

Old Peoria Was 'Right' For Sheltons Until Death Closed The Books

School Board Beats Motion That It Quit

Post-election bitterness erupted at the Peoria School Board meeting last night and culminated in a motion that all seven members resign.

The motion was defeated 5 to 2. Mrs. Vivian Roszell, who made the proposal, and Mrs. Marietta Bloom, who seconded it, were the only two who voted for it.

The action came about during a heated discussion of last Tuesday's school board race in which W. C. Jacquin and Mrs. Bloom were re-elected to the board. In a statement the day after election, Mrs. Bloom accused Jacquin of asking people to vote for only one candidate.

Some 40 persons attended the meeting and one of them, Mrs. Gladys Schiefeling, asked Mrs. Bloom whether she "considered proper" that a board member instruct voters to vote only for him.

Charging that the president of the board "signed and sent out many postals" requesting people to vote for Jacquin, she commented that none were sent for Mrs. Bloom. "This is board participation in politics," she said. Mrs. Bloom agreed with Mrs. Schiefeling's statement, declaring that the "practice was indefensible."

BOARD PRESIDENT Frederick M. Bourland announced that he sent the post cards out under his name as a private citizen and not as a board member, urging his friends to vote for one member only.

Serving on the board does not prevent him from speaking as a citizen, Bourland said.

Jacquin echoed Bourland's sentiment, stating:

"My status as a board member is separate from my status as a citizen. I don't consider myself unethical. I ran as an individual citizen. I can't instruct anyone to vote for me alone. My friends did and I knew about it. Why should I as a candidate stop it?"

At this point another person in the audience, Eugene Allison, got up and suggested that Jacquin resign "to gain the confidence of the people."

This was met with a round of laughter, after which Mrs. Roszell announced that whether he knew

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Resigned Because He 'Served Long Enough' Caldwell

G. Chapman Caldwell of Peoria said today that he resigned from the Illinois American Legion's anti-subversion commission because he "strongly felt" that he had "served long enough."

He was replaced on the six-member commission Sunday by E. D. Stoetzel, secretary of the Peoria Manufacturers association. Caldwell called the appointment a



BERNIE SHELTON

Frost Seen Likely In Area Tonight

Near freezing temperatures and fair skies are forecast for tonight. The low is expected to be between 30 and 35 degrees.

John Wenke, Peoria Journal Star garden editor, said he doubted if there will be any frost injury because cool weather already has delayed some crops. The two exceptions he said were possible are early set tomato plants and sprout trees. There are only a few of the latter in this area.

Wednesday will be partly cloudy and continued cool with a high around 50, according to the weather bureau.

Winter's return will result as Peoria area comes under the influence of a high pressure ridge now extending from the Dakotas to Oklahoma.

FROST OR FREEZING temperatures will arrive, however, as winds subside. Today, in addition to being partly cloudy, was rather windy. A high of near 50 was indicated this afternoon.

Weatherman Wayne McDaniel, in a local weather summary, said skies cleared over southern and central Illinois during the night but cloudiness was expected to develop and increase again during the day.

Cancer Fund Has \$10,013

At a Cancer Fund report meeting at Hotel Pere Marquette Monday, Charles E. Gagnier, general chairman, announced that \$10,013.52 has been collected.

The goal is \$32,038. Reports were given by Mrs. Ben Melver and Leonard Goudy, co-chairmen of the commercial division. Mrs. Duane Phillips, chairman of the residential division; Mrs. Beatrice Zewolski, chairman of buildings; Clayton White, chairman of the industrial division, and Rudy Fiala, chairman of special gifts.

The drive will be continued through April 30. Next report meeting will be Friday, April 27.

A single shot from a high-powered rifle, fired by a gunman hidden in a wooded thicket behind St. Joseph's cemetery eight years ago, ended a long era of big time gangland rule in Peoria. But the lone bullet, which snuffed out the life of Bernie Shelton, did much more.

It precipitated a series of reverberations which shook Peoria's official circles for months and echoed throughout the state and nation.

Many Peorians believe that the wave of revelations which came in the wake of Shelton's assassination played an important role in the election of Adlai Stevenson, then virtually a political unknown, to the office of governor of Illinois.



Carl Shelton

FOLLOWING THE PEORIA KILLINGS, a U. S. Senate committee headed by Estes Kefauver, began its famous probe of nation-wide operation of major gambling syndicates.

Prior to the arrival of the Sheltons on the Peoria scene and for some time thereafter, gambling operations in Peoria were on a more or less peaceful and well-organized basis.

Last of a Series

While this snug arrangement was in operation, "outside interests," attracted by the fertile Peoria field, tried to muscle in.

IT WAS ONLY NATURAL THAT PEORIA'S earlier day gambling king—business men rather than gunmen—should seek protection of bodyguards.

On this score the Sheltons—Carl and Bernie—appeared to fill the bill perfectly.

They were leaders of a gang of desperadoes which had come off victorious in a long and bloody underworld war in southern Illinois and had attracted international attention during the prohibition era.

So the Sheltons moved into Peoria. For a while they carried out their role as guardians and "enforcers" for their local employers.

IN TYPICAL SHELTON FASHION, the brothers "took over" from those they had been hired to protect. The latter, taking the hint when some of the toughest members of the old Shelton gang began to appear on the scene, quietly withdrew into other fields of endeavor.

