

# The News-Review

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## BOOSTING REGULATIONS

By CHARLES V. STANTON

Oregon Business & Tax Research, a statewide taxpayer vigilance association, is greatly concerned by current efforts of the State Tax commission to alter county assessment valuations to the true cash value of the property concerned.

The commission has instructed assessors to use "true cash value of today at the earliest possible time." Simultaneously, the commission has generally lowered the ratio of assessed to actual value in most counties, for a general decrease of 8.7 percent.

County assessors do not assess nor collect taxes from public utilities. Public utility taxes are collected by the State Tax commission. There is a lack of uniformity among counties in assessment ratios. Some counties have a higher valuation formula than others. Consequently, to bring uniformity into taxes imposed on utilities, the State Tax commission must first find the ratio the assessed valuation in each county bears to true valuation, then apply this percentage figure to public utility holdings in the respective counties.

In 1935 the ratio of assessed to true valuation in Douglas county was fixed by the commission at 65 percent. In 1940 this was reduced to 64 percent. The effect of boom conditions then became manifest as local property values started to soar, while the assessor continued to rate property on the assessment roles at pre-boom levels. In 1945 the ratio dropped to 60 percent. It went to 59 percent in 1950 and to 55 percent in 1951.

### Assessment Equality Desired

While property values in Douglas county have spiraled rapidly, the basis for assessment is the average valuation rate of 1938 through 1940. When new improvements are placed on the tax roll, the assessor endeavors to ascertain the current true value. He then uses a rather complicated formula to determine what the value of the same property would have been during the three-year period preceding inflation, and uses that figure as the base for levying taxes.

The total amount of money budgeted for any one year is divided into the assessed valuation to determine the rate of tax levy. It makes little difference whether the rate of levy is high or low, providing it bears the same relation to assessed valuation. The amount of money required from taxpayers remains the same.

Counties have endeavored to keep their assessed valuations below true cash values on the theory that, in the percentages fixed by the state commission, an advantage was enjoyed in taxes on utilities.

The tax commission now, however, is demanding that the preinflation level of assessed valuation be abandoned and that all property be brought to current true values.

### Increased Debt Feared

Oregon Business & Tax Research is fearful that the policy proposed by the commission would greatly increase public debt. And there is good reason for this fear. We imagine financially harrassed school districts and municipal governments would welcome the change.

Taxing districts, at present, are limited in the issuance of bonds or creation of debt to a percent of assessed valuation. If valuation should be increased, the limitation on debt would rise in proportion.

In Douglas county, for instance, our present assessment rate is only 55 percent of true value, according to tax commission findings. Should we increase assessed valuation to 100 percent, we would almost double our bonding capacity.

It would not affect the normal tax rate, but we doubtless would find school districts, municipalities, and other taxing groups, presently hard pressed for money needed for capital investment—such as school buildings, sanitary facilities and other improvements—promoting bond issues up to the new legal limit.

The taxpayer organization fears that public debt created under present dollar inflation could have a disastrous effect upon economy, should the dollar decline toward true value during the debt period.

"Taxpayers can't object to the tax commission's laudable, overdue effort to eventually equalize property assessments," the taxpayer association admits. But it adds: "No new taxing wealth is created by a quick jump in taxable values. Ballooned assessments invite going deeper in debt. They create a false sense of local government security. If history repeats and a recession follows this Stalin-defense spending splurge, will assessed values decline as true cash values slide off? Probably not."

**Scraps From the MENDING BASKET**  
 by **Vahnett Martin** P.O. Box 874, Drain, Or.

She does it with mirrors—unless it's dark. Then she says "good night" to her family with a flashlight. Pretty, blonde, teen-ager Loretta Olson is lookout on Ward's butte this summer. Her parents live within sight of her tower, so they flash messages back and forth. Mrs. Olson, with her glasses, can see Loretta up there on the butte; Loretta, through hers, can keep track of activities down on the Olson ranch.

"Of course we go up there real often," said Mrs. Olson, who is also a blonde and pretty, "but Loretta hasn't come down in six weeks! She loves her job and when 'they' told her they hoped she would do it next year, too, she said she would be looking forward to it."

The beacon is close to Loretta's tower, so now during a wakeful hour, as I watch the beacon flashing across the sky, I think of a plucky young girl, minimum age



## In The Day's News

By FRANK JENKINS

(Continued from Page 1)

sened. If we are inclined to shake our heads and sigh about what this old world is coming to, and all that, let's take a moment to think about all the "teen-agers in uniform" who are doing a job—a job for us, safe here at home—and think, too, of young folk in many other places who are not making the headlines, for instance, forest lookouts on guard against that cruel enemy—fire!

