

Press-Herald

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Librarians and the Law

Quibbling between members of the City Council and some of the city's administrators and advisors on the matter of taking county librarians into the city system beginning next month seems to us to be a bit less than the terrible confrontation some of the participants would have us believe.

And—which is not always the case—we think the City Council action in requiring compliance with the city's Civil Service rules was absolutely correct.

At issue is the question of "blanketing in" the currently assigned librarians when the city takes over the libraries to end a long term program in which the county provided service for Torrance. The librarians are all serving as the result of civil service examinations conducted by the county, and it has been argued that they should not be required to qualify again for same jobs.

Wrong! These people are experienced librarians and want to stay in the Torrance libraries—and we want them to stay. But to come into city service, they must pass through the same gate other city employees have been required to enter—through the qualification and appointment according to Civil Service procedures. Those regulations do not provide for such blanket employment of city personnel, we are told.

The City Council apparently has learned its lessons better than some of the others around city hall. Having been scorched on the blanket appointment of a police sergeant, and going through the agony of considering appointment of bus department employees to other city posts if the lines are sold, the councilmen aren't too anxious to take on another such case, even though the reasons are most laudable.

We all want those librarians now working in the city's libraries to stay on the job and to stay with the city. But to do so, we think it is reasonable to expect them to meet the same requirements that other city personnel have met.

A Boost in Status

Torrance's annual Armed Forces Day celebration, traditionally one of the nation's largest such events, moved up sharply on the status ladder last week, we believe, with the announcement that the local committee had been successful in obtaining a high ranking military officer to lead the celebration.

With the announcement here that Gen. James K. Woolnough, commander of the United States Continental Army, would be grand marshal, leaders of the Torrance celebration ended a cooperative agreement with a San Fernando Valley group which had shared the guest of honor over a two-day period.

Many of us have long felt that the Torrance celebration, one of the most impressive anywhere, was dimmed largely by the fact that the guest of honor was regaled on Friday, given heavy news coverage for a major talk in the San Fernando Valley, and then came to Torrance to perform a duty which was treated lightly by most nonlocal news media.

In recent years, the honored guests have included Congressmen Mendell L. Rivers and F. Edward Hebert, both members of the powerful House Armed Forces Committee; Charles J. Hitch, then an assistant secretary of defense and now president of the University of California; and other high defense and military leaders.

Torrance's 1968 celebration marks a turning point and should put the city's efforts to salute those in the nation's armed forces in the proper perspective for a change.

It's time the tail stopped wagging the dog, as the old cliché puts it.

We like the move, we're told the local committee members like the turn of events, and we are sure those who take part in next May's annual Armed Forces Day celebration here will find the affair measurably better.

Morning Report:

Politicians—successful ones at any rate—are very selective at picking their enemies. They only choose those they can beat. And that's why Bobbie Kennedy made it clear the other day that he would not run against Mr. Johnson.

I don't think he ever had the notion of trying to take the Democratic nomination away from the President. For the principal reason that he knew it was impossible. Still, he could get lots of mileage on the campuses by being against what Mr. Johnson was for. After all, the college students of today will be registered voters by the time—1972—when Mr. Kennedy can run.

He has been very popular before young audiences. And has even gone so far as to let his hair grow longer and longer in keeping with youthful fashion. But never so long that it got over his eyes.

Abe Mellinkoff

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How About Recruiting Him?



AFFAIRS OF STATE

Attacks Growing Against Reagan Economy Studies

By HENRY C. MACARTHUR
Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO—It was to be expected that the governor's survey of efficiency and cost control, which showed how ultimately, the state could spend \$685 million dollars less than it would had the survey not been made, would come under attack by legislators whose philosophies operate on the theory that taxpayers provide a limitless source of income for them to fritter away on non-essentials.

Such an attack appears in a resolution by Assemblyman John L. Burton, D-San Francisco, calling for hearing on possible "conflict of interest" on the part of members of the task force who performed the lengthy and exhaustive survey and recommended ways and means to improve government operations.