Over quite an extended period, the Sheltons ran the Peoria gambling machine with a firm hand. Carl, the elder, owned and operated the Peoria and Main St. machine fronts in the "better circles" was the major force. Bernie, a more rugged character with numerous bullet scars on his person as memento of earlier encounters, stood along in the role of first lieutenant.

The happy-care-free life of the Sheltons suddenly came to an end Oct. 27, 1947.

On that date, Carl, on a visit to the family's homestead near Fairfield, Ill., was mowed down by a barrage of bullets while he was riding down a country lane.

Just nine months later, Bernie who succeeded his elder brother as commander-in-chief here, dropped from the single shot, fired from ambush as he stepped out of the Parkway tavern on Farmington road, opposite the lower entrance to Bradley park.

Bernie died a few hours later at St. Francis hospital without giving an inkling as to who his slayer might have been or why he was shot.

From that day to this the identity of the killer remains a mystery.

REVELATIONS WHICH FOLLOWED THE SHELTON killings, however, kept Peoria in the nation's headlines for months.

They started with a story by Ted Link, famous crime reporter of the St. Louis Post Dispatch, about a photographic recording made by the Sheltons, purporting to show that a high county official had tried to obtain \$20,000 from them to avoid prosecution on a comparatively minor charge, some months before the killing.

Circuit Judge Henry J. Ingram called a special grand jury and appointed a special prosecutor to investigate. The grand jury returned a series of indictments naming the state's attorney, sheriff and an investigator for the state's attorney on charges of malfeasance, attempted bribery and perjury.

The grand jury report also set forth that it had found "much evidence that too many public officials are too closely associated with gamblers and racketeers."

This was followed by another special grand jury session, under direction of a special prosecutor from Chicago, appointed by ex-Gov. Dwight Green.

THE SECOND GRAND JURY returned indictments against Link and several Shelton gang members, all on charges of kidnapping. The charges stemmed from the questioning by Shelton's friends of a minor Peoria hoodlum whom they believed played a "finger" role in Bernie's murder.

Meanwhile political changes came both on the state and local basis and all the indictments returned by the two grand juries

were subsequently dropped or permitted to die on the vine because of lack of "substantiating evidence." From the legal standpoint, the battle of the grand juries ended in a draw.

The death of Bernie Shelton, however, definitely ended Peoria's gang era. The remnants of the Shelton clan have long since departed these parts as well as their home territory in southern Illinois where some of their neighbors have shown an antipathy for the family in the form of periodic gunfire.

Even the "Golden Rule" farm off Farmington Road, where the Sheltons once held forth in baronial splendor, has passed to new hands and a new name.

Peoria Journal Star

PEORIA, ILLINOIS
TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1956
EVENING
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TIME OUT from preparations for putting up Downtown Days flags is taken by Ross Shride of the Peoria Flag & Decorating Co. as his assistant, Ed Cremons, answers a "What are you doing?" inquiry from tricycle rider Ralph Martin, 1318 1/2 N. Monroe St. Downtown Days are Thursday, Friday and Saturday of this week.

Downtown Days Fete Readied

Three consecutive days of bargain shopping are being planned by downtown merchants for Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Downtown Days in Peoria.

New spring and summer merchandise will be offered at attractive prices in this cooperative effort to focus attention on the advantages and convenience of downtown shopping. This is the third such semi-annual event under the guidance of the retail trade events committee of the Peoria Association of Commerce.

A SPECIAL ADVERTISING supplement for Downtown Days will appear in all editions of The Peoria Journal Star Wednesday, presenting top values being offered. David Purner, chairman of the Downtown Days Committee, emphasizes that this sale is not just a clearance sale but that excellent bargains will be available all three days. The retailers are making a special effort to have real values on the counters all three days so that Friday and Saturday shoppers will have as great an opportunity to shop advantageously as the Thursday shopper.

"The purpose of Downtown Days," said Purner, "is to make the public conscious of the advantages of loop shopping, to emphasize the convenience of a concentrated variety of merchandise and services, to make them aware of the value of the loop area to the entire community as

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Council May Get Stop Sign Petition

Residents in the vicinity of Robert A. Tall housing project are expected to present a petition to the city council tonight for the installation of a traffic signal or stop sign at the intersection of Adams and Green sts.

Parents began circulating the petition after several neighborhood children were either hit or had close shaves while crossing Adams.

Parents have complained to city officials that Adams st., near the housing, has turned into a speedway and is proving to be a definite hazard to children and adults alike.

Traffic Engineer Daniel J. Hanson yesterday said the problem is being discussed with school officials with the idea of having chil-

Pastor-Legislator To Address Methodist Men

An ordained Methodist minister who also is a state representative will speak here tomorrow night.

He is the Rev. Clarence G. Hall, minister of First Methodist church of Catlin, Ill., and currently serving in the general assembly as state representative from the 22nd senatorial district comprising Vermilion and Edgar counties. He will address men of the First Methodist church after a 6:15 p.m. dinner.

Mrs. Hall has spoken in this area on previous occasions and is considered outstanding in his field. His subject tomorrow night is: "Has The Church Lost Its Job?"

He is a former secretary of the Y.M.C.A., a past department (Illinois) chaplain of the American Legion and the Veterans of For-

The Family Car



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