"PRESENTING BOTH SIDES"

Tommy Maloney was a state senator and an assemblyman in the days when San Francisco ruled the state and people with names like Maloney, Tom Finn and Bill Hornblower ran the legislature.

It was not the worst of times. These lads were riddled with honesty. Their colleagues who weren't were at least honest enough to stay bought.

Herb Phipps recalls the time when Tom Finn desperately wanted a bill passed in the Assembly, and enlisted the aid of Maloney and Hornblower. Hornblower -- certainly the possessor of one of the classic political names -- arose and launched into an ornate attack on Finn's bill.

As Finn blanched, Maloney pulled on Hornblower's tailcoat and whispered, "For heaven's sake, Bill, Tom is FOR the bill." Without the slightest hesitation, Hornblower banged on his desk and roared, "Now that I've told you what's bad about this bill, I'll tell you what's good about it," and so he did.

The bill passed handsomely, and Hornblower was praised editorially for his fairness in "presenting both sides."

From Herb Caen, The San Francisco Chronicle
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