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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1948.

First Step for Tax Reduction.

Passage of the Knutson tax reduction bill by the House of Representatives having been a foregone conclusion, what is of interest is the size of the vote by which it was adopted—more than enough to pass it over a veto. But a comparison with the four votes of the House on tax reduction in 1947 shows little fundamental change in the line-up since last year. By an odd coincidence exactly the same number of Democrats yesterday voted for the Knutson bill as voted last July to pass a somewhat different bill over President TRUMAN's veto.

What this means is that there is an upper limit of Democratic support to be won by a Republican sponsored bill to reduce taxes. Democratic strength in the Senate is relatively so much greater than in the House that the Knutson bill as it stands cannot win enough Democratic votes to allow a veto to be overridden. The political count in the two houses of Congress is all the explanation needed of the prediction that the House bill will be modified in the Senate Finance Committee. What is more, the prediction is safe that modification will take the form of cutting down the percentage reductions in the bill, which range from 10 per cent in the upper brackets to 30 per cent in the lower brackets in the Knutson bill.

Last July, when the House voted to override the second tax reduction bill by a vote of 299 to 108, the Senate voted to pass the bill over the President's veto 57 to 36. The veto was thus sustained by the margin of five votes in the Senate. These five votes might be obtained now by amending the bill to take a smaller bite out of Federal revenues.

Stop and Go Signs in Foreign Trade.

To predict for the current year perplexing uncertainties in overseas trade it is not necessary to be a top-flight prophet. All signs point to the influence of a high degree of guesswork in international commerce. The conference last year in Geneva, and the still unfinished business before delegates in Havana, may eventually give the world a workable International Trade Organization. Meanwhile local and national problems in each region and country are shaping the pattern of overseas commerce.

Such a major commodity as cotton provides an example of the variations which disturb trading as presently conducted. Last month the Harriman committee proposed that on the basis of an American crop of 11,694,000 bales, and in view of the domestic needs, only 2,500,000 bales should be assigned for export. Over the past three years exports have averaged 3,000,000 bales annually.

The other day India announced a ban on exports of nearly all grades of its raw cotton, thus temporarily reducing the world's supply of that country's crop. Just before the war India was the main source of cotton for Japan. Now Japan, occupied by foreign troops, is preparing to expand its cotton industry with bales from the United States. It must expect difficulties when the textile mills of Italy and France, for instance, strive to expand their export business in fabrics, and thereby acquire means to buy more raw cotton here or elsewhere. Broad agreements on trading principles do not rule out national rivalries.

New Jersey's Budget Problems.

Governments are human, for they are managed by men subject to conflicting impulses of thrift and extravagance, or caution and ambition. The Governor of a State, aware that such motives affect legislatures, draws up an annual budget in which he endeavors to make ends meet in a year of high cost of living. Governor DRISCOLL of New Jersey faced his problems squarely in submitting to the Legislature a budget that may run to \$156,500,000. This would mean a rise of more than 100 per cent in five years. But taxpayers' memories are short.

Governor DRISCOLL has embarked upon the perilous fiscal voyage of attempting constructively to show ways and means for raising more money as painlessly as possible. His new program for taxation will provoke controversy. But in one important respect the Governor's policy is not hard to defend. He is opposed to the continuance of dependence by States upon Federal handouts. He favors a fiscal system in which taxes on gasoline, alcoholic beverages, inheritances, and the like shall be collected by the States, not by Washington. He favors for New Jersey more State aid to schools, and that is boldly reflected in his new budget.

He has also tried to make a good impression upon business by calling attention to the State's swollen fund for unemployment compensation, by proposing a reduction in the employers' tax and elimination of the tax paid into that fund by employees. His proposals for an increase in the State's levy on pari-mutual betting, for a 3-cent cigarette tax, and for a rise in the tax on beer are not revolutionary but may be unpopular. This is an expensive time for States to build new institutional buildings and highways. Ultimately the new Constitution should save money for the people of New Jersey. It provides for less wasteful government. Until then inflated budgets are bound to prove burdensome.

Orville Wright.

