

The News-Review

CHARLES V. STANTON, Editor and Manager

ADDY WRIGHT, Asst. Bus. Mgr.
GEORGE CASTILLO, Asst. Editor

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HIGHWAY PROBLEMS

By Charles V. Stanton

Color is an important factor in sales appeal of many products from soap to automobiles. Large sums of money are being spent to emphasize color attributes and thereby promote greater use of the products advertised. But the State of Oregon is considering the matter of color as a means of reducing and limiting the use of one commodity. In fact, you may soon be ordering passionate pink or brilliant blue gasoline.

Oregon collects a tax from the sale of all gasoline. But when gasoline is used off the highways, the purchaser is entitled to a refund.

A farmer who uses gasoline for tractors, motors, appliances and equipment, and the logger who uses gasoline for cats, yarders and loaders, may obtain a refund of gasoline taxes.

The State of Arizona adopted a law a couple of years ago that all gasoline sold for off-highway use had to be colored. Police officers made surprise checks at intervals of the gasoline in private cars and trucks to ascertain if purchasers of gasoline for off-highway purposes were using their tax-free gas for operating vehicles on highways. After a few fines had been levied, the State of Arizona cut its refunds by two per cent.

Undoubtedly there are some people in Oregon who have operated motor vehicles upon occasion with fuel on which tax refunds have been claimed. But if all off-highway gasoline were to be colored a putrid purple, and state policemen given siphons to test the color of the contents of the gas tank, the State of Oregon might save some gas tax revenue that normally goes out in refunds.

What's A Fixed Load?

That problem is one with which a legislative interim committee, headed by Representative Al Flegel of Roseburg, is wrestling. The committee will start a series of public hearings concerning highway problems. Any persons or firms having complaints, suggestions or proposals for new or corrective legislation pertaining to highways are invited by the committee to appear at one or more of the hearings. The committee will be in Roseburg the night of March 17 and will hold a hearing here on the morning of the 18th.

Do you know any good reason why a crane, mounted on rubber wheels, should pay a license of \$25, while the same identical crane on tracks should pay a personal property tax of \$150 or \$200? That's another problem the committee is booting around.

Many pieces of heavy mobile equipment, working on jobs off the highway, must upon occasion use the highway to get from one job to another. The law provides that where such vehicles are on rubber tired wheels they classify as motor vehicles and come under a special "fixed load" regulation. The constitution provides that motor vehicles, licensed as such and paying into the highway revenue fund, cannot be taxed as personal property. A vehicle on track treads, however, doesn't qualify under the law as a motor vehicle, so must pay ad valorem taxes. Chairman Flegel reports that Oregon now has 1,561 vehicles licensed under the "fixed load" provision. A "guessimate," he says, would value these vehicles at around \$7 million, which, under ad valorem taxes would yield a lot more money for the State and Counties.

So, what shall he do about the rock crusher set up on wheels and paying \$15 per year license, as compared with the crusher of the same make, size and design, but on fixed foundation, that contributes \$400 or more into the county tax coffers?

Public Relations Checked

Is the Highway Commission tough and hard-boiled in its relations with the public? Are its representatives and agents pushing people around just for the fun of it?

Two elderly ladies don't feel it was necessary for the Highway Department to lay out a road right through the middle of their farm, dividing their property into two sections and greatly reducing value and utility. Other property owners contend their rights were not adequately considered. On the other hand, many people will testify that right-of-way agents were courteous and considerate and fair in their bargaining for needed land.

The interim committee also must listen to highly technical evidence pertaining to weight-mile taxes on commercial freight trucks, and pleas for formula changes, as well as certificates of necessity and tariffs as applied to log trucks.

Public utilities want the State of Oregon to relocate poles and other installations when changes in roads and highways force the expense of moving the utilities. On the other hand, a large segment of the public is objecting to the erection of unsightly towers and poles along highways, just as opposition is raised to highway billboards.

Then there is the perpetual problem of whether the Highway Department should include the State Parks Department. Previous investigations have indicated that Oregon gets far more for its dollar spent for parks than do other states where the Parks Department is a separate agency. But there still is demand for separation.

