

Keep Safe From Fire

This is Fire Prevention Week, and it is good time for all of us to pause in what we are doing and give a thought to care with fire.

Too many fires need never have happened, and a little care in the part of all of us can reduce our tragic fire toll in lives and property destroyed.

On the average, about 1,000 fires start in homes in the United States every day. Last year 11,800 persons lost their lives in fires and more than 70,000 received bad burns.

And last year, dollar fire losses in the United States totaled \$1,265,002,000, a new all-time high and an increase of 4.6 per cent over the preceding year.

The tragic thing about all these fires is that three-fourths of them were the result of carelessness, according to the National Board of Fire Underwriters.

With a little care, lives can be saved and needless burning of property prevented.

1—Never leave small children alone. Even if you are leaving for only a few moments, get a responsible person to stay with them. When going out for an extended period of time, employ a baby sitter.

2—Small children and elderly people are the most frequent fire victims. If there are elderly persons in your household, plans should be made to get them out of the house quickly in case of fire.

3—Use care with cigarettes. Never discard a cigarette or drop a match without being sure it has been extinguished. It's a good plan to break a match after using just to be sure it is out. Keep matches out of reach of children. And never smoke in bed.

4—Keep a flashlight handy for use in dark places. Never strike matches or carry lighted matches or candles into closets or attics.

5—Keep your electrical appliances in safe condition. Take them to a qualified repairman if they have loose connections or frayed or worn cords.

6—Throw out old newspapers, magazines and other waste combustibles regularly, rather than let them accumulate in the basement or attic. These are the things on which fires feed.

7—Impress upon everyone in your household that in case of fire, first get everyone out of the house, and then call the fire department. Call the department from your neighbor's home, if need be, but never re-enter a burning house.

These suggestions could save your life, or the lives of members of your family.

You are the one who can help keep your home safe from fire.

Well It's 'Next Year'

That promise of no new taxes in California has gone by the boards in a far less subtle way than one might imagine. We refer to the one-cent additional tax on gasoline that went into effect in California the first of this month.

Last year the governor (then a candidate for re-election) promised there would be no new state taxes "next year." Well, this year is "next year" with three months to go.

In 1922 Pennsylvania, the first state to institute a gas tax, collected \$3,112,000. This year in that state motorists will pay an estimated \$382 million in state and federal taxes that now total 11 cents per gallon. The same situation prevails in California and every other state of the union.

It is amazing that motorists seem to take these taxes so complacently. One answer might be found in the way these taxes are hidden giving the average unthinking motorist the impression that the oil companies are responsible. He fails to realize that while the oil industry is discovering, producing and marketing petroleum products at prices the public can pay, it is functioning in a three-fold capacity. It is meeting a need for a vital commodity; it is serving as a gigantic tax collecting agency for government, and finally, it is a very heavy taxpayer in its own right—the government receiving the major share of the profits.

But in California this year motorists will be paying more and more in the "next years" to come if they continue to take in stride state tax increases the way they apparently are taking this one.

Mutual Trade Benefits

Business Jets, a division of Pan American World Airways, has just closed a contract with the French manufacturers of a 10-passenger Baby Jet aircraft to be sold in the United States and Canada. The planes produced under this program will cost some \$900,000 apiece and be acquired largely by corporations to provide fast and convenient travel for business officials offices and plants here and abroad. Pan American is organizing its airport facilities around the world to efficiently serve such corporate aircraft abroad. In addition, this unusual agreement is expected to provide foreign exchange earnings over the years for the United States as well as French, and thus help to reduce our balance-of-payments deficit.

The airframes for these small jets will be built in France. But the contract provides that they will be fitted with U. S.-built engines, along with flight instruments and other components of American origin. These will be exported for installation, and their value will more than offset the cost of airframe imports. So, it is estimated, net U. S. foreign exchange earnings under the cooperative U. S.-French program will total almost \$20 million.

Mutually-beneficial arrangements such as this will, it is to be hoped, be effected in many fields. Little by little, old trade barriers are being lowered. This brings profits to all concerned—not only in money, but in understanding between nations and their peoples.

This is an outstanding example of vision and business courage in pioneering in a round the world field which maintains the tradition of U. S. enterprise.

Ain't These Relaxed Tensions Wonderful?

James Dorais



ROYCE BRIER

Female Politicos Possess Controversial Capabilities

The sayings and doings of lady politicians under stress can be droll, and when they are on the national or international stage it can be a brawl.

A little-known national example is Jessie Fremont, wife of the nonpareil, John Charles, who went to Lincoln to upbraid him for cashiering the general. He said, "You're quite a lady politician," whereupon she flipped and had to be escorted out, to spread her lamentations to the newspapers.