## Reader Opinions

### Bipartisan President Suggestion Deplored

ROSEBURG — I have just listened to the 4 p. m. broadcast. This is not the first time I have heard the suggestion that both political parties agree on a certain candidate. I am not seeking to discuss the candidate mentioned but rather the principle involved.

Why an election, if but one candidate is placed before a voter?

We as a nation are at the crossroads. Many do not know which way to turn. We have reached the time to think, to figure out what every move means. Our school books have so camouflaged Communism that many of our young voters would think one candidate would stop all controversy. It certainly would. But at the same time it would put an end to the freedom of every citizen.

Think of the founders of this nation who came here to establish a nation of free people! We have flourished under a constitutional government. I have watched our liberties slipping from us. I have watched the deadly enemy of death-dealing centipede which creeps along until it finds resistance. Then the poison is injected into the cringing flesh and death results.

Our school books, our books of fiction, and our radio addresses and many interpretations of law have been, and are now, like the bright colors on a centipede's back—just ready for the poison to be injected into the flesh of its victim.

Oh that we, as a people, could see the monster which is taking our freedom from us! We do not want a dictator. A bi-party head of our nation would surely be that.

MRS. EMMA P. WOODS, Roseburg, Oregon.

### Oregon Spot Practically Eden on Earth, Claim

ROSEBURG — This Umpqua valley is known as, and is called "Webfoot" because of the rainy weather.

From my experience, I am going to call it one of the wettest and driest valleys in Oregon, if not in the whole United States. I will say that it is even drier than the deserts of eastern Oregon. Some reader, by this time, is perhaps ready to take exception to this, but I'll prove it.

In eastern Oregon it is arid and dry and it gets very hot and sultry. But it does rain nearly every day in one spot or another there. They have thunder showers, occasional water-spouts or cloud bursts, but rain or hail, nevertheless.

Even if it is a cloudburst, it is welcomed, as it sometimes does a lot of good as well as damage. Thunder showers here are few and far between.

So I claim this is the wettest and driest spot in Oregon, as it rains all winter and dries all summer.

But, even so, this is practically an Eden on earth. No tornadoes, no frigid winters, no earthquakes, no high temperatures; just calm, dry days and cool, pleasant nights. I have been here since 1927 and

### NON-MILITARY spending that can be got along without.

Take a look at your personal hole card.

The House has just approved (and the Senate will approve) a bill to spend 56 BILLION dollars for U. S. military purposes. The President has asked for \$16 billion more to help our allies in Europe add to their military defenses.

Roughly, each billion dollars that Congress appropriates costs YOU, as an individual, the sum of seven dollars. Seven times 56 billion dollars comes to 392. Seven times \$16 billion dollars comes to about \$600.

These two appropriations will cost you, as an individual, about \$450. If you happen to be the sole breadwinner for a family of four, they will cost you \$1800.

Knowing that, knowing that you can't kid yourself about somebody paying YOUR SHARE of the tax, knowing that, in one form or another, you'll HAVE TO PUNGE UP, are you hot and eager for more boondoggling?

I doubt it.

The trouble is that at least a majority of the members of Congress THINK YOU WANT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO GO ON SPENDING LIKE A DRUNKEN SAILOR.

As long as that impression prevails in Washington, we'll go on whizzing down the road that leads to national bankruptcy.

## United States Learns The Hard Way To 'Never Trust A Communist'

By BRUCE BLOSSAT

The crisis which interrupted the Korean truce talks indicates that we Americans are still too slow to grasp the working of the Communist mind.

The postwar years should have taught us that with the Reds you can take nothing for granted. You must assume they will take advantage of every loophole, for both strategic and propaganda purposes. You must anticipate them by spelling out arrangements to the last detail.

This we did not do at Kaesong. In our eagerness to assure that cease-fire negotiations were well launched, to let no minor difficulty stand in the way, we leaned over backwards to accommodate our Communist opponents.

Among Communists such behavior does not inspire reciprocal good faith. It is taken as an invitation to abuse.

We assumed at the start that Kaesong would be treated as neutral territory, though we knew Red soldiers were dug in close to the city. That too-ready assumption was our first error.

When the first United Nations helicopter set down at Kaesong, it was instantly apparent the area was occupied by armed Communist troops moved in from the north. A quick look about established that the entire atmosphere was designed to convey the impression that we came to the talks as defeated forces seeking surrender.

Our advance mission, distracted by the commendable desire to get the talks going for certain, failed to realize the harm in this situation. The moment they saw the first Communist gun, they should have declared there could be no talks unless absolutely equal status prevailed among the negotiators in a neutral setting free of arms.

Without prompt satisfaction on I know of no more beautiful valley in the United States.