These are only a few of the issues to be considered by the interim committee as it conducts public hearings in all parts of Oregon. It will endeavor to study every phase of the highway program in Oregon, and invites every interested person to appear and "speak his piece."

French Troops Policing Land

PARIS — The French Foreign Ministry acknowledged for the first time Tuesday that French troops were conducting "police operations" in Mauritania, a French possession claimed by the Moroccans. It is located south of Morocco.

The French Foreign Ministry spokesman said the police operations were against "bands of looters." He would not disclose the scope of the operations. Previous reports of French-Spanish cooperation in Southern Morocco, the latest only a few days ago, had been denied here.

Spanish cooperation was correct. Spanish troops, however, are also fighting rebels in Sagua El Hamra, their French possession known as Spanish Sahara, south of Morocco and the colony of Ifni.

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Least Likely to Appear at a Summit Meeting



—Bruce Blossat—

From France the world wants to hear neither minimizing nor justification of the tragic air attack upon a Tunisian border village.

Only deeply felt expressions of regret may make even the faintest impact upon the shocked millions who read of this unprovoked aggression against innocent humans.

There seems to be no doubt that Tunisia has been providing refuge for rebellious Algerian guerrillas. President Bourguiba either could not, or would not, close his borders to these fighters as they sought safe bases from which to launch attacks against French military forces in Algeria.

France surely has been provoked by Bourguiba's refusal to act in the matter. But even if French commanders had concentrated on actual rebel encampments or arms caches, they would have been in

fringing the sovereignty of a free and independent state had they struck at such points across the border.

AS it was, French planes searching for rebel bases bombed a border town on market day, killing some 80 people, including women and children, and wounding as many more.

It seems to be questionable whether this frightful act accomplished any measurable part of its stated purpose, though the French say it did.

It is the Tunisians who are dead, but it is France, with its friends, which will suffer more. If Moscow can for once restrain itself, all it needs to do is report the facts accurately and it will have a tremendous case to offer the world's impressionable peoples.

France's bloody campaign against Algeria could be prolonged. Its inch-by-inch efforts to find a peaceful solution may have been ruined. Not only Tunisia but all the Arab world will have new cause to stir the fires of anti-westernism. America, having supplied the planes which made the assault, could be tarred with the brush which blackens France.

THE Tunisians, all Arabs, all decent men everywhere, must know in clear, strong words that free western nations feel a deep sense of shame at what their ally has done.

If this feeling is not conveyed in full measure, men of good will may find it a task of years to piece together the shattered foundation of mutual trust that had begun to rise some places between the Arabs and the West.

He listed expanded production of the long-range jet B52 bombers and their jet tankers, the K133s, as items that must be accelerated.

McElroy came to the capital on an invitation to make a progress report on military matters. The choice of particular subjects was left to him.

The unusual invitation came from Senate majority leader Lyndon B. Johnson (D-Tex.), chairman of the subcommittee which held public hearings on U.S. defense needs after the launching of the first Soviet Sputnik last Oct. 4.

The hearings ended last Jan. 23, with the subcommittee adopting a comprehensive list of 17 recommendations, including stepped up programs for missiles, satellites, missile submarines, manned bombers and troop airlifts.

TUNIS — Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba today called on the NATO powers to intervene to end the conflict between France and the Algerian rebels.

In a broadcast recorded for later transmission over the government radio, Bourguiba suggested that a French-proposed commission to patrol the border between Algeria and Tunisia be broadened to include other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The commission's task should also be widened, he said, to include investigation of the Algerian war and finding a solution for it.

The French government has insisted it would not allow the Algerian conflict to be brought into the negotiations to end the French-Tunisian dispute, except for discussion of measures to seal off the Tunisian border from the rebels. The French insist that Algeria is France's domestic concern, not a subject for international intervention.

