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THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 1977

Good move on Teamsters' fund

The grizzled union man in the Alabama unemployment office was not only bitter about being out of a job. He was bitter because he had heard the day's news about alleged misuse of Teamsters Union pension funds and he was worried that his own pension might not be safe.

That was two years ago during one of the recurring waves of such allegations. Now, under government pressure, the union is taking welcome steps to ease doubts by placing control of pension investments in the hands of outside managers.

The case dramatizes the need for all union pension funds to be managed not only in the interest of the members but in the interest of the country. For the \$1.5 billion or so in the Teamsters' fund is a relatively small part of the huge and growing total of union welfare investments. Some indication is given by one expert estimate, called exaggerated by the unions, that they already own a third of the stock in America's publicly owned companies.

Clearly such funds must be well and honestly administered, as the great majority of them are. As they become even bigger, it becomes increasingly urgent that their weight not be swung to union power maneuvers or socially destructive investments such as gambling enterprises or loans to the underworld.

The investigation of the Teamsters' fund provides a salutary warning. By agreeing to Labor Department and Internal Revenue Service demands, the fund avoids a lawsuit and regains its tax-exempt status. A symbolically vivid part of the package is the resignation from fund trusteeship by four long-timers including Teamsters Union president Frank Fitzsimmons, who last year bluntly defied union reformers.

Congress will be watching to see if the Teamsters carry out the agreement in a satisfactory way. The Labor Department properly has not waived its right to go to court if it has a case against any illegal activity.

Through careful government scrutiny, and rigorous self-policing by all unions, the billions in union welfare funds will be a growing asset for the nation as well as the union worker. --*Christian Science Monitor*

Boys will be boys

While we were otherwise engaged, the Boy Scouts of America sent us a "Memo to Editors," advising us that the organization wishes to be known from now on as Scouting/USA.

Generally, we take the position that people or organizations are entitled to be called whatever they want to be called. In this instance, we wish the organization had consulted us first. One purpose of the change, national headquarters in New Brunswick, N.J., explains, is to eliminate confusion about identity of the organization. We, who weren't confused before, are confused now.

For the new nomenclature is, we are told, to be a "communicative name." Legally, the 67-year-old organization will continue to be called the Boy Scouts of America.

In its memo, the national office explains another purpose: "The word 'boy' is objectionable to minorities, our young adult (male and female) leaders and naturally to the young women enrolled in our coed Exploring program."

Well, now, an adult black male does not want to be called "boy," with its racist connotations, and shouldn't be, but a boy of any color is a boy. It's not a dirty word. We note that the Girl Scouts of America not only intend to keep their name but tried, to avoid confusion of another kind, to persuade the Boy Scouts of America to keep theirs. They don't mind being called girls. That's what they are.

So we're sending a public memo back to the Boy Scouts of America. Whoever dreamed up this field trip into the thickets of confusion wins no merit badge from us. Take another look at your compass, and turn back, boys. --*The Philadelphia Bulletin*

Enforce 55-mile limit

Just about everybody concedes the 55 miles per hour speed limit, passed in the wake of the Arab oil embargo three years ago, has saved some lives and some gasoline. Just how many and how much is in dispute.

What is no longer in dispute is that Americans are beginning to ignore the limit. We're creeping back to pre-embargo rates of speed. And while studies show we're still driving somewhat slower than before, anyone who takes to a superhighway and leaves the speedometer needle at 55 will wonder who else is obeying the legal, posted limit.

This is a real pity.

The 55-miles an hour limit is a lifesaver. In 1973, 55,096 Americans, enough to people a fair sized city, died in highway accidents. In 1974, after the lowered limit, 46,049 Americans died: True, some of this was due to fewer miles driven and new patterns of travel. But three respected studies cited recently by the Comptroller General of the United States say that between 3,000 and 4,500 of these lives were saved by the lower speed limit itself. So were between 70,000 and 100,000 serious injuries.

Add the undisputed potential to make massive savings in fuel imports — at a personal savings to drivers — and you have a compelling case for the 55-mph speed limit.

How do we convince Americans of this? The vast safety and bureaucratic and automobile lobbies in the United States can help present the clear evidence. The Comptroller General's recent study is a good first step.