Burton, one of the foremost proponents of the state's liberal "give-away" policy in matters of welfare, and other items involving gifts of public funds to individuals who contemplate such gifts as their due, nicks at the report in complaining that an executive of a firm manufacturing a recording device recommended a cut-back in transcriptions by stenographers

in favor of electronic recording.

The assemblyman apparently has little cognizance of modern-day progress in methods of handling records, as trends for some

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years have been toward substitution of electronics for cumbersome hand transcriptions and in fact, are now even being considered by some courts.

Burton also says the telephone company loaned four or five executives to the committee to assist in the survey, and has an application for a rate increase before the public utilities commission.

Just what this would imply as far as conflict of interest is concerned is hardly understandable, in that during this era of inflation applications for rate increases not only from the telephone company, but from other utilities as well, appear to be continuous, as are increases in prices in all phases of private business.

The San Francisco assemblyman says the business connections of the committee "were not revealed" for the most part when the survey was made public. Names

of all participants were listed alphabetically in the report, as were the firms whose contributions to the private corporation which made the report at no expense to the state.

He also mentions inaccessibility of the report to the public, which too is far-fetched, as any member of the public who wants to look at the report can do so for free by visiting the governor's office, or paying \$25 per copy. However, the report is not being delivered free, as are almost all government reports, which really aren't free at all, but paid for out of tax money.

No business in California exists without some connection with government, if only the privilege of paying taxes to stay in business. It would then, from Burton's viewpoint, appear that if any interested citizen, bent on assisting in the process of making government more efficient and economical, would be in "conflict of interest" if he donated time or money for this purpose.

Actually, such a resolution as proposed by the San Francisco ultra-liberal assemblyman reaches the realm of the ridiculous, in that it serves no useful purpose.

WILLIAM HOGAN

Policy Blamed for Wane In Passenger Train Use

Right on top of the approved, highly publicized merger of the Pennsylvania and New York Central railroads appears a book which probes into the railroad industry, and in no flattering style. This is "To Hell in a Day Coach: An Exasperated Look at American Railroads." The author is Peter Lyon, who at one point observes:

"The men who run the railroads seem to have positively booted the commuters, and the passengers, generally, away from their ticket windows and off the trains."

Lyon looks at the industry from its early days of jockeying for position and persuading lawmakers to bequeath it vast parcels of the public domain (some 150 million acres), down to the present when railroads are battling to carry less than half the nation's freight and, as the author puts it, fewer passengers than any other

mode of transportation, unless you count pogo sticks."

The outlook for the traveler who prefers the relaxation and scenic advantages

Browsing Through the World of Books

of train travel appears to be gloomy, despite a few hopeful signs — high speed experimental trains and, if you look abroad, the improved services, schedules and equipment of foreign trains. Lyon suggests that no Eastern U. S. rail executive has uttered a peep to encourage passengers in more than a decade. "On the contrary," he writes, "the earnest effort has been to convince every commuter and every intercity passenger that he should drive his car, or take a bus, or fly. But in any event, get lost, and the sooner the better . . ."

At the same time, Lyon admits that railroads face

inequities at the hand of federal and local tax officials; that government funds for research and development have gone to support air and highway travel, and that the railroads face competition that has been unfairly boosted by a confused federal policy.

Yet, the author continues in this testy, often angry book, even in the heyday of profits, railroad management did little to improve the lot of the traveler. He lists their three "fundamental" improvements on sleeping cars: 1924—receptacles for used razor blades; 1926, containers for facial tissues placed in "some" ladies' rooms; 1929, water coolers adjusted so they would no longer overflow on the carpet.

"When chairmen of the boards of railroad companies start talking about the public interest," this author declares, "it is time to count the spoons."