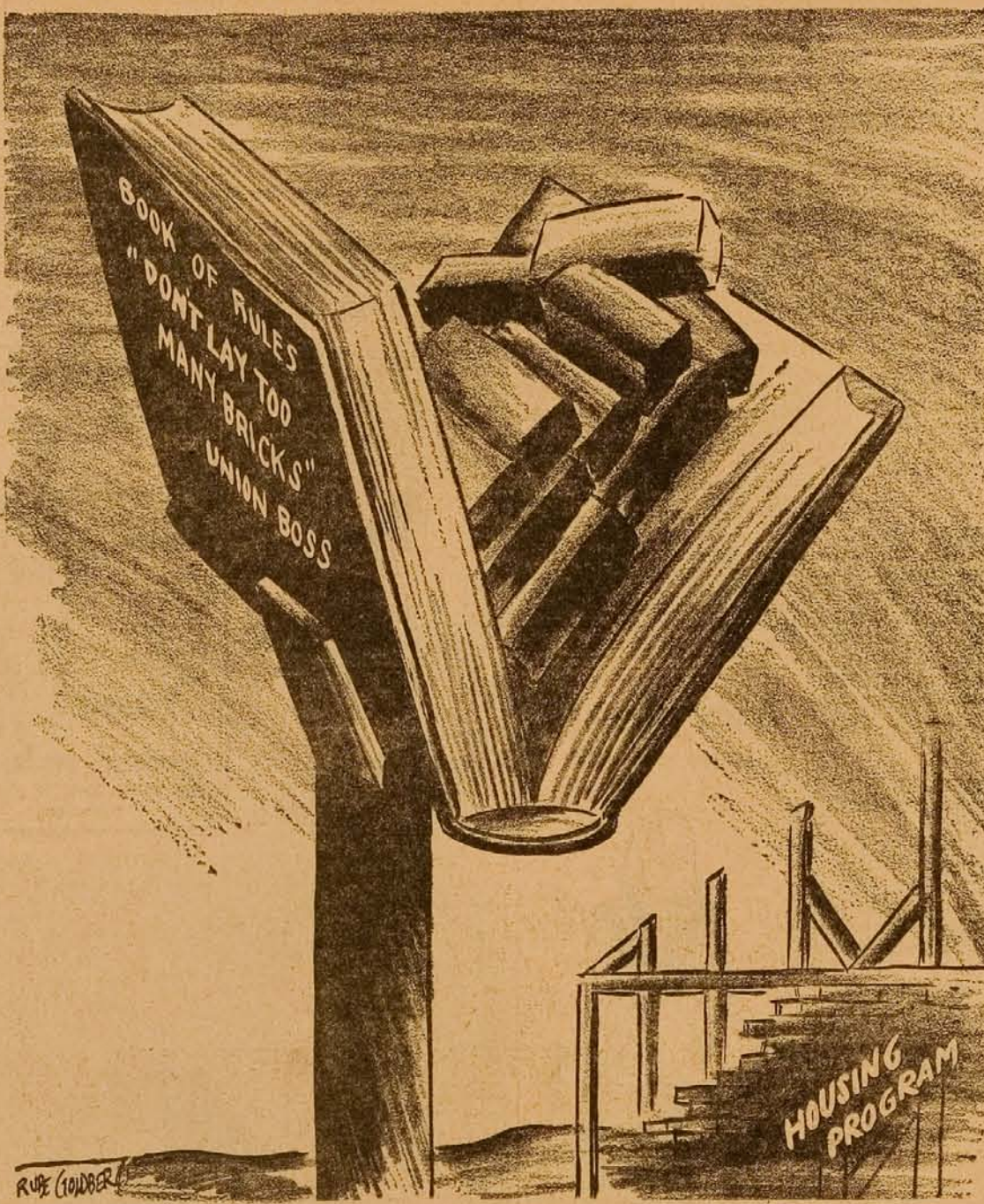
Though they were born four years apart ORVILLE and WILBUR WRIGHT displayed much of the singleness of purpose and harmony of interests characteristic of twins. ORVILLE outlived WILBUR by a generation, but the essential and fundamental contribution of the Wright brothers to aviation was a matter of history by the time of WILBUR's death in 1912. Hundreds of other men have contributed in one respect or another to what is the modern airplane, but if the names of ORVILLE and WILBUR WRIGHT still have the authority of primacy it is because they bridged the gap from nothing to something, whereas others have bridged successive gaps from something to something better. For the sake of the picturesque it is customary to say that two bicycle repairmen from Dayton, Ohio, built the first heavier-than-air flying machine to make a sustained flight under its own power. It would be more accurate to say that two highly intelligent Americans, who happened to be bicycle repairmen, used their intelligence to work out with the facilities available to them the means of overcoming difficulties that had been plain to many of their predecessors in the quest for man-made flight. At this late day after the first flights at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, it would be impossible to say how much of the modern airplane bears the stamp of the Wright brothers. It is enough to know that they are secure of their fame as pioneers in the grand manner.

