

'But, Boss... You've Already Spent This!'



EDITORIALS

Never Forget That These Editorials Are The Opinion Of One Man
And He May Be Wrong

The Gambler Problem

Each of us is a gambler, whether it is gambling with seed in the soil, money in a business venture, driving in heavy traffic or on making "four the hard way."

But there is a wide range of feeling among us on the specific subject of such types of gambling as one usually associates with card or dice, horse racing or lotteries.

A little bingo at a church party is "harmless," but peeping at hole cards with a few of the boys once a week is "sinful" in the minds of some.

Betting a dime or a buck a hole on a round of golf is a playful form of relaxation and a way to stimulate conversation around the links, but betting a fellow can't fill an inside straight has some sinister overtones that frighten a good many of our most stalwart citizens.

Of course, to those of us who attempt to be reasonable gambling is exactly like every human habit: Only bad when carried to extremes.

Temperance in all things cannot be im-

proved upon for a way of doing business or relaxing. The man who drinks beyond his capacity, gambles beyond his means or even plays beyond his strength is making a serious mistake.

But there always has been and always will be a percentage of us who refuse to abide by this principle of temperance. Those who waste their lives on drinking, their substance on gambling or their hearts in over-exertion automatically become the concern of assorted groups of "right-thinking people"; the self-annointed whose sincere purpose is to protect the weak from themselves.

This reasoning — noble in sentiment as it may be — is impractical to the point of impossibility. National prohibition should have proved that it is not wise to make nine men criminals in an effort to save one man from his weakness.

Laws against the specific kinds of gambling that most think of when the word "gamble" is used are equally bad, equally unenforceable and equally in need of repeal.

Soviet Pandora's Box

Some effort is being made in The Kremlin to slam tightly shut the minds of those Russians whose artistic expressions have not been absolutely parallel to the "party line."

But, once opened, the Pandora's box of education is impossible to close. Russia has moved from a land of 98 per cent illiteracy to one of 90 per cent literacy in one generation. This is a revolution within a revolution that will ultimately consume the totalitarian system which made it possible.

Man's mind is not compartmentalized to such an extent that a broad education in the physical sciences can be given without some light creeping into those crevices of the brain where human and cultural values are created.

In many senses we in America suffer the same pains of education as the Soviets; in that many of our youth and a lesser number of our more mature citizens sincerely believe that state socialism is preferable to the free enterprise that we enjoy.

There are leaders — or at least would-be

leaders in America who would slam shut with equal force the American Pandora's Box that has caused such intellectual defecation in our own country.

Fortunately our system is still geared to permit deviation short of outright treason. In Russia the ground rules of treason are different, and a "crime against the state" can be something less than betrayal by espionage or sabotage.

Russia's system is NOT geared to any tolerance of ideas. The dictator cannot operate with "loyal opposition," since in the semantics of the totalitarian opposition is traitorous in any form, whether sincerely constructive or utterly destructive.

But in order to catch up with the world that had passed it in the renaissance Russia had to leap forward educationally before it could move industrially and politically. That first leap will ultimately result in a competitive society in Russia, because of the first hard lessons of education is that men are not equal.

A Stupid Statement

Those who praise our economic system might explain how a bricklayer earns more than a college professor.

This ridiculous statement was on the editorial page of the Hertford County Herald this week.

One must assume that the writer of this statement has no praise for our economic system, or, more charitably, no understanding of our economic system.

The explanation is simple, and it is the ultimate praise for our economic system: If the professor doesn't like his salary he has the perfect right to quit and to become a bricklayer, or bartender, or truck driver or any other highly paid worker.

The idolatrous enshrinement of the educator that some people in our nation insist upon is completely out of place in America.

We have every respect for the educator, but nothing could be more dangerous to our educational system than to make gods out of men and women whose immortality is in their good works.

In further answer to the Hertford County editorialist let it be known that there are "fringe" benefits to being a college professor, or even a grade school teacher.

Not the least of these is the work day, or the work year. If the teacher worked as many hours in a year as the average person they could expect to earn a great deal more money than even a bricklayer.

But education has been frozen into a monumental feather-bedding that is at least as much concerned with sticks and stones as with the minds of students. Working 180 days a year, six hours a day is both a tremendous waste of talent, plant and most importantly of that most precious commodity: Time.