HERB CAEN SAYS:

Transistorized Symphony Orchestra Rumor Refuted

It is now definite that Seiji Ozawa, the utterly brilliant 32-year-old Japanese maestro, will be the next conductor of the San Francisco Symphony — taking over in 1970 from Josef Krips, who has done a remarkable job of rebuilding the orchestra after its near-dissolution under Enrique Jordá. Ozawa's appointment is part of the "youth and glamor" movement that is sweeping the symphonic world in the wake of Leonard Bernstein's great success in New York and Zubin Mehta's in Los Angeles (Mehta is a few months older than Ozawa, so I suppose that puts S.F. one-up in one department, at least). Under Ozawa, the orchestra will be able to land a recording contract, and, as a New York Times critic observed the other day: "You can't have a major orchestra without a major recording contract." Los Angeles has one (London Records) and we want one desperately. The appointment of Ozawa is NOT an economy move. The rumor that he will transistorize the orchestra down to 20 men and one lady harpist, amplified by Sony speakers, is ridiculous. I know it's ridiculous because I started it myself.

Here we are outside Oreste's on Jones St., and here's this lady trying to park her car while her husband gives directions from the curb. At last she hollers: "Okay, George, put another dime in the meter—I think I can make it this time." . . . And HERE'S Molly Walsh of Young & Rubicam, running for a departing 22 Fillmore bus, all the time muttering "Catch 22, Catch 22!" . . . Okay, no more meatballs for RCA-Victor's dog. Some 25,000 Jefferson Airplane albums were delivered to dealers — with Ed Ames records inside 'em, and if you're an airplane fan, this is no bargain. I know, because I got stuck with one of these foulups.

Among others suffering in the local news blackout is Les Natall, who runs the Presidio Theater and North Beach Movie. Here he gets arrested for showing an allegedly "obscene" film at his latter spot, and not a line in S.F.'s non-existent metropolitans . . . Willie Mays is still having trouble selling his house here (inexplicably, he wants to move to the Oakland hills), maybe because nobody's ready to pay \$80,000 for a two-bedroom spread — even

one containing a pool table . . . Ravi Shankar, the sitar virtuoso, played at the Opera House the other night — and while I agree he's a consummate artist, I still say he has exerted a foul influence on rock groups, especially the Beatles. Give the sitar back to the Indians. And that goes for baby sitters, too.

Migawd, is even San Jose getting ahead of us? Classified ad in the San Jose Mercury: "Wanted, topless dishwasher, attractive, over

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In San Francisco

21. Apply or call The Udder Place, Monterey Road, San Jose." And keep your eye on the wringer at all times.

Widespread rumors that Dwight D. Eisenhower is writing Ronald Reagan's dialogue might well have some foundation. Assuring reporters that Medi-Cal's old bills have been paid—somehow and from some source—the Governor elucidated: "We know that the revenues—we apparently know that the revenues that came in accrued were just about what had been estimated. Therefore, to have money for this unexpected—well, not unexpected but this overage in the cost of Medi-Cal over and above what everyone had hoped it would cost had to then obviously come from increased efficiencies and economies in the running of the government, funds from other programs that didn't go over, but went under, as a result of economies that were implemented, and we are trying to find out exactly . . ." Reporter: "There is no dispute then over whether the money has been paid?" Reagan: "No, there is no dispute over that." Reporter: "Where you got the money?" Reagan: "Where it came from, that's right." Reporter: "Governor, can we move on to another subject?"

Millionaire Ralph K. Davies, chairman of American President Line and other rich confessions, emerged scathed from a bad Bayshore Freeway auto crash: a dozen stitches in his handsome face and a broken nose ("For the first time in my life, it's straight"). Davies, who is 70, now looks 55 instead of his usual 51 . . . Rene Auberjonois, the American Conservatory Theater's brightest star, is through with the local company as

of Feb. 4, having been wooed and won by H'wood. Producer Harold Hecht for a movie about comedians to be directed by Carl Reiner, a fair comic himself. Next to leave ACT, according to the rumors, is the also brilliant Peter Donat, nephew of the late star, Robert Donat. Peter is said to be "disgruntled." Isn't anybody grumbled around ACT these days? . . . They all laughed when Pat Montandon sat down at the typewriter to concoct a book titled "How to Be a Party Girl," but cut out that giggling: the epic is now in galleys and will be hard-covered by McGraw-Hill in June. A cursory rattle through the prose reveals not a single mention of Melvin Belli, with whom she once starred in a putative marital drama titled "30 Seconds Over Tokyo."

