

Honolulu Star-Bulletin

RILEY H. ALLEN - - - - - EDITOR

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OUR MERCHANT MARINE.

AWAIT THE FACTS.

Before Americans pass judgment upon Germany's legal responsibility for the Arabic sinking, the facts in the case must be ascertained. What the Star-Bulletin said in these columns yesterday—that the reports lacked confirmation and that citizens of the United States should stand by the president in whatever course investigation prompted him to adopt—is increasingly applicable as the circumstances become apparent.

But whatever be Germany's explanation of the Arabic sinking, the "frightfulness" of the act will not be lessened by technical justification. Such justification may, it is conceivable, put the destruction of this liner and the killing of those aboard outside the definition of a "deliberately unfriendly act." But it will scarcely lessen the general horror and resentment felt around the world.

The sinking of the Arabic, like the sinking of the Lusitania; like most of Germany's submarine war on commerce; like Great Britain's food blockade and detention of cargoes; is part of the brutal disregard of neutral rights which is characterizing the war. By act if not by word both belligerents are preaching the doctrine that might makes right. The reason why Britain's course does not arouse the burning indignation which Germany's course arouses is that Britain is destroying neutral commerce while Germany is destroying neutral life.

"GOOD POLITICS."

If there are any among the supervisors who continue to doubt the wisdom of the frontage-tax plan, their timorous hesitation should be set at rest by the spontaneous movement in various parts of the city to take advantage of the local improvement statutes.

Alewa Heights residents have petitioned the board of supervisors for the creation of an improvement district in their section, and from Kaimuki comes news of another strong though still incipient movement. Manoa, as is well known, has led the way and would undoubtedly be even more vigorously in favor of local improvements but for the unfortunate controversy that has arisen over interpretations of "maintenance and repairs."

It is no secret that now and again various members of the board have shown considerable weakness in this matter of carrying out the frontage-tax statutes. On the platform in the last campaign—particularly when addressing Fourth district audiences—their pledges were definite, but after election some of them began to look for excuses to favor certain localities.

Slowly the fact is forcing itself to realization that the city as a whole is ready for this local assessment idea—that section after section needs the improvements and is ready to pay for them under the frontage-tax (or area-tax) plan provided it is known all sections are to be treated alike. It must be expected that in a few neighborhoods ignorance and prejudice will still rule. The only possible way to convince these neighborhoods that they must pay for their improvements is to withhold the improvements until the property-owners come to time.

The political consequences of enforcing the new statutes depend on the way in which they are enforced. If the supervisors show favoritism; if they back and fill and look for excuses not to apply the law; if they allow the engineering and other features of the actual application to drag, the city will be disgusted and, sensing the insincerity that has followed platform protestations, will very likely show that disgust in the next election.

But if the supervisors go at their task with vigor and impartiality, they will win votes instead of lose them. The possible hundreds of votes controlled by prejudice and ignorance will be overwhelmed by the thousands of votes controlled by intelligent alertness to the big needs of the city.

It is "good politics" to promote the local improvement idea.

AMONG THOSE PRESENT

There is Teddy, rough and ready, blood-and-thunder in his eye, and Brer Bryan, always sighin' for a chance to pacify.

"Strict accountability" appears to be very resilient, not to say elastic.

(From the Chicago Tribune)
The Pacific Mail Steamship Company has joined with the Dollar Steamship Company in withdrawing from American registry because of the vastly increased operating costs imposed by the new La Follette seamen's law. Capt. Robert Dollar explains that it would cost him \$32,044 more to operate the Robert Dollar under the American registry than under the British, and as compared with the Japanese there would be even a more serious handicap.

Such is the practical effect of the new regulations which express the American idea of safety and decent living conditions for seamen, and it is the practical effect that must be dealt with in formulating a policy for a national merchant marine to carry our foreign trade. American ambition and necessity are martyred to make the seamen's lot more livable, yet without accomplishing anything for the sailor. The trade is simply transferred to the Japanese, because they are not under the same regulations and can do the work cheaper as a result.

