

**THE FRONTIER . . . O'Neill, Nebr.**

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**Let Us Learn Humility**

The long, weary, terrible, devastating Winter of 1948-'49 is slowly drawing to a close.

February is the shortest month of the year. But it seems interminably long to the storm-stricken people of O'Neill, Holt county and Nebraska.

One storm after another, one blizzard after another, snow, sleet, ice, howling winds and paralyzing cold. History has been written this month which will be read with astonishment and horror by generations yet unborn.

And February has been only one of a succession of terrible months of a terrible Winter.

The entire Winter has been a black era in the history of Nebraska and will be talked and written about for many years to come.

It started way back in November with a blizzard and has continued with unabating and increasing fury up to the present.

Nebraska has never known anything like it before. There may have been individual storms which were worse than any of the storms this year, although even that is doubtful; but the Winter on the whole is unquestionably the worst in the history of the state.

Roads, streets and highways have been blocked, towns, farms and ranches have been buried under drifts of snow, all transportation and communication systems have been paralyzed, huge machines, powerfully built to combat the snow, have been stalled and even overturned and a vast area has been devastated by the forces of nature.

And that is not all. The tragic part of the situation is that livestock has perished by the thousands and human beings have not only suffered from cold and hunger, but have actually died.

It is a sad, tragic story and, obviously, it has not all been told yet. Alert reporters and photographers have fought courageously to "cover" the Winter of 1948-'49 and have done a magnificent job, but only the future can reveal all the facts.

The overall, ghastly picture will not be completed for some time yet and some of the awful details will probably never be brought to light.

The federal government moved into the stricken area of Nebraska and adjacent states and, of course, no money was spared to cope with the situation and bring relief to the suffering ranchers, farmers and other people.

This relief has been timely and came none too soon. There is a lot of money wasted by the government, but every dollar spent in the work of rescue and rehabilitation will be a good investment.

That in brief retrospect is the story of the present awful Winter from the first blizzard in November up until the latter part of February. One blizzard after another, one howling wind after another and one deep snow after another until the period has piled up a record probably never equalled in this stricken region.

Future historians will include the Winter of 1948-'49 in mentioning the outstanding events of the Midwest in the story of the century.

What are the lessons, if any, to be drawn from this historic Winter?

Several, it seems to The Frontier. In the first place, we suggest that one important lesson is that nobody—not even the most astute observer—knows very much about the weather. There are well meaning people who have been saying for a number of years that the Winters in this region were growing milder. And it has been true to a certain extent. The Winters in recent years have been milder than they used to be and there have actually been some when there was comparatively little snow, wind or low temperatures.

As a result of this moderation in the Winters of the Midwest, we have grown careless and overconfident to a certain extent. We have not made the preparations for a long, cold, rigorous season which we should have made and, when the storms and blizzards and devastating winds struck in all their fury, as they did this year, we were not prepared to withstand the onslaught.

The pioneers were wiser than that. They didn't have much and lived in primitive fashion, but they were never fooled by the weather. They were prepared for the worst and "dug in" in the Fall, expecting a long, tough struggle for several months.

Our second thought is akin to that—the people and particularly the farmers and ranchers of the western states should be more adequately protected against the attacks of such a Winter as the present one. We appreciate the fact that that suggestion poses a hard problem as to how people in this storm-infested area can get such protection; but it can be probably worked out as other hard problems have been. People living in flood-infested areas have had to face the same problem and have solved it to some extent.

And, finally, The Frontier would suggest that the whole terrible experience of the present Winter should teach us all the lesson of humility.

Man has made such wonderful progress in conquering and utilizing the forces of Nature that he has become somewhat vain and egotistical. He has come to imagine that he can do anything and, then, at that very moment, a destructive blizzard or wind or flood comes along and upsets all his calculations.

Man is smart and ingenious, but, as a matter of fact, he never yet has been able to invent a machine which can cope with the forces of Nature when they go on a rampage.