But ultimately, enforcement is the answer. --*The Sunday Bulletin* [Philadelphia]

'Here they come... give them a blast of cheese on darkrye'



by Marty Vega

That Other Writer

Ill Winds of March... On the front page of this newspaper a writer whose column appears in the extreme left of the page has given an account of how he lunched on St. Patrick's Day. Why he chose this topic I can't say, and it does seem inappropriate. After all, it is last week's news, isn't it?

Although this column is being written before this writer has had a chance to read over what this certain other writer has written, this writer has a suspicion that the front-page writer may be painting a picture and this has made two individuals in this office uneasy.

Writers should stick to writing and leave painting to the painters, no? Particularly if the painting should convey to the public that two members of this newspaper's staff are rather odd, or behave strangely, or whose choice of restaurants is difficult to comprehend, even bizarre.

It doesn't matter a nit just who these two individuals are who were written about. The reader needn't give it a thought. It might do irreparable harm to these individuals to become objects of ridicule. Like they might have nervous breakdowns and have to be put away. It's not nice to make fun of people in a crazyhouse. They deserve compassion.

This writer personally knows the two and am familiar with the details of the incident. But I have made a promise not to speak of it to spare feelings. That's only right.

More On The Cow... For more than two weeks we have had a raging controversy here (all of our controversies are the raging kind) over the correct naming of a cow. We thought we had it settled but now new evidence has been introduced. The editors of *Oui* magazine don't agree on Bessie. On page six of the February issue, under the Reader's Mail section, a letter concerning the impregnation of a cow ran under the heading "Let's ask Bessie."

So we're back where we started, unless we can successfully shift the controversy out of the N-J office and into the *Oui* office. (If you want to know about the impregnation of the cow, read the magazine. If you want to know what we were doing with the magazine, none of your business.)

Serious Stuff... To Marty Jones of Dundarrach, who is said to have been muttering that his wife Becky and the rest of us don't do anything all day but sit around and tell jokes, it's not so! We talk about serious stuff a lot. Just last week Becky came up with an idea for a complete revision of the tax laws.

The idea was to do away with all deductions, exemptions, credits, etc., and just tax everyone a flat 10 percent of their income. The rich would have to pay their share and it would end all of the unfairness about the current tax structures. Everyone would pay the same rate and nobody would have any cause to complain.

And just to prove that Becky is not going to go back to her old joke-telling ways, next week she is going to come up with a plan for corporate taxes. Marty. So there.

For instance, I know a man who said he tried to insulate his house but the wind kept blowing the stuff out through the cracks in the walls.

Another man said insulation saves energy all right and the argument by the government that insulation will save enough fuel to pay for itself may be true, but his house is insulated from top to bottom and he still can't pay his fuel bill.

Obviously, homes ought to be insulated, but Congress is going to run into some big problems when it sets out to make everybody do it. What it's going to cost to set up the National Insulation Bureau (NIB) and hire enough people to see that everybody complies, may cost more than the insulation itself, although that won't matter because tax money, unlike energy, is inexhaustible. It'll make good news, too. I can see the headline now in *The News-Journal*: MAN NEAR RAEFORD CAUGHT LIVING IN AN UN-INSULATED HOUSE.

It's hard to legislate efficiency, just as it's hard to legislate morality. In fact, you can't legislate morality among men, although immoral men can legislate.

Nonetheless, if we can get every home in the nation insulated we'll be on a par with Congress. It's been insulated for years.

Yours faithfully,

J.A.



Report To The People

by Senator Robert Morgan

A recent issue of the *Washington Post* contained a very brief story which carried the astounding news that the United States is being given some foreign aid. Hearing of the winter's bitter cold, citizens of West Berlin have contributed \$575,000 to help individuals, especially the poor and the old, most severely hurt by the weather America has suffered.

As the West Berliners put it when they turned the check over to the Red Cross, this was a return on the generosity America showed them after World War II.

Then, a few pages farther on in the same newspaper, there appeared a guest editorial proposing we give aid to North Vietnam to repair the damages of war.

Together, the two articles pose a question very forcefully. Should American generosity again come to the fore -- and could we, years from now, have as good a friend in North Vietnam as we have now in West Berlin?

I don't think so. There are significant differences between the German situation after World War II, and Vietnam now.

The American response to Germany's plight is legend, and deserves to be. Such generosity to a vanquished enemy is surely without parallel in the history of the world. That effort paid off. By acting as we did, we helped put the axe at the root of war in Europe for a long time, and made allies of hated enemies.

