

Cottage Grove Sentinel

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Discussion of measures—

FOLLOWING its usual custom the Sentinel will discuss measures that will be up at the special election January 31:

There are three measures referred by the legislative assembly and one referred by referendum petition. One is a constitutional amendment. The number is small enough so that each voter should take time to read the affirmative and negative arguments in the voters' pamphlet.

While it may not be of outstanding importance that any one of the measures be enacted, yet each one is a controversial issue and every voter should give careful consideration to each. The Sentinel can give only a brief outline of each.

Bill changing primary elections to September.—300-301.

The Sentinel had taken a position in favor of this change before the legislature enacted the law and referred it to the people. The editor came from a state where the primaries were held a short time before the general election, in Minnesota, and the law seems to work entirely satisfactorily. Eleven states, including Washington, have September primaries.

At present the primaries are held the third Friday in May. The measure on the ballot would change the date to the first Monday in September, leaving 63 to 69 days between the primaries and the general election.

The charge has been made that the change would favor the wealthy candidate. In the opinion of the Sentinel the opposite is true. At present a candidate starts in January or sooner to make his campaign for the May primaries. After the primaries there is so much time intervening before the general election that the successful candidates in the primaries have to make another complete campaign. The expense of two campaigns is terrific. It is nothing unusual for \$10,000 or \$15,000 to be expended during the two campaigns for a state office. The charge has been made that a few years ago there was expended in the interests of one candidate who was elected governor a sum between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and he was not even a candidate in the primaries.

It is not well for democratic government that such sums should be expended in seeking public office. Such expenditures mean that those elected will require their entire terms in office to get their election expenses back. Those who have been defeated, after making an expensive fight, have been crippled financially for the remainder of their lives. A suit was recently filed in Portland to recover money due for the expenses of an unsuccessful gubernatorial campaign of a number of years ago.

Bringing the two elections close together should cut the expenses of candidates almost in two. That is certainly desirable. What chance has a poor man now to seek public office? The ordinary farmer or laboring man can not make a good start. Campaigns for important office in Oregon are exclusively for those who can afford to spend a large sum of money, or for those who have friends willing to spend that money, or for those who through public service have received publicity worth many thousands of dollars. In any event the

common man has no chance to seek office. The proposed change in the date of the primaries would make office seeking easier for the poor man.

There is still another angle. We have so many elections that the voter gets tired of them. Putting the two elections close together would cut almost in two the time the voter would have to give to consideration of candidates and measures. Putting the elections closer together would tend to increase interest in elections.

Compensation of members of the legislature.—Constitutional amendment.—302-303.

The Sentinel always has favored better pay for legislators. It costs the ordinary legislator \$200 or \$300 above his \$3 a day salary to be present at a regular session. It is not good for democratic government that officials should be asked to work for less than the salary paid them. It makes legislative service a game for the well to do. The person of moderate means, although he often does serve, can not afford to do so. Lawyers predominate in the legislature and one of the reasons for that is that legislative service gives prestige that is of value to a lawyer. But the farmer or the laboring man has nothing to gain by such service. He is simply money out of pocket.

In addition to being money out of pocket during a session, a legislator is out whatever he puts into a campaign, and he is out whatever it costs him to keep up correspondence preceding a session and between sessions. Also many public demands are made upon a legislator that are not made upon other persons. Many legislators suffer losses because of being away from business during sessions or because they offended certain persons or interests by their legislative votes. It is an expensive game.

Salaries of \$10 a day during sessions would be about sufficient to enable a legislator to come out even.

The proposed amendment sets no salary. It merely says that legislators shall receive such compensation as may be provided by law. Legislators now fix the salaries of all elective and appointed officers of the state, even salaries for county officers, and there seems no good reason why they should not be permitted to fix their own in the same manner. They would have to be reasonable in what they paid themselves if they hoped to remain in office to draw the salary.

Sales tax bill.—304-305.

Would levy a tax of 2 per cent on retail sales and one-fourth of one per cent on wholesale sales to provide for old age assistance, aid to the blind and dependent children.

The Sentinel has favored other sales tax bills, but is not convinced that this one should be favored. Its reasons for uncertainty are two: That the federal government is more than likely to enact old age legislation that will not require state participation, which would make a state sales tax unnecessary so far as the aged are concerned. The Sentinel believes that a sales tax bill should either forbid the tax being passed on or should require that it be passed on. That would place all business on an equal footing so far as the tax would be con-

cerned. The Sentinel prefers a tax similar to those of California and Washington which must be paid by the consumer. It is doubtful whether a tax that couldn't be passed on to the consumer would be constitutional, for such a tax might result in confiscation of property, and it would require a huge force to see that such a tax were not passed on. To be fair to business, the tax should be one that the seller would not be permitted to assume.

The Sentinel likes the feature of the proposed sales tax bill that excludes food stuffs from provisions of the bill. Of course, motor fuel oils, that already pay 25 per cent to 30 per cent tax, would be excluded.

The Sentinel's inclination is to wish to see sales tax presented in a more satisfactory form, but would favor the bill if that were the only way to get money for old age pensions.

Bill authorizing student activity fees in state higher educational institutions.—306-307.

This is an exceedingly controversial issue. There seem to be good arguments on both sides. Opponents argue that making the student fee compulsory works a hardship upon students who are cramped for funds. The maximum fee would be \$15 a year. In many cases that might be a burden, especially when added to other fees which the student must pay.

Proponents of the bill argue that no student should be without the things which the fee provides, that the things which the fee provides are necessary to a well-rounded education. The fee was compulsory until the attorney general cast doubt upon its constitutionality. The student fee would admit the student to all athletic contests, but would also support lectures, concerts, oratory, debate, dramatics, bands, orchestras, glee clubs, and student publications, all important in education.

It is pointed out by proponents that, with a compulsory fee, all students would be on the same basis so far as these added activities are concerned, while, if the fee were not compulsory, the fee would have to be so increased to those who did pay that the extra activities would be only for those well provided with funds.

Whether or not the fee should be imposed, and in what amount not exceeding \$5 a term would be optional with the state board of high-

er education. The Sentinel believes it would be sensible to give the state board, charged with conduct of our institutions of higher learning, every opportunity to do those things which seem best for the institutions and those attending them.

Practically every organization in any way related to higher education in the state is supporting the bill.

100% coverage. The Sentinel.

NOTICE OF FINAL ACCOUNT.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, as administratrix of the estate of Laura E. McKernan, deceased, has filed her final account in the office of the county clerk of Lane county, Oregon, and that Saturday, Feb. 1, 1936, at the hour of 10 a. m. of said day, in the county court room of said court has been appointed by said court as the time and place for the hearing of objections thereto and the settlement thereof.

Dated and first published Jan. 2, 1936.

Last publication Jan. 30, 1936.

CANDIS M. FOSTER, Executrix of estate of Laura E. McKernan, deceased.

J. E. Young, Attorney for Administratrix, J2-40

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