Sportswriter Ron Fimrite, nursing a hangover at a local bar: "I feel like a heart transplant donor" . . . Apropos which, Mark Gerstle III has composed a thumping good ballad titled "I've Got Those They Gave My Lover the Heart of Another and Now He's in Love with My Brother Blues" . . . As for "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," that is open to all sorts of new interpretations these days . . . Zubin Mehta, conductor of the L. A. Philharmonic, made Time Magazine's cover this month, which reminds me that our maestro in San Francisco, Josef Krips, is tired of being quoted constantly as saying about Zubie-baby: "The new Toscanini has been born!" "I never said that," scowled Josef at Trader Vic's through angry puffs of cigar smoke, "for the simple reason that I don't believe it. He is a very talented young man who is in danger of spreading himself thin."

Up at the French Club at noon, the talk drifted around to San Francisco's newspaper strike, inevitably, and Monsieur Weill said to Monsieur Aime Michaud: "I keep hearing the mailers started the strike—what do mailers do, exactly?" Amie, very dead of pan: "They fold newspapers." Too true . . . One of the town's richest hippies has a safe deposit box in a downtown bank, which he visits two or three times weekly. I don't know what he keeps in it. All I know is when he leaves the bank, he is wearing a wide and satisfied grin. If there's gold in that box, it must be the Acapulco variety. . . .

ROYCE BRIER

Waning British Influence Had Many Early Warnings

For several years, but with particular intensity since the devaluation of the pound, the editorial pages of the world have been smothered in speculation, sometimes in mourning, over the decline of the British Empire.

The devaluation itself is only an economic phenomenon, yet the British leaders, perhaps understandably, appear incapable of putting it, and the critical position of a once-dominant people, in historical perspective. In our setting, seemingly remote from London, let us attempt it.

For the British decline has been history in its largest sweep, working over the past 100 years. Given the changing circumstance of mankind, it was inevitable.

A century ago Great Britain was the foremost nation in the world. It wielded power and influence on every continent of the globe. This might be estimated quite loosely as 60-70 per cent of the power and influence existing in 1868.

But unseen forces were germinating which were to diminish that power and influence. The wisest man of

1868 could not sense them, but the most casual reader in history can now perceive them. They may be denoted as the rise of power and influence of the world extraneous to empire.

These new and rising forces lay in three main

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global areas: North America, Eastern Europe, and the Far East.

The American rise had just started after a devastating war, and was to reach incredible heights. The East European rise was rooted deeply in the hopeless paralysis of the Russian masses. The Far Eastern rise lay in a worn-out domination of the Far East by the Western world.

World War I seriously impaired British pre-eminence, sapping its homeland youth, alienating distant parts of empire which could not see that a European war was in their interest.

Meanwhile, the same war disclosed the prodigious potential of the United States, which toughly fought off a

world depression which only aggravated the 1918-1939 trauma for Britain. Then a Japanese adventure largely swept away the remaining British power and influence in the Far East. When the adventure was wrecked on American power, Red China picked up the pieces in Asia, seeming at first but an extension of Soviet power. But China became an entity by sheer weight.

There was just so much total power and influence residing in mankind, today much of it technological. What had happened was that American, Russian and Chinese power and influence have filled, and more than filled, the vacuum left by British disintegration. Britain joined the secondary status of Germany and France.

For this cycle the relation seems permanent, two and possibly three "great" powers. But do not bet on the next cycle of 100 years, or against history, which has ever been capricious. The seeds of immense change are forever implanted in today, though we cannot see them lying there, awaiting the next impetus.