The British propose an international ban on toy atomic sets, "which might prove very dangerous in the hands of our young." The young may worry more about the toy that the atomic bomb represents in the hands of the older folks in the world.

Much of the debate on the Marshall plan centers on the question of whether Europe's condition of being economically in the red is likely to become contagious politically.

Radar won't seem really wonderful until it is adapted to the purpose of finding extra blanket needed around 3 A. M.

THE WRONG HOD.



LETTERS TO THE SUN

Foes of Zion

Charging That Communists Confuse the Public on Palestine.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Alexander Bittelman, Communist party leader and alien whom the government is attempting to deport, spoke at a "mass rally on Palestine" on Sunday, February 1, at Manhattan Center.

This is only one of a series of Communist "Palestine" rallies that are designed to arouse antipathy toward Britain and America. They are also designed to confuse. And they do confuse thousands of Americans. This new-fangled Communist "Zionism" antagonizes much of the anti-Communist public against legitimate Zionist activity. On the other hand, many unwise persons, Jewish and Christian, with real grievances against official American and British policies, are drawn into the Communist orbit through such rallies as the one mentioned.

The issue must be clarified now. Communists are no friends of Zion. They were anti-Zionist as recently as two years ago. They have shifted their "line" on Palestine, for reasons of their own, more times than one can count. Conversely, Zionism itself is a democratic movement that can have no truck with aggressive international totalitarianism.

I denounce this latest scheme of the Communists to confuse us. As a Zionist and a past president of the Westchester County Zionist Organization, I believe it time to sound an alert.

BENJAMIN SCHULTZ,
Yonkers.

Palestine in Rebellion With the Aid of Its Youth.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Your correspondent William Henry is right in finding that the cartoon by Rube Goldberg, "It's too hot for me in there," suggests something that has no foundation in fact.

Of course, Britain is not frightened of a handful of patriots in Palestine, most of them boys and girls in their teens. But "John Bull," who, I feel, represents England better at present than the famous British Lion, is a practical gentleman. After twenty-five years or more of misrule he has managed to arouse the youth of Palestine to rebellion just at a time when he is a little short of cash. A long occupation would be costly; besides, many in England believe men could be better employed digging coal and doing other work for which all hands are sorely needed.

Mr. Henry in his last paragraph suggests that the Zionists will regret having "pushed matters to such extremes" and would dearly love, even now, to have their "protectors" remain in Palestine. Certainly they know what is being readied for them, but I cannot imagine that any one would prefer the frying pan to the fire. Certainly not the young people. I spent several years among them and was told by one and all, that—"we prefer to die on our feet, than live on our knees."

Like most young people, they have confidence in themselves and the justice of their cause, and do not really expect to die. Well, many of them survived slave-labor camps, and many fought with the "underground" of their respective countries or with the British Army during the war. Perhaps God

spared them to live and not to die. I know that is how they feel about it.

MARY KING GAFNEY,
Jackson Heights.

CONFOUNDED PROPHETS

In Weather and in Government the Forecasts Seem Exaggerated.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The changing of our political life is nowhere better epitomized than in the prophets of the Weather Bureau. Its percentage of hits is woefully low. Like the members of Mr. Truman's Cabinet, the predictions of dire things to come are evermost in mind. The crises and emergencies that have filled the air like the lamentations of Jeremiah seem to bog down like the fourteen inches of snow that recently forgot to come to New York. I hope the committee on the ERP will note this: The good Lord has a way of confusing the Brobdingnagians in favor of the Lilliputians.

TERRACERVINUS,
Upper Montclair, N. J.

Hoover for Relief Job.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Permit me to thank you and your correspondent John Hanna for his letter recommending our former President, Herbert Hoover, for the important post of administering the European Relief program. A better qualified, or more honest man cannot be found. He has the confidence and trust of practically all thinking people in our country and would be gladly welcomed by the people of western Europe.

As Mr. Hanna so aptly states, if the Congress could be assured that Mr. Hoover would be appointed they would not be criticized for giving him a practically blank check, knowing the funds would be efficiently and effectually used, to furnish the greatest help to the most needy. It would greatly restore the sadly waning prestige of the United States, so definitely needed to stop the aggressive action of Communists.