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Weather Bureau Postpones Plans To Drop Service

WASHINGTON — The Weather Bureau said Friday it has dropped plans to discontinue terminal forecasts at three Oregon airports but still plans to stop the service at two Oregon airports and at five in Washington.

F. W. Reichelderfer, chief of the Weather Bureau, advised Sen. Morse (D-Ore.) the service will be continued, despite earlier adverse decisions, at Eugene, Troutdale and Klamath Falls.

Seattle every six hours and is pegged to the individual airport area. Arthur C. Peterson, chief of the Weather Bureau's aviation section, said there has been no change in plans to drop the service at Burt and The Dalles, Ore., nor at Olympia, Bellingham, Ephrata, Walla Walla and Ellensburg.

Peterson said it still was not known when the service will be halted but estimated it would be "a matter of months."

He attributed the change to a lack of desire to retain the "flash advisory" forecasts initiated by the Weather Bureau about a year ago.

He described this service as a radio forecast covering major disturbances within a 150-mile radius of an airport. The terminal forecast also is available to air-borne pilots on request but is primarily for use in pre-flight planning.

Peterson emphasized that discontinuance of the terminal forecasts would have no effect on weather reports emanating from these airports to the Seattle office for use in compiling other forecasts.

But a toll road is not an answer, f.w.a.

WASHINGTON — Would you like a scale sensitive enough to weigh the wing of a fly? You can make one from two soda straws, a half-inch screw, a match folder and a sewing needle.

That's a sample of a new way of teaching high school physics which Dr. Elbert P. Little says is catching on rapidly.

Eight high schools are now experimenting with this "do-it-yourself" system, he said. He expressed hope 100,000 students would be getting the course by 1960.

Little is a member of the Physical Science Study Committee at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Here for a regional conference this week, he demonstrated some of the proposed new experiments for newsmen.

More Complex Subjects

In an age when many students can take a hot-rod apart and put it back together, Little said, they lose interest in such things as "simple pulleys and levers, the sort of things which can be taught in lower grades but which still are included in high school texts."

Instead, the course he's planning is to start with "complex subjects" like the hot-rod and put it back together.

Public Tests For Pay TV Are Sidetracked

WASHINGTON — Projected public tests for subscription television were shoved off Thursday at least until fall.

The Federal Communications Commission late Wednesday bowed to the expressed wishes of the House and Senate Commerce Committees that nothing be done about such trials until Congress has had a chance to say something about the matter.

The commission, which had been scheduled to start processing pay TV applications next week, said no consideration will be given to any such applications "until 30 days following the adjournment of the 85th Congress."

Only one application actually has been received from the Philadelphia Broadcasting Co., which holds a permit to build a station in that city.

Editorial Comment

From The Oregon Press

TOLL ROAD NOT AN ANSWER TO PROBLEM

Coos Bay World

It is good that Port Commissioner Howard Walker has tossed out, for discussion, the idea that the Bay Area's need for an east-west highway tapping U.S. 99 can be solved through construction of a toll road.

It is good because it keeps us thinking about the need for a road. The idea of a toll road in this instance is, however, of low merit. And this is not said to detract from either Mr. Walker — who spoke out as an individual and not as a member of the Port Commission — or from the necessity of a road.

Toll roads have been fantastically successful elsewhere in the nation where two conditions have prevailed.

The first condition was the necessity of a highway. That is obviously also present in our situation, because without an east-west highway from the Bay Area to the vicinity of Roseburg, there is only one way for Coos County's economy to go — and that's down.

The second condition, however, is another matter. Toll roads have been successful where they are operated between large population centers which promise heavy use of the highway over 24 hours of the day. That condition is not present in this situation.

The east-west road is needed to improve and expand commerce, to provide cheaper transportation of lumber products for inland mills, to make greater use of the millions in tax dollars expended to make this port what it is today, and to encourage greater tourist travel along the coast by providing another convenient entrance and exit from the coast.

But the road is not needed for commuting. And it is the commuter more than the tourist or the freight hauling which makes for a toll road success story. To pay out a toll roads needs thousands of automobiles, not hundreds. An east-west road out of Coos Bay's area would be primarily commercial.