The situation is even more impossible when considered from the commercial and military standpoint. Our foreign trade in the Pacific must be carried in Japanese bottoms, our chief competitor and our most likely enemy. When the bill was passed Congress had in mind an improvement of the safety and living conditions on the sea. They did not bargain for subjecting American trade to a Japanese monopoly in the Pacific ocean.

American boat owners have shown a real independence of spirit. They do not want to feed at the public crib, either through a government subsidy or government ownership. They have asked for more reasonable regulation, mindful of an international situation which the American Congress cannot reform in one sweeping declaration of its own good intentions. An effort will be made to induce the coming session to authorize a shipping board similar to the railroad regulation system. It is a thoroughly reasonable proposition. If Congress cannot legislate about the details of railroad management, as it has wisely admitted, by appointing the interstate commerce commission, it cannot legislate on the intricate question of steamboat regulation, which must be regarded as partially subject to what Germany, England, and Japan require of their ship owners.

Now is the time for some constructive ship legislation—readjusting the laws on a more favorable basis for operation of a merchant marine under American traditions and business principles. Anything less will make government subsidy or government ownership all the more likely.

One of the greatest singers of this or any other generation will make her appearance in Honolulu tonight—Mme. Nellie Melba. Her local engagement is all the more interesting because Mme. Melba has lately been devoting her magnificent voice and consummate vocal art to the raising of funds for European war relief. In this she has been strikingly successful. And her singing was not alone for the benefit of fellow-Britons, but of Poles and Belgians also.

"President Must Decide Whether Sinking of Arabic by Germans Was Deliberately Unfriendly Act."—Advertiser headline. We thought the Advertiser settled all this yesterday morning when it declared the act was "deliberately unfriendly, committed with cold-blooded calculation."

Reports of hurricanes along the gulf coast and the storm sweeping north to the Great Lakes give Hawaii folks another reason to be proud of their climate. The hurricane isn't grown here.

"Sold for a song" takes on a new meaning when one is discussing Mme. Melba. She has raised more than \$150,000 for the Red Cross war relief work by giving concerts.

The "missing link" discovered by the morning paper is probably the original advocate of coastwise law suspension.

What Bulgaria is waiting for seems to be "Come over into Macedonia and help yourself!"

Of course we shall expect the Kaiser to name it Novogeorgeburg.

The way of the submarine runs deep.

LETTERS

(The Star-Bulletin invites free and frank discussion in this column on all legitimate subjects of current interest. Communications are constantly received to which no signature is attached. This paper will treat as confidential signatures to letters if the writers so desire, but cannot give space for anonymous communications.)

BOOZE IN KOHALA.

Editor Honolulu Star-Bulletin.
Sir: "Booze in Kohala." This is the caption of an article appearing in the last issue of the Midget. It appears that the booze problem in Kohala has recently become a live issue. Four new saloon applications are pending before the liquor commissioners. It is proposed to open a saloon at Hahi with the backing of the plantation, in order to kill off the many "blind pigs" which flourish in the laborers' camps. The writer in the Midget calls in question the method and scores the police. The opinion prevails that the wholesale liquor establishment known as the Kohala Club is the promoter and feeder of these blind pigs. But, will the establishment of a saloon, even though it be a branch of the club, as some think, stamp out illicit selling? This is the problem the writer treats. "In other words, self-interest is to be appealed to to see that the law is enforced. It is to be a case of fighting fire with fire."

"The fact is the remedy proposed is faulty because it ignores entirely the responsibility of the police authorities for suppressing blind pigs and farms out the duty of suppressing them to a private person, by an appeal like this to his greed: 'The less booze you let the unlicensed seller dispense, the more there will be for you to doze out. Be vigilant and chain the drunks to your own cash till, and big dividends will be yours.' In other words, we capitalize thirst and may to a man, virtually: 'The more thirst you can cater to, the greater your profits. Get a corner on thirst for booze. See to it! It's up to you. Thirst of the boozier is your gold mine.'"

