

Press-Herald

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A Landmark Week

This week has been a landmark in Los Angeles County's assessing history.

For the first time the property owners of the county are being notified of their assessed valuations. Not individually but through newspaper publication, so that they can see changes in the assessed valuation of their own property, and also the valuations of their neighbors' parcels. Such comparisons encourage equity and provide what County Assessor Watson has characterized as a "public audit" of his appraisers' workmanship.

It should be noted that Los Angeles County has more assessed parcels of property than any other comparable jurisdiction in the world. When the legislature enacted the statute providing for notification to assesses and making permissible the use of newspapers for such purpose it was pointed out that, allowing only a single line of small type to each parcel, it would take some 1100 standard-sized newspaper pages to print the full list of 1,800,000 parcels. This is what Assessor Watson originally advocated.

But then he and the board of supervisors, for reasons of economy, decided to adopt a modified plan under which the full listings (data for all parcels whether their assessed valuation changed or not) are to be published in only a portion of the county this year. Partial listings embracing only parcels whose assessment was changed are, however, being published in the remainder of the county. Thus, by the publication in the 112 suburban newspapers participating in the notification program, all parts of the county are being blanketed by one method or the other.

While the assessor says he is quite sure that the data as published for some 629,000 parcels throughout the county are accurate, apologies have been voiced for the manner in which they are being presented this year in this newspaper and others.

Originally the publications had been planned strictly to follow a street address arrangement for each map book area, with house numbers in ascending numerical order, and with the name of each assessee printed along with the assessed valuation of land and improvements. Parcels without a street address (vacant land) would have been grouped at the end of each map book list, by assesses' names, in alphabetical order.

Due to limitations of time for the programming of the old computer providing the "print-out" for the lists of assessments and assessment changes it was impossible this year to follow the original plan.

Instead, the much less clear arrangement had to be used that is now on the computer's magnetic tape and on the assessment rolls by map book, page, and parcel number. And as there was no space left in the single line of type for the names in addition to street addresses, street addresses only were used for all improved parcels and names only for unimproved properties.

An assessee can find his map book, page, and parcel number most quickly by referring to last year's tax bill. If he has no tax bill he should spot his probable map area on the map which is printed in this newspaper, and then find the map book number in the published list and thereafter the property by street address. Next year, Watson's office promises, the discovery routine will be made easier by rearranging the list in street address order, as originally intended.

In the meantime, the assessment listings are there — all spread out on the table for full inspection by everybody. If assessee has a complaint and cannot get satisfaction from the assessor's regional office, they can file an appeal with the newly established Tax Appeals Boards. The assessor quite obviously wants everybody to have a fair deal.

Constitution Week

Observance of Constitution Week throughout the United States this week offers a deserved tribute to a document which sets forth the greatest set of rules for self-government ever devised by the mind of man.

The U.S. Constitution, drafted by the most brilliant minds of Colonial America and signed by a handful of courageous men, has been of such enduring quality that it has been amended but a dozen times since the Bill of Rights put 10 amendments on the original document at its adoption.

The importance of the U.S. Constitution has been re-emphasized in recent years with the continuing assaults on traditions which Americans have cherished throughout the 170-plus years of its existence. The need to stand up and be counted was never stronger than it is today.

In this regard, the Boy Scouts of America will set up and man signature booths throughout Los Angeles County on Saturday and will ask Southern Californians to add their signatures to those of the original signers of the Constitution. In this area, a booth will be available at 290 Harbor Drive, Redondo Beach.

Opinions of Others

All of us react pretty much to our environment. When we're standing in an alley, we don't worry about our cigarette ashes. When we're in someone's neat and attractive living room, we do. It's the same with parks, picnic places, swim beaches and highways. The cleaner they are and the more attractive, the more we're inclined to keep them that way. And so are the other people. —Everett (Wash.) Herald.



HERE AND THERE by Royce Brier

Red Wolf Pack Barking At Saigon's Front Door

The man nominated to succeed himself now faces one of the toughest problems ever faced by a candidate and President—how to get out of the Vietnam mess.