Then there was Queen Marie of Romania who came to America after the Old War to pick up a few-score million. She fell in with press agents and gaggles of club

ladies strewn across the country, and her tour turned into an oldtime beer garden.

But latter-day candidate for the Donnybrook medal is Mme. Ngo Dinh Nhu, the logorrheic cutie from Saigon, who's star, on trows, has not yet reached meridian.

That is, you windmill in Belgrade, and you're only halfway to immortality. But let her touch down in Idlewild, and you'll see a spectacle the likes of which ain't been seen since Cleopatra rocketed into Rome.

She threatens to come, too, and the most sense she talked at Belgrade was that it would be like entering a "cage of lions." This is a mighty ele-

gant way to describe news-men, but they may live up to it.

Well, so far just Belgrade, where she's been at some meeting making speeches. For weeks now she's been cabling American news media saying President Kennedy is a little retarded for not liking the Diem-Nhu mobsters in Vietnam, saying Yankee newsmen are "horrible," and in a conspiracy to lie about the nice people who smash Buddhist temples and bat high school kids around.

The Buddhist priests and the kids are all Reds, she says, and here she and her charming relations are, standing stalwart for freedom and beautiful democracy, and all she gets for it is martyred.

This dame is all brass, and trims her utterance to the wayward wind. Says Americans are "cruel" to her, but she believes in American fair play. Says the report she would visit the U.N. a "canard," but American "press groups" are panting to hear her.

She averred she won't visit President Kennedy lest it "embarrass" him. Who asked her?

Quote

"The meek may finally get the earth, but we'll wager the Internal Revenue boys will be there to collect the inheritance tax." — Ron L. Coffman, Grove City (O.) Record.

BILL GYORGY, Millbrae — "I supported the Kennedy-Johnson ticket in 1960, feeling that youth and 'vigah' were what we needed to get the country moving ahead. But I'm having a nightmare. I'm seeing a Frankenstein monster of fiscal irresponsibility, hobgoblins of inflation, increased gold outflow, 'panned' deficits, and the blood sucking leech of governmental bureaucracy."

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Homeowners' Improvements Bring Higher Assessments

By JAMES DORAIS
"The best way to have your house reassessed is to take out a building permit, no matter how small."

Writing in the magazine California Homeowner, Robert Scrofani, chairman of the San Francisco Committee to Reform the Assessment of Private Property, quotes the above remarks of a prominent California architect to illustrate a question that is receiving increased attention among neighborhood and homeowners associations throughout the state: should assessment practices be changed to permit homeowners to remodel and improve dwellings without increased assessments and higher taxes?

Mr. Scrofani makes the point that for every dollar spent on new home purchases this year, 75 cents will be spent on home remodeling. How much greater, he asks, would the market be — how many more carpenters, plumbers and electricians would be put to work, how much more business would there be in the building materials lines — if home improvements were not subjected to the penalty of higher taxation?

Under state law, any increase in the value of a property must result in higher assessment. Many homeowners' associations are working for a change in the law. This would require a constitutional amendment, which would have to be approved by vote of the people.

A Bookman's Notebook

By WILLIAM HOGAN

The picture of Japanese treatment of American prisoners in World War II is based on the Bataan death march and other atrocities. Not all GIs were subjected to this extreme brutality; the Marines taken on Guam within a few days after war began were treated relatively humane — for a time.

"Yanks Don't Cry," by Martin Boyle, is about the Marines who were shipped to Japan and put to work on the docks. Boyle was one of them.

For the next three and a half years they retained the spirit of free men, sabotaged the war effort when they could, stole extra food from the cargo (often with the connivance of Japanese stevedores with whom they worked), and stolidly accepted the beatings of their Japanese guards when they were caught.

The progress of the war is mirrored in the day-to-day happenings. The early years saw the harbor at Osaka filled with vessels, but as the U.S. submarines and bombers took their toll, shipping grew scarce and the prisoners were put to work at other tasks.

When the American offensive reached Japan itself, the prisoners had to undergo the bombings along with the Osakans. A dramatic moment occurred when the Marines fought over whether they should attempt to rescue Japanese schoolchildren trapped in a burning building. And another when, after peace came, Marines let their hatred overflow and began to lynch the most brutal of the guards.

Overall, the conduct of the Marines is remarkable for its discipline, and the reader finishes with a full measure of pride in his fellow Americans.

Boyle, now a Los Angeles public relations man, also provides a low-level and fascinating account of life on the Japanese homefront during the war.