Rockville Centre. J. D. HERR.

What Lex Talionis Is.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Almost every time I run across "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," it is used as an example of remorseless, implacable justice. The truth, of course, is that lex talionis was devised to prevent a far more remorseless and more implacable sort of justice, what might be called justice by geometric progression. In the absence of lex talionis, primitive society might well have demanded two eyes for one, three lives for one. The feud, in its worst form, is the best example of the excesses which lex talionis at its worst tends to minimize.

New York. J. P. J.

Mechanical Wizard.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Thomas J. Watson, president of the International Business Machines Corporation, has just dedicated to humanity a new gigantic calculating machine known as the Selective Sequence Electronic Calculator. This machine is capable of solving a multitude of mathematical problems requiring calculations of almost inconceivable magnitude and complexity. But can it, after having been fed the complete statistical information supplied by all the dope sheets, come up with the right selections for the daily double at Hialeah?

MILTON L. MAIER,
New York.

By Rube Goldberg.

The Reviews:

How a Woman Was Remembered; "The Valiant Lady," by Brigid Knight

The search of our novelists for new forms is insatiable; for the sake of novelty they turn to almost any device outside the tradition of realism. The results are rarely satisfactory, and sometimes questionable. Now and again they are partially impressive.

A case in point is "Message From a Stranger" (Viking, \$2.75), by Marya Mannes. Taking for the motto of her novel a quotation from Joseph Conrad's "Under Western Eyes"—"The dead can live only with the exact intensity and quality of the life imparted to them by the living"—she has her novel written by a dead woman, who tells in fragments the story of her life, in so far as her life left its mark on the living. Interpolated between these "flashbacks" of her real existence are interludes during which, in a manner of speaking, the dead woman continues her relations with persons still living: her first husband Max, a Communist from whom she was divorced; her son Philip, now in college; her daughter Auriol; her second husband Whitney, as conservative a man as Max was radical; her several lovers.

She Is Not Forgotten.

A famous poet, a woman of exquisite feelings, she is unforgotten by them. In the first year, at all events—for the dead woman's chronicle covers that space of time—they talk of her, or think of her, or hold converse with her in moments of rare awareness, as if she were still with them.

Whitney, who consoled her when she died, only in the weeks after her death realized that he hadn't known Olivia at all; some amorous escapades of hers had come to his attention because of some letters she had indiscreetly left behind; her son and daughter were also a bit shocked by them, though, with the insouciance of youth, they got over their feeling more easily than their stepfather. (Somerset Maugham treated the same idea more realistically in a short story in his most recent collection. It was about the deceased poet wife of a conservative businessman.)

The fact is, Olivia was a different person to each of many people. Of course, Olivia gave herself away in her poetry, but Whitney didn't marry her for her poetry; for that matter, he never read any. Olivia seemed to him to be a nice sort of woman, very maternal with her children and all that. No, he didn't think she was a saint, but he hadn't imagined such wickedness either.

Three Undestroyed Letters.

There were three letters indiscreetly and accidentally left among her effects—for she had destroyed many others—in Whitney's words, "Three of them, mind you—lousy, corny, sickening love letters from every damn place on earth. And she leaves that to Auriol." "Olivia wasn't one person," is the dubiously consoling response he receives from Elizabeth, who hopes to succeed to Olivia's place in his esteem.

In the course of this strange and sometimes impressive narrative, which happens to be well written, we have a series of portraits, one of the best of which is of Olivia's first husband Max, who is at the opposite pole from Whitney, a fact expressed rather succinctly by Max's stepson Philip: "I wish I could stop feeling like a Red whenever I'm with Whitney and like a reactionary whenever I'm with you."

Miss Mannes could have told the same story at least as effectively in the traditional manner, though it is possible that her method will please a good many readers as it is.

JOHN COUNROS.

A Novel About the Wars Of Spain and the Dutch

In "The Valiant Lady" (Doubleday, \$3) Brigid Knight tells the story of Dutch resistance to the Spanish invader in the sixteenth century. It is a dramatic story of endurance and courage, symbolized in Anna van Breda, the valiant lady of the title, who faces the national ordeal from middle to old age.

UPTOWN AND DOWN.

By Fred Neher.



"I'll have to wait till prices come down before I start dieting. With food so high I can't afford to leave anything on my plate."