"Society can never solve the drink question on such a false principle. It would be just as sensible to license a man to save burning buildings, with the understanding that the more fires there were to put out the greater his gain. It would be just as sane to license another man to bury all the corpses, with the tacit agreement that the more corpses there were to bury, the larger the dividends. None of us would feel quite secure against the use of artificial stimulants to aid our demise—rough on rate, typhoid germs, etc.—that chap might need our corpses badly in his business, just as the liquor seller needs our boys, and brothers, and young men. While at the same time it takes all sense of responsibility off private citizens. Where the public conscience is so nerve sensitive to the drink evil than it is in Kohala, the citizen will naturally heave a sigh of relief and turn over for another snooze, saying: 'Thanks be! I don't have to do anything about this. The license commissioners have made a deal with a Japanese (or someone else) and he will have to put the blind pigs on the blink, or go to pot—I guess he will be on his job all right.'"

"But there's another guess coming to all. We don't believe that granting one saloon license in Hawaii, or four, will get us out of the kettle of fish (or tub of sake) which we are in. It is only a makeshift. It looks as easy as 'twice two are four,' but it isn't."

"The plantation has felt that it was a losing game, fighting a wholesaler, with a paid attorney who is away at the top of the political heap, and who, as a Chinese concerned in some litigation that brought him against this legal light said, 'Him alle same little god in Kohala.' We have all felt that both territorial and federal authorities have conspired, in a way, to put us all under the thumb of the wholesale liquor business. It had come to that pass that a man in Kohala couldn't pay his taxes, serve on federal juries, be married or buried (we barely saved roads and some other things by the skin of our teeth) without the offices of a liquor wholesaler. It was a discouraging fight for sobriety and a better public sentiment. But it is our own fight, and in the end we shall have to fight, if we want right conditions. We can't wish it on to some poor Japanese with a saloon license. The decent people of Kohala have got to have nerve and grit enough to fight it out in the open."

JOHN W. WADMAN.

AH ON BOUND OVER TO FEDERAL GRAND JURY

Ah On, a Chinese who was arrested by the marshal's office yesterday on a charge of having sold liquor on a government reservation without first obtaining a license, has been bound over by Commissioner George S. Curry to answer to the federal grand jury. His bail has been fixed at \$500.

TITLE INTERVIEWS

—CORONER ASCH: Although everything seems "dead," yet nothing is dead enough to hold an inquest over.

—JACK KUHN: I got a lot of free advertising out of my case for disregarding that traffic officer. Advertising is my business, so I should worry.

—MAYOR LANE: Several of the city charter convention delegates appear to listen to everyone who has an ax to grind. I hope it will quit before the convention opens.

—W. R. CHILTON: When I win my conspiracy case I'm going to give a banquet and I am going to invite Jack Scully, J. J. McGrath and Charles G. Bartlett to the dinner.

—DAVID KALAUOKAIANI: The municipal Research Club has asked me to supply it with a detailed account of my many duties as city and county clerk. This I am about to do.

—CITY AUDITOR BICKNELL: About every other charter delegate proposes to abolish city offices and it keeps us all worrying about where our meal ticket will come from in 1917.

—HENRY VAN GIESON (deputy city clerk): It looks like Honolulu is about to hold one of the largest civil service examinations, in point of number of applicants, that she has staged in many years.

—HARBOR OFFICER CARTER: Terra, the man who stowed away on the Makura and left the ship here yesterday, and whom I arrested as a deserter later, is reported today to have deserted from the cavalry at Schofield.

—O. A. BERNDT: Some people harp all the time about the coolness of Hilo and the rain there. Say, I found it so hot over there than I welcome getting back to Honolulu, and rain was so scarce I almost forgot what it looks like.

—ROLLA K. THOMAS: I saw my first lunar rainbow last night, and although I had been told that they had such things in Hawaii, it was a pleasant surprise to me. This liquid sunshine and lunar bow stuff is surely great.

—JOHN MARTIN: A. K. Harris of the Kakaako Mission and I are today surprising Paul Super with a "peanut party" at his vacation camp on Tantalus. We are taking up peanuts and doughnuts along with a crowd of Y. M. C. A. boys, and will spread the lunch up there under the trees.