As a matter of fact, in this vast universe, man is insignificant and impotent and his knowledge of Nature mighty "small potatoes and few in a hill."

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**Gratitude to the Army**

Operation Snowbound is history in Holt and its adjoining counties.

It has been a magnificent peacetime demonstration on the part of the Fifth army under the direction of Maj.-Gen. Lewis A. Pick.

Here in Holt county, where leaders were first to realize that county and even state facilities could not cope with Nature's fury, there is everlasting gratitude to the army for the snow-removal work that has been done with and for them.

Full story of Operation Snowbound, the number of lives that have been saved and the details of the impact on our economy, The Frontier gladly leaves to the historians.

The Frontier in behalf of the people wants to express to the army sincere thanks for a big job well done. Too, it wants to thank the American Red Cross for its timely work in bringing relief to human sufferers in a variety of ways.

More could and, probably, should be written about the commendable manner in which these two agencies have carried out their work in cooperation with civilian agencies and individual workers. Nothing The Frontier might venture in this editorial column would do justice to their grand work.

Only testimonials from storm-stricken country folk, who know how it feels to be utterly helpless, who have known the pangs of hunger, who with their own suffered from cold, and who have seen their livestock perish from lack of food and protection, can convey the true appreciation for Operation Snowbound.

**Modern Martyrs**



Oratory runs riot about every day in the capitol city but within the week there has been a special outburst. The Reclamation Association and the Nebraska Petroleum Marketers each rated four-column headlines in the city papers for their contribution to the din of voices beating the air, while the school teachers, insurance group and others received less attention. There has not been a time with in memory of equal circle racing about, confusion of thought and working at cross purposes.

I don't know just what there is to be reclaimed for Holt and Boyd counties along the shores of the Niobrara, but the reclaimers have these two included in their plans for the "water shed" of north Nebraska.

The petroleum gents are at loggerheads with Gov. Peterson, the school teachers repeat the familiar refrain, the insurance people let loose of some of the "premiums earned" for a big feed and the senators were invited to a like spread at a swank hotel at \$3 a couple, this a feature of the reclamation group. A lady of the world of make believe came all the way from Broadway to this prairie-land center of culture to demonstrate the charm and encourage the revival of the "legitimate theater" with a plea to write the congress urging federal grant of funds for such purposes.

At a period when the scroll of history must write down the gloomy record which tells the dark story of every man's hand raised against his neighbor in many lands these group gatherings tune the heartstrings of fellow patriots united in common effort to contribute to the thing they feel may mean a step forward along the winding trail of material and cultural progress. Mankind gropes about, reaches the long arm of incessant search into the dark until inspired fingers touch the stars.

At this writing the legislature has just been mauling over a measure proposing the length, circumference and charge of powder for the kid's Fourth of July firecracker. Moved to defer to later date. Next up for consideration came the bill disturbing election laws. This has been going on for half a century and the present legislature has before it a bill to do away with the endorsement of candidates at the state political conventions.

After a number of senators had spoken in favor of the measure, Sen. Frank Nelson arose to champion the cause of the party conventions, showing the slight interest there is in the primary and how it has and will work as a free-for-all that is the means, without the convention endorsement, of putting incompetent and undesirable candidates on the ballot and the danger of filling the offices with poor material.

One speaker in behalf of doing away with the convention endorsements unwittingly cast a slur at himself and the entire senatorial group when he said competent and able men will not become candidates for office under the present law.

Proponents of the measure place emphasis on an appeal to placing nominations in the hands of the people. Sounds wonderful. But the primary does not now nor never has worked that way. There has never been more than about 25 percent of the voters that have showed interest enough in nominations to go to the polls primary election day. That is about the percentage of voters who take part in precinct, county, judicial, state and other conventions of political parties.