But there are many differences between that situation and Vietnam.

CLIFF BLUE ...

People & Issues



JUDGES -- Editor Sam Ragan of the Southern Pines Pilot questions the proposal being made by the North Carolina Bar Association and the N.C. Judicial Council to abolish the election by the people of our judges from the district courts to the State Supreme Court. Editor Ragan closes his commentary by saying: "Are legislators willing to tell the people they don't have enough sense to select their own judges?"

JOHN INGRAM -- With members of the insurance industry in North Carolina in the vanguard of the fight to defeat John Ingram as State Insurance Commissioner last year, Ingram won a big victory in the primary and was third high man among the Council of State members in the general election November 6.

Now efforts are being made to "de-horn" Commissioner Ingram in the General Assembly. Some want to strip him of his rate-ruling authority. We have observed efforts of this nature in the past and as a general thing they backfire against those pushing the movement.

Should the efforts succeed don't be surprised to see "Big John" catapulted into a major candidate for governor come primary time 1980. The people have spoken pretty loud and clear in behalf of "Big John," who has demonstrated his interest in reasonable rates for "the

people." It must be granted that the insurance industry has a case -- but just how strong -- many people are uncertain.

When an automobile is wrecked and the responsible party for the wreck has insurance the bills often are quite high. In the long run it is the policy-holders who must foot the bill. Insurance companies are in business to make money like all other businesses and the insurance commissioner is there to see that both sides get a fair shake, which in lots of dealings is not always possible.

Take the energy industry, the gas and electric companies are regulated by the State Industrial Commission and you can see lots of flak whirling around utility commission decisions which could be the same in case "Big John" is dehorned and another addition to bureaucracy is added.

AMENDMENTS -- The proposed ERA Amendment to the U.S. Constitution has been rejected by the 1977 General Assembly, in a very close vote in the State Senate.

Two proposed Amendments to the North Carolina Constitution will be submitted and both are controversial, succession by the governor and veto authority by the governor.

While North Carolina's approval of the ERA Amendment to the U.S. Constitution required only a majority vote, to submit an Amendment to the N.C. Constitution requires a three-fifths vote.

The three-fifths vote required in both houses of the General Assembly will make it much harder for the proponents to get it on the ballot than if a bare majority were required.

To submit the proposed Amendments to the people for their decision, it will require 72 votes of the 120 in the House and 30 of the 50 Senate members. In other words if 21 members of the Senate oppose an amendment it cannot be submitted and if 49 of the 120 members of the House are against an amendment, or do not vote, the proposed amendment is dead.

Analyzing the succession and veto proposals in this method, it looks like Governor Hunt has a pretty big job cut out for him to even get the Amendments on the ballots to say nothing of getting a favorable vote from the people.

EDUCATION -- Governor Hunt's proposal that students be required to meet minimum standards in "survival skills" such as reading, writing and mathematics in order to obtain a high school diploma seems to be an excellent move to improve our schools in North Carolina.

When leaders of the North (See PEOPLE & ISSUES, Pg. 15)

Browsing in the files

of The News-Journal

25 years ago

Thursday, March 20, 1952

At a recent meeting the town commissioners transferred some property from the Town of Raeford to the Board of Education of Hoke County. The land in question, located almost directly behind the Raeford Methodist Church, was given to the town by the late J.W. McLaughlin and his wife to be used as a park and playground.

...

The newly organized Jaycees began their improvement program last week by preparing two of the parkways in the North end of Main Street.

...

From Poole's Medley:

Plowmen used to storm at their plow stock - horses, mules or oxen, but you could hear them a mile hollowing Haw. Gee there, Whoa, Get Up There and the horse, mule or ox paid but little attention to

them. I am glad that they have quit it.

...

From Rockfish News:

It's not official, but it does seem that when a member of the "Sit on the Nail Kegs Club" gets so corpulent as to break down the keg and spill nails all over the floor his membership should be suspended.

...

15 years ago

Thursday, March 22, 1962

A petition with more than 800 signatures calling for an ABC election was voted into the office of Board of Elections Chairman Col. W.L. Poole late Wednesday morning.

...

A slight mixup in Republican circles this week was occasioned by the appointment of a Hoke County Democrat, Willard Shell, as Republican representative on the County Board of Elections.