

Millions raised for corporate tax measure fight

SALEM (AP) — Millions of dollars have been raised by the two groups campaigning on opposite sides of a November ballot measure that would increase corporate taxes.

Measure 97 would create a 2.5 percent tax on sales exceeding \$25 million for some corporations. Last week Gov. Kate Brown endorsed the measure, which would be the largest tax hike on corporations in Oregon history.

The *Statesman Journal* reports Our Oregon, the group supporting the tax, has raised \$1.5 million so far. The money is from just two donations of \$750,000 each by the Oregon Education Association and SEIU Local 503, the state's largest public sector unions.

The business-backed Defeat the Tax on Oregon Sales is campaigning against Measure 97, and has raised more than \$5 million from nearly 800 donations. Most contributions are from corporations or their executives.


The campaigns are likely to spend heavily on television, radio and digital advertising.

Supporters of the measure say it would re-ignite investment in public schools, healthcare and senior services, all while allowing the state to tackle its other financial problems. Opponents say it would hurt businesses and curb private sector growth.



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Commentary...

Meet the new horde; same as the old horde

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

Fanatically puritanical Muslim hordes boiling up out of the desert in an effort to establish a murderous caliphate are nothing new.

As the Great War of 1914-1918 was breaking the Ottoman Empire for good and reshaping the map of the Middle East, a deadly swarm of fanatics rose in the interior of Arabia. Semi-barbarous tribesmen, they called themselves Ikhwan (Brothers). They were the Wahhabi militia of the Saudi chieftain Ibn Saud. Wahhabi Islam is named for the 18th-century scholar and preacher Mohammed Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Wahhab insisted upon a literal and "pure" application of the Quran, and the religious movement he sparked in the Arabian peninsula was puritanical, ascetic, anti-modern and extremely violent.

Ibn Saud united disparate bandit tribesmen — including the Ikhwan — and used them to consolidate his power, dominating the Arabian interior and creating the modern state of Saudi Arabia.

In many respects, the Ikhwan can be regarded as a century-old foreshadowing of ISIS — not least in the fact that they were throat-slitting bandits who had little

compunction about murdering innocent Muslims who did not conform to their particular interpretation of the Faith.

Joby Warrick, in his excellent book "Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS," (available through the Deschutes Public Library) describes how the Ikhwan assailed the newly created Emirate of Transjordan in the early 1920s, after having established Ibn Saud as the ruler of Arabia:

"Bloodthirsty fanatics who regarded all Western inventions and practices as works of the devil, they saw themselves as divinely appointed to purify the region by slaughtering all who allied with foreigners or deviated from their narrow vision of Islam."

Sound familiar?
"From the harsh wastelands of the interior, they thundered into the newly formed countries of Jordan and Iraq in the early 1920s with the intention of toppling governments and creating a unified Islamic theocracy, or caliphate, spanning all of the Middle East. They hacked and slashed their way through entire villages that stood in their path, slitting the throats of every male survivor, to ensure that all traces of Western modernity were wiped out."



PHOTO PUBLIC DOMAIN

The Ikhwan on the move in the Arabian desert. The Wahhabi militia invaded the new Emirate of Transjordan in the 1920s, before being mowed down by British warplanes.

The invasion of Jordan by 1,500 Ikhwan ended when British warplanes caught them on the desert outside Amman and strafed them relentlessly, killing all but 100 who fled back into the Arabian peninsula.

The Ikhwan soon became a problem in Arabia itself. When Ibn Saud formed a nation-state called Saudi Arabia, he won recognition from Great Britain and sought to establish state-to-state relations with other powers.

This — being infidel business — infuriated the Ikhwan, who rose in revolt. Ibn Saud was no moderate,

but he valued his power and preeminence more than he valued purity, and he ruthlessly crushed the Ikhwan Revolt of 1928-30 with machine guns.

The spirit of Ikhwan did not die, however. A group of radicals who violently seized the Grand Mosque in Mecca in 1979 called themselves Ikhwan, and their murderous, throat-slitting progeny — now calling themselves the Islamic State — continue to fly the black flag over the desert where once savage bandits rode in raids raging against the birth of the modern Middle East.



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