Could use a few pleasant summer showers in summer at that.

**Fulton Lewis Jr.**  
**WASHINGTON REPORT**  
 (Copyright, 1951, King Features Syndicate, Inc.)

By RICHARD NIXON  
United States Senator from California

WASHINGTON—There are few left in Washington now who continue to express the belief that President Truman will not seek re-election in 1952. But there are too many (from the Republican point of view) who already are counting on an easy victory over him, openly expressing their satisfaction over the abundance of signs that the President wants to run again.

Recalling the complacency which characterized the 1948 campaign and led to defeat, it is difficult to understand why so many Republicans are already adopting the attitude that "Truman will be

(Editor's Note: While Fulton Lewis Jr. is on a four-weeks reporter's tour of Europe, guest columnists will write for him.)

a push-over." Of this we can be sure, both as a result of the 1948 experience and present indications of President Truman's strategy: He will have a specific program to offer the voters and he will do an effective job of selling them on it. If the Republican party and the Republican candidate do less, the result in 1952 will be the same as it was in 1948.

In other words, the ingredients of a victory formula which proved successful for Mr. Truman can and should be used by those who oppose him and the policies for which he stands. The issues must be clearly defined; the Republican position as contrasted with that of the President must be presented with equal clarity—without hesitation or apology.

It will not be enough to merely criticize and oppose the actions and policies of the administration. It has been proved over a period of twenty years that the people will not support mere negativism; they demand to see a constructive program to replace the failures of the past and this they certainly have a right to expect.

Once we have agreed upon a candidate and a program, however, the biggest part of the fight will still lie ahead. It is going to take a far more vigorous effort to bring home to the people the merits of that candidate and that program than the Republican party has been producing in the past.

President Truman and his administration are as vulnerable from a political standpoint as any President or any administration in history. The failure of our foreign policy in the Far East, the shocking disclosures of graft and corruption in high places, the incompetence which has become a trademark of so many Washington agencies, are potential issues which could be as potent as any one could ask. But if the Republicans put on a do nothing, say nothing, spinster campaign we will be asking for a good licking and we will deserve it if we get it.

Nothing short of a fighting, courageous campaign, with the issues met head on, will stand a chance of prevailing over the opposition's undeniable capacity for presenting its case down to the grass roots. This is more than a challenge to the Republican party—it is an obligation which it owes the people of this country to never again allow the outcome of an election to be determined without a fight on the great issues affecting their future welfare.

The Republican task in 1952 will be greater than was faced in 1948 because there are at present a number of advantages on the side of the administration which did not exist in the last campaign. Financial sources for campaign contributions will be greatly expanded, due to the hold the administration has on defense contractors, a number of those who are seeking such contracts. The machine politicians who control the party in power are past masters at "shaking down" those

### Grand Theft Charges Faced By Publisher

LOS ANGELES —(AP)—Al Waxman, 42, East Los Angeles newspaper publisher, was arrested here on seven counts of grand theft involving a \$50,000 newspaper deal.

Waxman was jailed in lieu of \$25,000 bond and district attorney's investigators accused him of receiving \$50,000 from five southern California publishers for the purchase of 1,000 tons of Canadian newspaper, which he did not deliver.

His alleged victims were the Hollywood Citizen-News, the Van Nuys News, the Pomona Progress-Bulletin, the Compton Herald-Tribune and the Rodgers MacDonal Printing company.

### GRASS FIRES QUELLED

Roseburg firemen quelled two grass fires Sunday afternoon, reported Fire Chief William E. Mills.

At 4:13 they were called to put out a grass fire of undetermined origin at East Fifth St. There was no damage. A grass fire at 856 South Jackson St. was extinguished at 8:08 before it caused any damage.

**ENTITLED TO SUE**  
**Ruling Favors Owner Of Auto In Parking Trap**  
 NEW YORK —(AP)—A municipal court judge ruled here that a motorist whose car was hemmed in by a double parked automobile has the right to sue for damages.

Justice Maurice Wahl cited a recent decision of the District of Columbia court of appeals upholding the right of riders to travel on street cars and buses without being forced to listen to broadcasts.

"If a 'captive audience' has the right to make known its plight and pray for relief," he said, "so may a 'captive automobilist.'"

Justice Wahl was ruling in a case brought by Hans Harnik, an attorney, and his wife, against Dr. Samuel R. Levine.

They asked for nominal damages of \$25 for "discomfort and inconvenience" but admitted the issue of damages was unimportant and what they wanted was a judicial declaration of civil liability.

Rejecting Dr. Levine's motion for dismissal on the ground there was no cause of action, Justice Wahl suggested that a motorist barred from moving his car by a double-parker might even sue to recover for false imprisonment.

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