Things are going down the drain in Saigon, and fast, visiting us with an overseas crisis of the first order. We may well have to withdraw from Saigon, or enter physical combat to protect our little military-civilian force of 20,000 which is organized to advise and not for combat.

Development of recent days are headlong, and may reach critical proportions before you read this. A bitter religious war has raged in Saigon's streets between Catholics, remnants of the Diem regime, and Buddhists, persecuted by the Diems. The government's power was so flimsy it wilted under the disorder.

Close observers say all levels of the Vietnamese society are now permeated with communists, and the Viet Cong guerrillas are

weaker than this new force raised against tottering Saigon.

We Americans, have assumed the mass of the Vietnamese have wanted order, and total defeat of the Viet Cong. The observers say this whole estimate is false: the Vietnamese mass couldn't care less about the Viet Cong.

What they hate are their blundering and power-mad leaders, and by extension, their American advisers. They hate dictators. They want democratic self-government, and don't know what it is or how to get it.

For instance, the Americans assumed the students would answer Khanh's appeals to join his army and fight guerrillas. They didn't. They would rather join the street mobs pressing at the palace gates. It's safer and promises more. Where did we get the hallucination these kids would love to trudge the rice paddies just for the hell of it?

Where did we get a lot of ideas we have been pushing

in Vietnam? Like the idea that a major general, a division commander like Khanh, is competent to found a strong government, and bring vision and direction to his people. Napoleon did in his bellicose way, but where are the Napoleons in Asia?

On-the-site reporters are saying we encouraged Khanh to be a strong man, and he flubbed it. If they are right, we bear a large share of blame for the Saigon jam.

This is what faces President Johnson. He has to get some new thinking going out there, and not necessarily the thinking of his antagonists at home, either.

If he doesn't, we may find a full-fledged communist regime cemented in Saigon, backed by strongarm operators from Red China, for Reds do not on such situations. What could we do then but evacuate? When you are chased by a wolf pack you can fall down only so many times, before the pack closes in for the kill.

BOOKS by William Hogan

Biographer Studies Four World War I Commanders

It is curious how so many authors in different parts of the world will almost simultaneously decide to write about the same general subject matter. This fact has been widely demonstrated by the sudden spurt of books about the first World War, beginning with Barbara Tuchman's splendid "Guns of August." But what is far more unusual than having a group of books suddenly appear on a topic that has been relatively untouched for years is to have all of these books of such uniformly high quality.

"The Swordbearers" is a particularly good example of this. Correll Barnett, who earlier wrote an excellent collective biography dealing with World War II, "The Desert Generals," here considers the decisive effect of individual human character on history.

To do this he selects four of the commanders-in-chief who served during World War I. Two are German: von Moltke and Ludendorff to balance against his studies of Admiral Jellicoe and General Petain. Each had something in common in that they were trained for the war that was not fought in 1914-18. They all had been born and bred in a pre-

vious age, and their difficulties reflected the almost inelastic nature of their training.

The author's study of Admiral Jellicoe and the battle of Jutland are particularly fine. Of Jellicoe, Churchill said he was the only man who could lose the war in an afternoon. At Jutland he commanded the British Fleet in what, in all likelihood was the last general naval action in which the vast majority of naval units of two great powers engaged each other.

Several indisputable facts stand out. Jellicoe did not lose the war in an afternoon, although, in the author's opinion, Beatty, his second in command, came close to doing so; the German Fleet never again ventured forth in strength and was never again a major threat. On the other hand, Jellicoe did not win the battle in an afternoon, or at all, and at that stage of the war, Britain and her allies needed something more impressive than a draw.

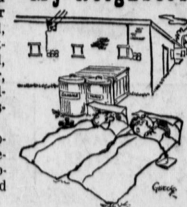
Each of these four biographical studies is well related to the other and, together, furnish a unified story of World War I.

More than that, the au-

thor's analysis of men and events is so penetrating that much of what happened in World War II is also explained. This is particularly true of Petain for the qualities of caution and "realism" he exhibited after Neville's disaster on the Somme, were the very qualities of leadership France should not have had when she was over-run by the Nazis in 1941.