That of course does not lessen the largely overlooked has been the possibility of bonding by the state, perhaps in conjunction with federal aid.

When the road is built, and it will be built, the odds are it will be built through highway bond sales in the same manner as Highway 101 is now being unbottlenecked between Brookings and Gold Beach.

And the odds are also that it will come about a good deal more rapidly than most of us realize. At least it will if pressure against officials is unrelenting.

For instance, in a relatively short time the need and desire for the road has been brought home hard to Gov. Robert D. Holmes, who realizes the need for an adequate highway system all over the state as well as in its southwestern segment.

He has stated positively that he will, if re-elected, make road building, through the use of bonding, an integral part of his first full-term program. The east-west road here would be a natural fit into such a program as suggested by Mr. Holmes.

Mr. Walker is correct in stating the need for a road. The port here, despite its massive shipments of lumber products, is a "one-way street" in more ways than one. It is shipping lumber and nothing else and it is importing nothing excepting a few barrels of petroleum.

If a high-level economy—not a "cut and get out economy"—is to be maintained not only in Coos Bay, but in the whole of Coos County, this port must be put to more diversified use of the port. It goes hand-in-hand with the need for diversification of industry, which is not only the need here but the need throughout the state of Oregon.

But a toll road is not an answer, f.w.a.

PRESTIGE AND PAYROLL IN COUNTY SEATS

Eugene Register-Guard

Salem is Oregon's only truly divided city. The main part of town is in Marion County. But a dormitory and semi-industrial unit lies across the Willamette River in Polk County. In other places in the state where a similar social map could be drawn (mainly Portland and its Washington — Clackamas fringe) the city limits stop at the county line. The Salem pattern has both its good and its bad features.

The Capital Journal of that city points out correctly that it makes sense to have the heavily built-up fringe a part of the core city, something a majority of our Eugene fringe people do not understand. At the same time it's bothersome to involve two county governments with the affairs of one city. The paper speculates on the alteration of county lines, and even on the elimination of many of them.

Al, idle dream. Granting that most county lines don't make sense and that Oregon counties are more the result of political log-rolling than of sensible planning, we see no likely way out. Those court-houses, and Oregon has at least two dozen more than it needs, employ too many people. Mayor's hamlet makes a major share of its living out of the fact that it was designated a county seat in pioneer times. And we mustn't forget prestige. Being a "county seat" means something, apparently, if we recall the recent squabble in Lincoln County over moving the courthouse from Toledo to Newport where it originally belonged. And up in Union County some 90 years ago the citizens waged what was almost a pitched battle as the county seat was claimed by both Union and LaGrande. Violence and hatreds also sprang from similar disputes between Umatilla and Pendleton, Astoria and Baker City, Lafayette and McMinnville, Jacksonville and Althouse.

Paraphrasing, let it be said here, "it would be a good idea if Oregon's 100th year was a watershed to dust off some of this exciting

history and appraise our people of the lusty, vigorous path Oregon trod in its early days."

Counties, unlike states and cities, have no entities of their own. They are creatures of the states and agents of the states. They can be created and eliminated by the Legislature. In the earliest times Oregon had only a handful of counties. Then they were carved into smaller and smaller pieces, each theoretically of a size that would make it possible for a horseman anywhere in the county to gallop to the courthouse between breakfast and dinner. That was the excuse for creating Benton, Polk, Sherman, Wheeler, Gilliam, Columbia, Union, and other counties that, by modern standards, should be hitched onto larger ones. But the formula was not applied equally. Lane and Douglas counties still stretch from the summit of the Cascades to the ocean. Malheur, Harney, Lake, Klamath and Grant still occupy huge reaches.

In 1916 when Deschutes was carved out of Crook County, Oregon's county-building boom ended. Since that time we've had 38 counties, which is far fewer than most states (Texas has 254, Georgia 159, Kentucky 120), but which is also perhaps 30 more than we need.