If our Hertford County editor had been exposed more hours to better teachers he would not have needed to ask for an explanation of the goodness of our economic system.

This Ahoskie writer is the end product of an educational system that is more concerned with form than with substance.

The college professor who is less well paid than the bricklayer has the opportunity to choose between the hard-earned pay check of the artisan and the relatively less strenuous job of building the minds of young people.

The professor does not work in winter freeze, nor summer heat and his pay check, small though it may be, does not stop when it rains, or when mortar freezes, or when there is no construction work.

Postmaster General Ed Day is threatening to curtail mail service if congress does not give his department all the money it is asking for. When it takes six days for mail to get from New York to Kinston it is hard to imagine what more Day can do than already has been done to curtail mail service.

Seldom is the time when we can agree with Luther Hodges, but we prefer to feel that it is he who is agreeing with us when he suggests publicly that congress should not demand one standard of conduct of others and live by a completely different set of rules itself. Hodges disposed of his Howard Johnson restaurant holdings when he became secretary of commerce, but his partner, Everett Jordan, didn't when he went to the senate.

This is the season of the manufactured crisis when congress is getting ready to write appropriations bills. The situation in Laos gets a little lousier, the Mediterranean muddle gets a little more muddy, the Caribbean circus spins in wider circles, the African tribal warfare gets a bit more war-like and, of course, the Russians are about to beat us to the moon, or somewhere. But not into bankruptcy.

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PERSONAL
PARAGRAPHS

BY
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One of the most miserable people is that one who has lead a fairly sheltered life holding down his job, running his own business, pattering around the house and being concerned with the problems of his immediate family. Then that person develops what is sometimes called a public service psychosis. That's when he really gets miserable. He thought he had headaches paying off the family mortgage, keeping the babies in shoes and a mess of porridge on the family board.

But when this sheltered type moves into public affairs he suddenly finds out a lot about himself that he never dreamed. Generally he gets this education indirectly, or in such doses as anonymous letters and phone calls, or occasionally in a letter to the editor. He will find that his motives, which he thought was as pure as the driven snow, are selfish and mean; that he has gotten into public affairs either to get a job for himself, a member of his family or to get more public business for himself or his family.

This sheltered type will also find that he perhaps has a dandy skeleton or two in the family closet. Rumor becomes fact and fact becomes fixed in the minds of the public which is generally quick to believe the absolute worst about those who do as Gregg Cherry used to say, "Become patriotic enough to serve in time of need."

In the face of this kind of public distrust and the slings and arrows of outraged citizens it is small wonder that government is conducted as well as it is. My experience is that the overwhelming majority of these patriots who serve are doing just that and generally at a considerable sacrifice on their part, both in dollars and in utter mental and physical fatigue. There is, of course, that venal small per cent who do serve only for their own selfish purposes, and they are the type that cause all to come under automatic suspicion. But even in Rome, Caesar's wife was supposed to be above suspicion.

Some of my friends who have found the courage recently to band together in the Kinston Conservative Club are suffering some of this public service misery. They sincerely believe that an anchor must be dropped to keep our government from drifting onto the shoals of state socialism. And I agree with them in principle, but in public affairs principle and practice often cannot be bed fellows.

This sounds unethically contradictory. But public affairs is not much different than private affairs in that it is the "Art of the Possible," an area of compromise, where seldom is found unanimous agreement on any project or proposition. Most of us would like to run our business on one basis but lack of equipment, capital, time or labor forces us to make shift with what we have.

In public affairs, as well as in private the individual must labor with his conscience. There are times when it becomes impossible morally to accept a compromise. In public affairs that is a decision that has to be made regularly, whether to take that part of what one feels is good, and accept that part one feels bad or to reject both and hope that time will bridge the gap between the extremes. But that public servant who mounts the lily white charger and stands on true blue principle is not likely to have much success in winning friends, influencing projects or in getting re-elected.

In an individual's business he can control to a greater degree the gap between principle and practice. There the number of people involved in making decisions is less. But the larger the business becomes the more certain it is that one will have to live with things as they are, working and hoping to someday have them become what he would like for them to be.