demonstrated by IBM and other calculators.

It is a notable essay on the credulity of Americans when confronted with bogus evidence entitled "We're Drowning in Phony Statistics," by Daniel Seligman. I urge you to read it. You'll never believe a trend finder or argument substantiated by figures again, and you'll be wiser and happier for it.

Mr. Seligman, with the anatomical skill of a professional, simply disembowels the whole calling of the statistician, pointing out that the most flagrant dramatic statistics designed to have the maximum impact on the recipient are part and parcel, whole hog, lock, stock and barrel, based on the totally unknowable and therefore totally meaningless.

As a case in point, he quotes the completely undemonstrable hypothesis that gambling in the United States constitutes an annual drain of \$50 billion on the national economy.

He places in evidence the insurance company statistics of the cost of fires, hurricanes and dog-bite, although even the most credulous boob has always had a sneaking distrust of actuarial findings. It may well be that, added to their monstrous rapacity, the insurance companies of the world are its master liars.

Mr. Seligman has traced down the origins of the most urgent and compelling arrays of statistics to discover they were dreamed up by the washroom attendant or had no sources of positive origin of any sort save in unsubstantiated publicity handouts by pleaders for special commercial causes.

When you get through with this most enchanting of documents, you'll never again believe anything in the world that has statistics to prove it.

And in conclusion, I'll venture a statistic of my own to the effect that if every American for a year discounted in its entirety every statement in print and on the air supported by arithmetic evidence there would be \$500,000,000,000 less change hands. It might even put Fortune out of business, which would be a pity.

AFTER HOURS By John Morley

Some Basic Certainties To Hook Your Wagon Onto

CHICAGO—In these times of nuclear fears . . . the threat of communism from abroad . . . people across the nation in my forums ask repeatedly: "Can I be sure of anything any more?"

My answer always is: "Absolutely yes" . . . for the most important basic values in life have never changed and probably will never change. It is we who often get sidetracked by the pressures and contingencies of daily living and forget to recognize them.

We can be sure of . . . Nature. Has the beauty of the sky blue waters changed because of Khrushchev? The Pacific ocean looks the same from the window as it has looked from this same window long before our troubles with him.

Has the majesty of the snow-covered peaks from the Rockies to the Appalachians changed? Have the Mississippi and the Missouri and the Columbia changed? Have the autumn colors of the maple and spruce and the oak changed? Has the endless flow of the bubbling brook changed?

Has the look of the infant nursing changed? Has the smile in the cradle changed? Has the innocence of the child . . . the thrill of the first formal . . . the first day on the college campus changed? Have the mellowing, satisfying years of maturity changed?

Have the stars and stripes stopped waving anywhere in the world? We have lost some initiative somewhere along the line . . . but have our most basic freedoms vanished? Not on your life!

Life is anything but soft . . . never was and never will be soft. Unhappiness, insecurity, shock, illness, tragedy of one kind or another strikes all of us in a measure. We may lose some of our material possessions . . . robbed by men or by misfortune . . . but no one can ever rob us of the meaning of life, unless we let them.

Basically the world . . . or people if you prefer . . . are righteous. There is more integrity, honesty, godliness, sincerity, frugality . . . there is more appreciation and gratitude . . . there is more goodness than anything else. In the midst of all the pressures, the crises, all the treachery of man against man . . . righteousness prevails in abundance.

There is something in the heart and soul of man that responds in an emergency. Sometimes the worst among us respond as though a thousand angels extended a helping hand.

Every now and then some things appear to be wrong. But how sure are we that these are truly wrong? Is it not possible that our understanding of them may be wrong . . . and time may prove us to be in error about them? Isn't this possibility always present when we judge something as being wrong?

For every morning we emerge from our dwelling place . . . we see the sunrise . . . and every night we see the sunset . . . and every tree, every blade of grass, every grain of sand, every wave in the sea confirms the beauty of nature, untouched, unspooled. There is beauty in the warmth of the tropical air, or the cold crisp wind of the snow-covered road.

There is beauty in the unrewarded goodness of parents, loved ones and friends. There is beauty in the realization of ideas and ideals. There is beauty in faith and sacrifice. There is beauty in love of God and country.

There is beauty in hope . . . in the expectation of a better tomorrow. There is beauty even in the ugliest thing made by man, for it is surrounded by the majestic mountain that man can never

duplicate. There is beauty from the plane flying regularly 30,000 feet above the earth.

There is beauty in the conveniences and comforts of today's living. There is something beautiful about the modern car . . . air-cooled, or warm and cozy.

There is something beautiful in the modern home appliances . . . and the modern office, store or plant in which you work.

There is nothing we can do to change the past and there may not be much we can do to even change the present. But of this we can be sure: There is and always will be a road to walk on . . . and what is a road for, if not to seek the beauty around us?

As for the occasional rough road . . . be glad you walk over it . . . for you will appreciate the smoother one when you reach it.

Hoppe in Wonderland

Introducing! Miss Amanda!

Art Hoppe

"America is a republic, not a democracy," snapped Miss Amanda Quinch as she stomped in on her tennis-shoed feet. "Let's keep it that way!"

I asked what was on Miss Amanda's republican undemocratic mind. It usually being stimulating.

"Wake up America!" she growled, adjusting her bifocals with one hand while pounding on my desk with the other. "We must form a new organization to fight the insidious, internal Communist menace!"

I said we already had several hundred. At last count. "True!" she said. "I belong to them all! I am a Bazoorkaman second class with the Minute Men, a tap root of the Birch Society, a gem-like flame in the Torch-bearers of America, an important artery in The Network of Patriotic Letter Writers, a contributor of alarms to Project Alert in Los Angeles and Project Awake in Seattle, and a highly indignant member of the National Indignation Convention!"

The what? "The National Indignation Convention! It started in Dallas last month! More than 1,800 people! All indignant! It's spread to L. A.! Wake up, America! Be indignant!"

I said that was a good idea. But why did Miss Amanda want to form a new organization? "Because these are all suspect!" she muttered. "One man in the Natural Born Americans, Inc., has definite Caesarean tendencies! I must form a new group! One hundred per cent pure and right thinking!"

Wonderful, I said. How could I help? "It must have a name!" cried Miss Amanda. "Something with zing!" I said there must be a few left that no one had used yet. How about "Angry Americans?" Miss Amanda shook her head. "Piqued Patriots?" "Huffy Housewives?" "Fuming Fighters?" "Rinkled Resistors?" "Defenders in a Dune-on?" "Underarmed Protectors?" Miss Amanda scowled. "Ire, Inc?" "Umbrage, Uninc.?" None would do. I thought for a minute. I said I had it, a banner under which Miss Amanda and all her co-workers could proudly march. Just plain: "!"

Miss Amanda was delighted. She clapped me on the back and said I was a "real American!" I asked how many members she'd have in her new 100 per cent pure organization? "Just me!" she said. "I'm the only one I can trust! Wake up, America! And out she stomped, brandishing her "!"

Well, I didn't want to join the "!" anyway. I'm forming my own group. It's called "Grouchy Americans." The name describes exactly how I feel when a lot of noisy people decide what's good for me and come banging in to wake me up.

LIFE'S LIKE THAT

By FRED NEHER



USE CHRISTMAS SEALS AND HELP FIGHT TB!