Notes on the Margin
... "T. E. Lawrence: To His Biographers," is a study by Robert Graves, who probably knew Lawrence as well as anyone, and Liddel Hart, the soldier-writer. The book is far removed from the conflicting and often easily-arrived-at-accounts of Lawrence today as the glamorous hero-enigma "Lawrence of Arabia," or the obscure villain-enigma. Doubleday publishes this \$6.50.

According to Mr. Scrofani, however, there is much that local assessors, within the framework of existing law, can do to encourage the maintenance of property without penalizing homeowners. What is required, he says, is a policy setting forth the categories of work that can be classified merely as maintenance, and which do not constitute an increase in value.

In the city of Richmond, he points out, homeowners are told the kind of work they can have done without adding to their assessed value. For example, installation of disposal units, furnaces, hot

water heaters, cabinets, cupboards, counters, plumbing and lighting fixtures, window sashes, sill and roofing, papering, painting and sanding do not bring additional taxes.

Most local assessments however, do not make this clear-cut distinction. The general policy is to increase assessments whenever a building permit is obtained for home improvements of any kind.

In an era of costly urban renewal, financed by income tax monies, Mr. Scrofani asks, what is the value of urban renewal showplaces when the homeowner, who wants to renew his home, too, is penalized for doing it?

Our Man Hoppe

Not Facts—Just Figures

Art Hoppe

What we ace political strategists worry about most these days is a candidate's recognition factor. "You can't beat somebody with nobody," we say. And all of us ace strategists agree the Republicans need a nationally known candidate to whip Mr. Kennedy next year. But they don't have any.

The best known they've got is Mr. Rockefeller. And the latest Gallup Poll shows he's known to only 85 per cent of the people. When Miss Elizabeth Taylor, for example, is known to 91 per cent. Although perhaps not personally.

In this hour of crisis the Republicans obviously face two choices. The first is to persuade Mr. Rockefeller to divorce his wife. And marry another one. After all, Miss Taylor is well known because she's had a dozen husbands, some of whom she was married to.

But isn't this seemingly practical solution a bit risky? True, it would correct Mr. Rockefeller's overly staid image. But would he have time between now and November to marry enough ladies? Would he perhaps not tend to mix up his speeches in the grueling days ahead? Pledging unemployed miners 100-karat rings and castles in Venezuela? And offering his next intended improved workman's compensation? It could be disastrous.

So the safest and wisest path for the GOP appears clear: they must nominate Miss Taylor.

There is no need to cite Miss Taylor's broad experience in both international and domestic affairs. Besides, we ace strategists never give a fig about qualifications. What we care about is Miss Taylor's figure.

The figure is frightfully important with us strategists. But it keeps changing. Mr. Eisenhower, as you know, was a Father Figure. This was unbeatable. Indeed, the best the Democrats could muster was Mr. Adlai Stevenson, as an Uncle Figure. He got clobbered.

In 1960, however, Mr. Kennedy, handsome and dashing presented the Romantic Figure, while Mr. Nixon, friendly and folksy, offered the voters The Boy Next Door Figure. The voters rejected the Boy Next Door. At least if he were going to be Mr. Nixon. And since then the Romantic Figure has reigned supreme.

So Miss Taylor's figure is unquestionably in vogue. And the questions we ace strategists must next ask ourselves are: (1) Does she project a more Romantic Figure than Mr. Kennedy? And (2) is her Romantic Figure better known than Mr. Kennedy's? Yes and yes.

Thus if the Republicans heed the advice of us ace strategists they'll nominate Miss Taylor. And there's no question her prettier smile, wavier hair and more stimulating voice, among other assets, will sweep her to victory over Mr. Kennedy. He'll be lucky to carry Boston.

So now that Miss Taylor's triumphal entry into the White House is assured, let us turn to other matters. Like who'll be the First Gentleman?

Of course, I suppose a few idealists will oppose Miss Taylor's nomination. "The heck with the strategists," they'll say. "The heck with choosing the most publicized candidate. Let's just pick the best man we've got."

Nonsense. These are perilous days. And it's certainly no time for either party to embark on a radical political experiment.

(Distributed by Chronicle Features)

Morning Report:

It's a new disease in Washington. Creeping non-politics.

The virus infected foreign affairs a long time, when politics were supposed to stop at the water-line. But it took Mr. Kennedy to turn the disease inland. In his big TV speech the other day, he said that the proposed new tax cuts were not political at all. Which meant right off the bat that the Republicans had no right to demand equal time.

You know how a virus is. Before long, everything in the Capital will be non-political. We might even consolidate the Republican and Democratic conventions. No need for all those noisy candidates. Just call the roll of states to see if they are still in the union.

Abe Mellinkoff