"The Swordbearers" is not only a brilliantly written, exciting series of stories but it is also a superb history of World War I, and a first-class history based upon a thorough understanding and a splendid analysis of most of the existing official and unofficial sources.

My Neighbors



"Next year we'll plan ahead to phone ahead, OK?"

AFTER HOURS by John Morley

More Than 100 American Bases Encircle Russia

This column was actually written in Korea on our last newsbeat early this year, after completing the route of U. S. bases from Berlin to Seoul.

It continues a personal survey of U. S. bases started during our coverage of the Korean War, 1950-1953 . . . from personal inspections of U. S. installations from Scandinavia to the Far East . . . and from information made available to us by U.S. and United Nations commanders in Korea, Washington and along the route.

Since the discovery of the Soviet rockets in Cuba in 1962, U.S. bases on the official Pentagon list increased to over 100 . . . plus an undisclosed number which are listed as secret.

This represents the most formidable ring of steel since the cold war began. It's the only real deterrent against Communist attack via Russia or Red China.

Every U.S. base which encircles the Communist bloc is for defense . . . not for attack, infiltration or subversion. What makes Cuba a threat is its use as a base of Communist subversion in the Western Hemisphere.

Since the Russian installations were discovered in Cuba, the U.S. substantially increased its guard around Russia. The one exception is our agreement to remove Jupiter from Turkey in the alleged deal for the removal of a questionable number of Soviet rockets from Cuba. Without on-site inspection in Cuba, we can't tell for sure if the bargain was worth it.

Today, U.S. bases, U.S. supported bases or access to the bases of our Allies literally encircle communism from Greenland through Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Korea, Japan, to Alaska.

The official Pentagon list does not include, for instance, Holy Loch, Scotland, where Polaris submarines are based for the North Atlantic run.

Nor the Pakistan secret air base from which Francis Powers took off with the U-2 on his ill-fated mission over Russia . . . or the unlisted ballistic missile bases near Ismir (Smyrna), Turkey, where we once lived in the French protectorate as a boy.

Our encirclement of the Communist bloc begins in Iceland . . . and major bases in Thule, Sondstrom, Greenland. These near-arctic operations are supported by bases in Labrador, Goose Bay, Cold Lake, Frobisher, Harmon, Nomea.

The U.S. has access to 15 Royal Air Force bases in England, plus a naval base at Londonberry, Northern Ireland.

In West Germany we have 20 bases up to the Fulda invasion route along the Czech border . . . including eight major bases from Bitburg, to Rhein-Main, to Berlin's Tempelhof Airport.

We have 18 installations in France, which also support the Seventh Army of 140,000 troops based in Germany . . . with 10 air bases over Chamont, Ory, to Toulo-Rosiere.

In Italy the U.S. bases are located at Verona, Vicenza, Leghorn, Naples, Aviano. In Spain our Air Force is based at Moran, Torrejon and Zarazosa, and the Navy at Rota and Cartagena. On the African coast we operate from Wheelus, Libya . . . and Sidi Silmane, Benguerir, Nouasseur, in Morocco.

In Turkey we are based at Adana, Ankara, Cigli . . . plus a Strategic Air Command base at Incirlik.

Our bases continue through Saudi Arabia, Pakistan to Southeast Asia, Vietnam, Philippines, with a major naval base at Subic Bay.

We are heavily committed in Formosa, and a major Strategic Air Command base at Okinawa in the Ryuku Islands.

We have seven air bases in Japan, from Astagi, to Tachikawa, to Oppazu . . . two naval bases at Yokosuka and Sasebo . . . three army bases at Zama, Irumi-gawa and Chitose. The U.S. has the Eighth

Army in Korea, with air power at Kunsan and Osan. As a sober reminder, any Kremlin aggressor, the U.S. Strategic Air Command has the biggest bombers in the U.S. arsenal based at Elmendorf and Eielson, Alaska . . . only 29 miles from the Russian border.

