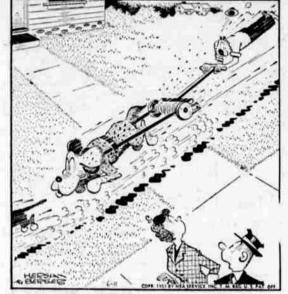
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FUNNY BUSINESS By Hershberger



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Overcrowding Blamed

Improvement Of Oregon **Prison Conditions Long** Way Off, Officials Think

By PAUL W. HARVEY JR.

SALEM — (AP) — Last week's strike of prison convicts is only a symptom of the trouble at the state penitentiary. State officials hope they can finish the prison building program before the lid blows off.

Warden George Alexander says all the trouble is

Warden George Alexander says all the trouble is caused by overcrowded conditions. His critics, including the Oregon Prison association and the senate committee on institutions, say that a lot of things could be

mittee on institutions, say that a lot of things could be done now to improve the place.

A new cell block will be built in the next two years, and that should help a lot. The prison contains some 1,560 convicts, or about 400 more than capacity.

The board of control, which consists of the governor, secretary of state and treasurer, runs all institutions. It is looking for a new warden, and Alexander will be moved upstairs into the office of superintendent.

Alexander now is both superintendent and warden. Under the new set-up, the warden will actually run the pison, while Alexander will handle business and financial details. Both will be responsible to the board of control.

It's going to take time to find a competent warden. So far, some police chiefs have applied for the job. But the board doesn't want any policemen running the place.

The warden says the new building program will take care of all of these ills.

The legislature told the board of control to establish convict work camps in forests. But this will present a lot of problems.

It would cost a lot of money to build these camps, and the forestry board, which would have to pay for them, isn't sure it would be used to plant trees on burned-over and cut-over lands.

Trusted convicts would be needed

any policemen running the place. They want a man who knows how to restore men to society.

to restore men to society.

Senate Action Blamed
Alexander blames the senate
committee for the recent trouble.
He says the committee gave the
convicts the idea that they are running the prison.

The convicts had a six-man convict committee, which Alexander
claims was self - appointed. This
committee, Alexander says, was
trying to run the whole prison.

The warden called for a showdown, putting four of the convict
committee members in isolation
cells.

cells.

The convicts went on strike, demanding the release of the four men from their correction cells. Alexander agreed to release them, and the strike ended. Then Alexander got the convicts to agree to name a new committee.

The convicts are picking the new committee now, but it is subject to the warden's approval. He doesn't want any desperate characters on it. He says the original committee had four very trouble-some men.

The new committee should help maintain order. It will transmit prisoners grievances to the warden. The idea is patterned af-

warden. The idea is patterned af-ter the federal prison system.

What's wrong with the prison?

The main thing is overcrowding, forcing youths into the company of hardened criminals, some of them sex degenerates. The men need more opportunity for education, including learning of trades. They need more recreation.

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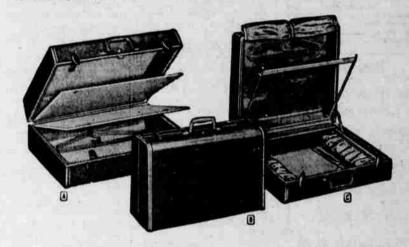
Warden Alexander gives Capitol news reporters the free run of the place. Yet it's hard to tell what's of its five arms and grow a new going on inside. We talk to lots of one.

to man them, and the warden doubts if there are enough convicts who could be so trusted. He says he can't find enough trusties now to run the prison.

The board of control wants a reformatory built for young first offenders. The legislature agreed-but it didn't provide the money to build it.

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