—C. J. MCCARTHY (Territorial Treasurer): I am getting good results from those notices I sent out to corporations which have long since quit business, and directors of "dead" corporations are beginning to get busy. I found several corporations which have not done any business since 1883 and another \$1,000,000 corporation that "died" in 1889. I purpose to wipe out about 300 "dead" corporations.

—DANIEL LOGAN: If the Pacific Mail boats depreciate 5 per cent per annum, what should the China be worth now since she was sold to Col. G. W. Macfarlane some 20 years ago for five dollars (\$5.00)? Let the wranglers over the "bargain" of the Atlantic Transport Company "chew on that for a while"—as I once heard a southern member of Congress say to a New England Republican in the house who failed to answer a poser to him on the currency question.

PECK WILL NOT DISCUSS HILL LINE PROJECT

Definite decision as to the amount of work to be assumed by the committee of 15 from the Chamber of Commerce, appointed by E. I. Spalding to take up the question of alleged passenger congestion between here and the mainland, is to be left to the first meeting, next Monday morning.

Chairman L. Tenney Peck, like other members of the committee, is reticent about suggesting the scope of work which the committee will assume when once it gets together for business. Mr. Peck would venture no opinion as to whether the question of bringing Traffic Manager Stone of the Great Northern Steamship Company, would come under the work of the 15 men.

"I am but one of the committee," said Mr. Peck today, "and before giving out any statements as to what shall or shall not be done, I prefer to see what the committee itself shall decide at the meeting on Monday."

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MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY FINED \$5 FOR SPEEDING

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.—Mayor John Purcy Mitchell of New York City was before the bar here charged with speeding. State Inspector Shinn brought him before Magistrate Senthemmer.

"Ten dollars fine," the court announced.

"He is Mayor Mitchell of New York," the inspector continued, and winked.

"Well, we'll make it five," the court replied, smiling.

The mayor paid. He later explained that Mrs. Mitchell had been taken ill during the run to the shore, which fact caused him to make fast time.

A cozy bungalow, on an excellent lot in "Makiki Beautiful," can be secured by a first payment of \$500, the other payments to follow regularly at the rate of \$48 monthly. The total cost of home and lot will be \$3450. There are just 5 of these opportunities.

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2568 Rooke st., Puunui	4 bedrooms	\$75.00
307 Vineyard street (housekeeping)	2 "	23.00
1117 3d ave., Kaimuki	2 "	25.00
Waikiki	3 "	40.00
Wai'alae road (partly furnished)	15 "	125.00
Bates street	3 "	30.00
Paloalo ave., bet. 12th and Koko Head ave.	2 "	35.00
3555 Wai'alae rd., bet. 11th & 12th ave.	2 "	35.00

UNFURNISHED

Two new cottages, "Royal Grove"	\$35.00 and \$40.00	
Wilder ave., opp Oahu College	4 bedrooms	30.00
602 White st.	2 "	45.00
1704 King st.	2 "	30.00
Cor. Kamehameha ave. and Manoa	2 "	40.00
Hackfeld and Prospect sts.	2 "	27.50
1904 W. 5th ave., Kaimuki	4 "	16.00
1313 Makiki st.	3 "	30.00
1205 Wilhelmina Rise, Kaimuki	3 "	25.00
770 Kinau st.	4 "	32.50
1339 Wilder Ave.	4 "	40.00
1877 Kalakaua ave.	3 "	20.00
1317 Makiki st.	3 "	35.00
2144 Lanikuli drive, Manoa	2 "	40.00
2130 Kamehameha ave., Manoa	2 "	40.00
Lower Manoa rd. and Hillside	2 "	37.50
1058 14th ave., Kaimuki	2 "	30.00
12th and Mauna Loa aves., Kaimuki	3 "	15.00
Kewalo st.	5 "	40.00
1562 Nuuanu ave.	3 "	50.00
40 Beach walk	3 "	35.00
14 Mendonca Tract (Liliha st.)	3 "	20.00
18 Dayton Tract (Liliha st.)	3 "	20.00
1020 Aloha lane	2 "	18.00