

### Solons Laugh As Senator Asserts Cigarets May Exceed Liquor Evil

By CHARLES P. STEWART  
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Washington.—"An evil which promises to be greater than alcohol!"

Senator Reed Smoot overdid matters when he said that—of cigarettes.

He might have said it of dope and won a good many endorsements. Plenty of lawmakers speak with alarm of the drug habit's spread. A lot more education evidently will be needed to bring them to a realization of the danger in cigarettes.

The Utah senator's warning only got him laughed at the other day.

Nothing is more fatal to a cause in congress than to have the legislators treat it as a joke.

Not only was it plain that his brother solon considered Senator Smoot's prediction exaggerated. They also seemed to think it funny, as coming from a prophet representing his particular part of the country.

Sen. Lee S. Overman of North Carolina—a couple of crossed cigarettes would make an appropriate coat of arms for that commonwealth—chuckled audibly when I asked him his opinion of his Mormon fellow statesman's newly-launched crusade.

"Did you ever hear of Utah among our leading beet sugar states?" he inquired, grinning.

"A cigaret instead of a sweet?" Again, the senator gave that rich southern chuckle of his.

True, Senator Smoot denied that he was leading up to a demand for out-and-out prohibition. He smokes cigars himself.

But then, some of Volsteadism's strongest standbys drink "licker."

However, all the Utah lawmakers or professors to be aiming at is to stop the "orgy of buncombe, quackery and downright falsehood and fraud which marks the current campaign promoted by certain cigaret manufacturers to create a vast woman and child market for their products."

Quite a few members of congress say that their risibles might not have been so much tickled if Senator Smoot had been satisfied simply to denounce the touting of tobacco as a food, a drink, a tonic and a cure for all human ailments.

Nobody admits ridiculing him for invoking the pure food and drugs act to prevent misleading advertising, or for protesting against the encouragement of smoking by school children.

It is when he says—"That American womankind has been passing, during the last five years, through one of those periodic crises that have afflicted womankind since the world began is no secret."

Then the cachinnation starts. "Craze will be right, when American womankind has had time to digest that statement," as one senator remarked, between snickers.

All the same, some congressmen believe that Senator Smoot has fired the first shot in what may develop into a vicious fight between sugar and tobacco interests—with the advantage distinctly in the former's favor, because sugar cannot very well be prohibited, but tobacco can be, if enough of that kind of prohibition sentiment should be stirred up—and there



Sen. Reed Smoot

are people who would like to see it stirred up.

Senator Overman refuses to be frightened.

"In my judgment," he ventures, "we have all the prohibition now that we ever are likely to have."

But lots of folks said that before the eighteenth amendment.

Then there was the Scotchman who was editor of a magazine. He was so tight he wouldn't even give a writer a rejection slip. —Life.

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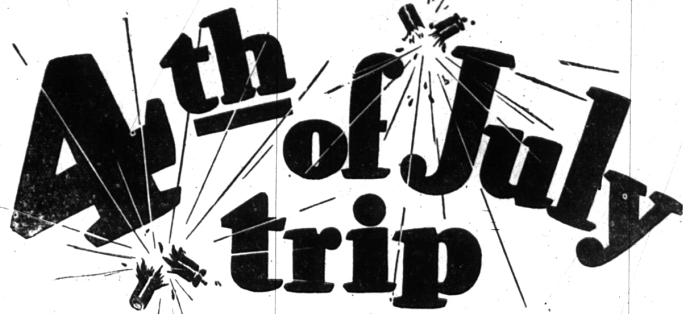
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