OUR MAN by Arthur Hoppe

Those Dropout Kids Need Help

The Olympics are coming up and everybody's worried about our chances. Especially Mr. Bobby Kennedy, the touch football player. He says we simply must do something to stem the mounting tide in our society of "athletic dropouts."

In an article in Sports Illustrated, Mr. Kennedy makes a pretty grave indictment of our confused, aimless, rebellious youth. And he says we grown-ups must "begin a drive to preserve talent" by rehabilitating these "athletic dropouts."

Frankly, it's a grave indictment I hadn't yet gotten around to facing up to. But every parent of a teen-aged son will recognize the onset of the symptoms. First thing you know, you catch him in his room on a nice afternoon, furtively reading a dog-eared copy of Cicero. In Latin!

The best course in such an event, I feel, is to hide your shock and disappointment and approach the boy man to man.

"Hi, there, son, 'you say casually, 'how come you're not out playing baseball?'"

"Aw, gee, Dad," he says sullenly, "I know I should. But I've got a test tomorrow and I didn't think it would hurt any to spend a couple of minutes reading a little."

"I know reading's fun, son. And there should be a place for it in any well-rounded athletic program. Say the hour after your bowling lesson tonight. But you have to learn you can't have fun all the time. Your job is to prepare yourself for life. Look at the C-minus you got in gym. You'll never get into college on an athletic scholarship that way."

"Okay, okay, Dad. I said I'd try harder."

"Promises, promises. Do you know your coach called and he's worried to death about you? He says you have the ability, but you just don't apply yourself. He says you missed three practice sessions in jai-alai last week alone. Where were you?"

"Oh, just fooling around."

"Don't tell me. You were hanging out with that crowd of no-good bums down at the Public Library. Borrowing books."

"If you just got to know them, Dad, you'd like them. They're smart fellows."

"Smart! I bet not one of them would know the difference between a squeeze bunt and a quarterback option. Don't you understand that what you learn today will stand you in good stead all your life? Don't you realize Willie Mays makes \$100,000 a year? Don't you comprehend that you can't get anywhere in the world unless you play a respectable game of golf? Don't you know . . ."

"Dad, I guess I better tell you. I got a job after school in Kastenmeir's Book Store cataloging Schopenhauer. I'm going to quit sports."

"Quit sports! Oh, the shame of it all. My son, an athletic dropout!"

Well, we can only hope that Mr. Kennedy's call for a vast rehabilitation program will restore these wild kids to a constructive place in our society, kicking, bouncing, and hitting balls. For, as we all know, it has long been the American Dream that any little boy with pluck and grit can aspire to the highest position in our great land. Centerfielder for the Giants.

Mailbox

Editor, Press-Herald:

I read the article in your paper of Sept. 9, 1964, under "Freeways Fence in His Farm"—wherein a spokesman for SCE (Southern California Edison Co.) states "Their operations relieve us of the necessity of removing weeds and other combustibles." It sure does.

I live on 177th Street across from the green belt. I have green with weeds and about ready for the seeds to ripen and blow over and ruin the lawns. Every year we also get the march of the fuzzy caterpillars, when the beans and weeds are finally plowed under and the bugs have nothing else to eat,

they start on our lawns and plants. If a person complains to the city, he is told to call SCE, and SCE tells us to call the city. SCE also has a fence which is sadly in need of repair and is an eyesore to the community. However, we are told by SCE it is the tenants (farmers) fence and they can't touch it. If you talk to the farmer, he tells you it belongs to the original tractor company.

A person reading the article in your paper can imagine nothing but an "eye pleasing green belt" . . . but it's taint so.

Yours truly,
K. J. OEDEN
2806 W. 177th St.

Morning Report:

I take it as a personal favor that both presidential candidates held off their campaigns until I could get back from vacation.

Even the Hillbillies are on only once a week. But the Republicans and Democrats plan to appear daily—on tape and live as well.

There will be hour-long programs and, for those who try to escape, unscheduled spot announcements at all hours. It is a national blessing the campaigns start in September. Otherwise we would all be too bored to vote on election day—which precedes the Big TV spectacular on the night of Nov. 3.

Abe Mellinkoff