Most of the editors of Nebraska weekly papers started as the printer's "devil." Their "school of journalism" was everything from sprinkling the floor and sweeping up at seven in the morning to feeding a Gordon and "learning the cases." They are creatures of the soil and have daily contact with the fellows in overalls as well as bank presidents, professional men, country merchants, women's clubs, teachers and preachers. They have no delusions and steer clear of giving advice to the gents working the soil or branding the cattle. That's taken care of by the so-called experts who go from city-to-city enjoying the hospitality and ample feeds of various organizations whose members are amused, edified, informed or bored, as the case may be, while the expert beats the air and discourses learnedly on the science of agriculture. And the old boys dressed in blue overalls riding the tractors in the fields continue to furnish us the daily bread.

Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, knocked over the second time as an aspirant to the comforts, amusements, duties and opportunities as master at the White

House, hasn't cried, "Hold, enough!" Late William Jennings Bryan came up the third time and it was notable that he received about the same vote each time. There were six million some 400 thousand devoted followers who were charmed to the last with his rather ratchety oratory. Dewey has a rather leaden tongue, a handicap in the race for president as many voters are charmed by fair speech rather than great action.

Another notable has come to town. The classic walls of buildings on the campus of the University of Nebraska have been shaken by the eloquent flow of Archibald MacLeish's notions on world peace. Peace—bombs ceased to explode and guns were silenced years ago. A new generation has come on the fields of action while those who brought on the world explosion have been beating the air in vain pursuit of elusive peace among the nations of earth. MacLeish' poetic soul revolts at strife and he sees only two remedies, a world government to run everything. In the humble opinion of the compiler of this department neither of these schemes will work and maybe the surest assurance of peace is for each nation to attend to its own affairs and let the other fellow alone.

A functionary, a bit officious, withal friendly, stands—or sits—guard at the entrance to the senate chamber down at the state house. He may want to know who the visitor wants to see, where you are from, your present occupation and previous condition of servitude but will invite you to help yourself to a comfortable seat on the sidelines and may follow you thither to warn you to remove your hat in the presence of this august and important assembly. The ladies are permitted to keep their head gear on.

**Prairieland Talk —**

**O'Neill Will Be Heard from Always... Even If It Is Sticking Out of Biggest Snowbank**

By ROMAINE SAUNDERS

LINCOLN—Newspaper and radio fellers have done their best to portray the scene on blizzard-bound prairieland. Neither quite match the simple statement of facts coming direct out of the snow drifts.

In a personal letter from friends in southwest Holt county I learn how one couple has managed:

"This has been a bad experience for all of us," the letter reads, "but so far we have not suffered. Have been out of some groceries we usually keep in the house, but not a matter of hunger. Our cellar is full of provisions. However, we had to shovel a tunnel into it and also into the shed where we have our coal. About every third day these drifted shut and it has been a backbreaking job all Winter scooping snow just to do the chores.

"Tore down the hay stacker and built a sled with which we have hayed the cattle. Then tore down a building and made partitions in the barns for the calves and the ewes which were lambing.

"No mail for over two weeks and then only as someone went to the outside aboard a horse to bring in and send out mail. And it was a hard day's grind for a saddle horse. On February 11, Floyd Adams, mail carrier, came from Amelia in a "weasel"—his first trip since Christmas. The army opened a track to our place last week but today it is closed again. Had three army men with us for meals and some over night."

The daughter of this couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Bly, who is attending school in Chambers, got home Friday, February 11, for the first time since Christmas.

Mr. Bly is assessor and is wondering how he is going to get at the job by March 10. Their son is at a ranch some distance from home trying to get feed to 300 head of cattle.

O'Neill has always rated in the jumbo class. No little, pettifog among the Irish. And now it has been the focal point of the storm-battered and frost-bitten of all Nebraska this hard Winter. O'Neill will be heard from always, even if it is from a head sticking out of the biggest snowbank.

Tokyo Rose, Axis Sally and now the third, the sorriest sister of the three, aging Anna Louis Strong, a native of Friend, kicked out of Russia where she had spent the half of her life, wife and widow of a soviet official, branded by Moscow as an American spy. The freedom and simple life of a Nebraska village was bartered for the gay whirl

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