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## Letter from Woodworth to Barbur

C. B. Woolworth

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"Copy"

Portland, Ore., Aug. 6, 1921.

Mr. A. L. Barbur,  
City Commissioner,  
Portland, Ore.

Dear Mr. Barbur:

The public is very highly pleased over your efforts to rid the streets of the stages and for-hire cars. The only criticism I hear is the delay, but the more I look at the matter the more I am convinced you are gaining in public favor.

I recently made a trip to Seattle and while there I got hold of a circular describing a building which is called the "Auto Whirl". It was ten stories high, the top being reached by an incline (I think it was 120 x 130). The prospectus stated it would hold 600 cars and that the entire building could be emptied in 30 minutes. The cars were parked around the sides but the floor is not absolutely level. It is just like a big screw or a winding stairway.

I feel certain the time is coming when the streets will have to be cleared of all auto parking and that a building of this character will come into use. We have an excellent place on the river front for just such a structure. If we had a four story building between the Morrison and Hawthorne Bridges, the same idea could be worked out and the building could be made to hold several thousand cars, and at \$5.00 per month or 25¢ per day, it would bring in a splendid income.

However, I started this letter to introduce another subject and that is the fruit stands around town. I will just give you one example which covers the entire field and that is the fruit stand on the Northwest corner of 3rd & Yamhill Sts. This morning when I passed I made a survey of it. The curb was piled with crates of peaches and apricots. Next to the wall there was a pile of watermelons; on the sidewalk were several crates being opened and the contents piled on the stands. The fruit stands were projecting out into the streets 26 inches and in addition to this the salesman stand in front of the stands. Now imagine if everyone in town would do this what sort of a looking place would we have?

A cigar man, realstate man, or a merchant has just as much right to take up the sidewalks, but if they displayed their wares in a like manner, they would be arrested in 10 minutes.

Not one of these vendors has a particle of respect for decency or order or for the rights of others or are good citizens in any way. They are mostly Greeks and would not hesitate to take advantage of anyone. The most annoying feature is the manner in which they solicit trade. A woman, man or child cannot stop an instant but what they begin to call their wares and annoy the life out of passersby and are often insulting and there is a common complaint that while they display their best fruit to the public, when a purchase is made, the salesman picks the small

Mr. A. L. Barbur

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overripe stock from the back where it is not seen by the public. You have no idea of the friction caused by this practice. Every time I pass there is some word war going on between the vendor and the purchaser.

This corner at 3rd & Yamhill is congested at all times, and the only remedy is that an ordinance be passed compelling all fruit stands to display their wares in their stores and that none of the vendors be allowed to stand on the street outside the street line and that they must unpack their goods on their own premises and not on the street, and that immediately upon delivery of goods they must be moved inside and not allowed to stand on the curb, and that soliciting must be stopped.

You will gain the everlasting good will of the people if you see that this ordinance is passed and strictly enforced. I would even go farther and advocate an ordinance to the effect that all fruits and vegetables which are invisible to the eye must be of the same quality as those visible, and that all fruits and vegetables must be of uniform quality throughout the package. I would also make the vendor and the owner and the corporation and its officers equally liable for violation of the ordinance.

These people must be curbed. They are getting a hold on America that is damnable and they must be held down or we will have trouble. They do not understand anything but force, have no moral principles and no decency, and it is the sentiment of good Americans that foreigners must be made to behave.

I have noticed that in all the arrests made for bootlegging and raiding of soft drink counters all the proprietors are foreigners. My principle for years has been "Be an American Citizen or Get Out".

I am not writing this letter to annoy you, but I make many inquiries and listen and watch in order to hear the voice of the people, and I have a pride for our City as a model, and it only requires backbone on the part of the Councilmen to make it so.

We have a policeman at the City market who should be compelled to go after these fruit vendors who constantly infringe on the streets and give them good heavy fines, but an ordinance would be much better and make them keep off the streets entirely.

Yours truly,

(Signed) C. B. Woodworth