

"Issues" in the Gubernatorial Campaign

While There Are Several Issues that Have Been Interlocked For the Purpose of Defeating Governor Olcott For Reelection, the Pretentious Promises of His Opponent Are Furnishing the People of Oregon Something Extraordinary in the Line of Campaign Pledges

IF THE people of Oregon, during these pre-election days, are considering the tax issue as the paramount issue in the gubernatorial campaign, then the democratic candidate for governor, Walter M. Pierce, of Eastern Oregon, apparently is working hard to eliminate himself by his own campaign speeches. While the people of this state, the merchant, the manufacturer and the home owner of the cities, the land owner and farmer throughout the Oregon country are feeling the heavy burden of taxes, they are intelligent enough to know that the state tax imposed on them is comparatively small in proportion to the self-imposed tax burden they carry in each respective city, town or district, over which no one but their own incorporated town or county has any control. They know that no governor of the state can remove their joint responsibilities for the community bonds and district improvements they themselves have voted for. They know that he can not lighten the burden of their district school tax, nor their local cost of community or county administration. Knowing that they themselves, as progressive citizens, have done all this in the interest of their district and the state at large and for the purpose of making permanent improvements that may attract people to their sparsely settled communities, where hundreds of opportunities are open and thousands of acres of fertile land waiting for tillers of the soil, they know that they themselves are responsible, that no executive of the state can reduce the specific obligations of their respective communities, obligations they have assumed without asking any executive for permission to do so.

The object they had in view when they voted for permanent community improvements was to make their county and district and the state at large more inviting to people from the outside, who would then be more likely to come in and engage in business, in farming and build homes. They know

that the only way to reduce their taxes for these improvements lie in bringing more people into their communities so that the heavy taxes, proportionately taken care of by the few, can be distributed among a greater number and thereby be able to reduce the burden of the individual resident.

Yet, in this campaign, Mr. Pierce, as a candidate for governor, himself a land owner, a business man and a man of legislative experience, is reported to be traveling up and down the state, telling the people that if they only elect him for governor on the Seventh of November **he will cut their tax burden in two.**

If these statements credited to Pierce be true, then he has less regard for the intelligence of the voters and taxpayers of Oregon than any man who ever aspired to be governor of this state.

Down at the Benson hotel in Portland, is the Pierce for Governor headquarters. A more luxurious political headquarters, people say, they never saw. If the tax-ridden farmer is to make a sound and logical comparison now, between Pierce' talk of economy and his extravagantly appointed headquarters, where a hard-working farmer hardly would find a welcome among fashionably attired ladies who sip tea with callers, he would hardly be able to find any consistency and would necessarily wonder what would happen to our state if the spirit that reigns at headquarters at the Benson should be transferred to the capitol at Salem for a four year sojourn?

A friend, who has taken an active interest in Governor Olcott's campaign for reelection, speaking of the governor's opponent, gave vent to his feelings, in brief, by saying, Pierce in "Running on Gall."

Asked to give his personal opinion and observations, he gave them in detail. The following is a summary of his views:

We have been through a lot of campaigns and witnessed the antics of a lot of candidates, but this man Pierce takes the grand prize for unadulterated gall. Though proven to be the greatest single cause of the present high taxes in

the state of Oregon, he has the sublimated nerve to make a campaign as an advocate of tax reduction!

He offers no concrete plans, makes no constructive suggestions, but apparently goes into the campaign coolly calculating that he can fool enough people on this issue to elect him.

While complaining about high taxes, he is the author of more bills creating taxes than any man in the legislature.

While deploring the too many useless commissions in the state, he has voted against every bill that has been introduced in the legislature to effect consolidations, even opposing the bill sponsored by the commission appointed a few years ago to devise ways and means of consolidating state bureaus.

He gets out on the platform and tells about his joy in the bonds voted for the soldier bonus and how he introduced the bill when the truth is that he was not even a member of the legislature when the bill was introduced.

He spouts about our "soldier boy laddies" in an effort to wean the veterans away from the governor, whom the boys know, has been their good friend, yet during the war he accepted his \$1.25 an hour as a member of the draft board, though the draft board regulations specifically stated that the pay was designed to cover the cases of those who were not sufficiently well off to give their services to the government. Mr. Pierce is one of the wealthy men of Oregon, his assessed valuation being over a quarter million dollars.

He talks about taking the taxes off the land, when he, himself, was the author of a bill to get a constitutional amendment to exempt monies, notes, mortgages and accounts!

His alleged friendship for the soldier voters is very new, for, while many of them were in France and do not remember his draft board record, yet many of them will remember that he voted against an appropriation to make Camp Withycombe ready to take care of the "laddie boys" just before the war.

He says he is for an income tax. Apparently this is correct. First, he was for a flat tax on net incomes, which resulted in the present measure on the ballot. Second, he found the grange preferred a graduated income tax because it swatted the big fellows harder proportionately, so he dropped the bill which he had fathered and came out for the grange bill. It was discovered that it had been fraudulently initiated, but that never hampers Mr. Pierce. He immediately came out for a tax on the gross earnings of corporations. This sounded fine to audiences owning no corporation stock until it was discovered that such a scheme very greatly pleased the corporations because it would lessen the taxes they now pay in Oregon 16 2-3 per cent. Besides, it would deprive the counties and school districts through which the railroads pass of thousands of dollars in taxes which they now receive.

While demanding the abolition of boards and commissions he was the

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