The late Warren D. Smith was interested in a program to reduce the number of Oregon's counties to seven. This distinguished geologist and geographer drew the lines with full consideration for the economy, social makeup, transportation systems, and climate conditions. As a plan it was a beauty. Richard L. Neuberger, when he was in the Legislature, used to give his fellow legislators the creeps by good humoredly threatening to introduce a bill calling for such a reorganization of counties. But he didn't. And if he had, the plan wouldn't have reached first base.

NO POETRY PLEASE

Grants Pass Courier

The Courier does not publish poetry, even in the letters to the editor column. We are reverting to the policy, because of late we have received several letters containing verse for publication.

This policy is maintained by most Oregon newspaper editors, who do not like the responsibility of setting themselves up as critics. There are times, admittedly, when we have been reluctant to turn down poetry that is well-written or clever. Yet once a precedent is established trouble can ensue.

Letters come to the editor requiring no standard save readability and freedom from libel. Anyone is welcome to participate in this column — so long as thoughts are expressed in prose. The only requirement is a signature that can be verified as an address.

Poetry is different, however. Everybody at one time or another seems to get the urge for self-expression. Young lovers use poetry to pledge their undying devotion. The approval of spring inspires others to take their pens or typewriters in hand and turn out verse. The passing of a loved one can produce a poetic eulogy.

Now just put yourself in the editor's position. If he selects one bit of verse and gives it space, he immediately is open to criticism from other subscribers who feel their rejected poems were as good or better than the one published. So just to be on the safe side most of the smaller daily newspapers of Oregon publish no verse at all, either from subscribers or as syndicated material.

That, to some readers, may seem like a cowardly way of meeting the situation. If so, we accept the accusation and enter a plea of guilt to the charge.

We'd rather be confronted by a dozen irate subscribers because of some news omission or commission than one would-be poet, determined to see his or her work in print.

Morgan Says Western Ports At Disadvantage

PORTLAND — West Coast ports have been put at a greater competitive disadvantage than they were previously, Oregon Public Utilities Commissioner Howard Morgan said Wednesday, because of recent railroad freight rate increases.

Morgan told the Portland Propeller Club that the increases, authorized by the Interstate Commerce Commission, increase the advantage held by the East Coast and Gulf Ports.

A tractor can be shipped by rail from the Midwest to the Gulf for 84 cents a pound while the rate to the West Coast is \$2.06, he said. Before the increase the Gulf cities had an advantage of 81 cents to \$1.79.

He said the ICC has been asked by Oregon's congressional delegation to revise the rates.

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Jean Meske OR 2-1552

Inquiries, Invited At Anytime

In The Day's News

(Continued from Page 1)
before we can tackle him.

That's for war. Let's take a look at peacetime prospects.

The Atomic Energy Commission has just authorized a ten-million-dollar project to tame plutonium. Plutonium is a relatively cheap and abundant by-product of scarce and expensive Uranium. Its principal use now is as an ingredient of atomic and hydrogen bombs.

If it can be tamed and domesticated, it can become the useful servant of man for the tasks of peace. Experts say such an achievement could lessen Western dependence on Middle East oil. Western European dependence on the oil of the fretful Mid-Eastern countries lies at the root of most of the trouble there.

The commies are trying to maneuver themselves into a position where they can shut off Western Europe's oil. That would spike Western Europe's progress.

Automobile designers are looking forward to the time when they are able to slip a slug of uranium — or, better still, a shot of cheaper and more abundant plutonium — into the fuel slot of your car and be all set for 5,000 or 10,000 or maybe 20,000 miles before having to fill 'er up again.

It costs more to work, of course. But your car would be too bulky and cumbersome because of the weight of the SHIELDING materials necessary to protect you against harmful radiation. NEW metals may reduce this cumbering weight.

Maybe some of these new metals will come from our ores right here in Southern Oregon and Far Northern California. Who knows?

But, you say, all this lies in the distant future.

What is there in it for ME?

Listen. The pessimists are howling bloody murder about a depression that they say is inevitable.

Question: How can there be a depression when the world is standing at the threshold of the greatest period of new