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Salem Scene

by Robert H. Elsner

State Budget Deficit and Tax Hike Seem Inevitable

Although many issues will confront the 1963 legislature, the one likely to concern most Oregonians centers around the strong possibility of a tax increase.

New or higher taxes of some type seem inevitable during the next biennium. Oregon is faced with a deficit ranging from \$40 to \$50 million.

State law prohibits operating in the red, which means that additional revenue will have to be obtained through taxes. In the past, Oregon has been able to meet its potential deficits by falling back on existing budget surpluses. But now, the surplus is gone.

Education accounts for one of the largest expenditures in the general fund budget. This and other "built-in" costs are necessary — and often difficult or impossible to avoid.

Even if the legislature trims the state budget to the bone, it is apparent that some type of tax increase is in store.

Oregon's lawmakers will have to determine the source — or sources — of this additional revenue. It won't be easy, and will require careful scrutiny and deliberation.

They may even decide to hold a special election while the legislature is in session, to let the voters determine how — or if — additional taxes will be levied.

Traditionally, Oregon voters and legislators have opposed a statewide sales tax. Sentiment still seems to follow this pattern, and most observers predict that adoption of a sales tax is unlikely.

Cigarette Tax Proposed
One of the most widely advocated is a cigarette tax. At present, Oregon is the only state in the Union without some form of cigarette tax.

Of the 50 states, 47 now impose a tobacco tax. The other two — North Carolina and Colorado — subject cigarettes to either a sales tax or a local community tax.

Proponents of a cigarette tax

include Governor Mark Hatfield, Speaker of the House Clarence Barton (D-Coquille) and Associated Oregon Industries, the statewide business association.

Taxes ranging from 3c to 5c per pack on cigarettes have been suggested, but 4c seems to be a likely compromise. Estimates are that this would produce from \$14 million to \$19 million per biennium.

Net Receipts Tax Suggested

Another proposal includes broadening the state income tax base. As suggested by the governor in his recent budget recommendations, this would be a net receipts tax, with a rate schedule of 1 to 6 per cent. Under it, every wage earner would pay at least 1 per cent, and nearly all deductions would be eliminated.

Proponents say that it is more equitable than a sales tax. Both business and organized labor agree that a sales tax hits the lower income groups hardest. A 1 per cent gross income tax, for example, would cost the low income taxpayer less than if he were required to pay a 3 per cent sales tax. Yet 37 states rely on a sales tax as their principal or a major revenue source.

Other tax possibilities include:
1. A limited sales tax, on luxury items. This has been advocated by Sen. Walter Pearson (D-Portland), who also has urged a statewide tax election during the legislative session to let the voters decide.

2. An increase in liquor prices by about 15c per bottle, coupled with the elimination of the annual \$1.00 liquor purchaser's permit fee. Governor Hatfield also has proposed this as a means of raising additional funds.

Whatever the outcome, it appears certain that income—the taxpayer's—will be one of the major topics of the 1963 Oregon Legislative Assembly.

"Salem Scene" will appear regularly, with first-hand reports, previews and interviews throughout the session.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

It Pays to Stay in School

Boys and girls who stay in school and graduate, because they are well trained and have some experience, will get the jobs of tomorrow. A high school diploma is now virtually a requirement for even an interview. Yet 50% of the children who in 1952-53 were in the fifth grade and should have graduated from high school in 1961 did not graduate.

On the labor market these "drop outs" are not able to obtain the more desirable jobs. This is particularly true of girls. Only one out of six girls who leave school before graduation become clerical workers compared with 7% of the women

graduates.
In the years ahead emphasis will be placed on brains rather than brawn on the rising level of skills, on flexibility and adaptability. Young women and their families should be impressed with the economic "facts of life." For example, that single women spend forty years at work, married women with children 31 years, married women who have children and then go back to work 27 years.

To compete in the world of work in the 1970's today's women will need to select an occupational field which suits their abilities and to work hard to get as much education and experience as they can.

Rural Road Use Increases

Traffic over Oregon's rural Interstate routes increased 7.7 percent during October of 1962 as compared to the same month last year, according to the Oregon State Highway Department's monthly traffic report. This was a somewhat smaller increase than had been recorded through the late spring and summer months.

Traffic on other rural parts of the State Highway System decreased 1.4 percent compared to October of 1961, according to figures recorded on 75 traffic counter locations.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Pacific Paradise

EDITOR:-

December 11, 1962
Have you read the papers, heard the radio and seen TV today about the winter grip on the eastern part of the United States, from Montana east?

Temperature now, here at Port Orford, is 56 degrees. Minimum this a.m. was 46 degrees. Full 8 1/2 hours of sunshine today, no wind at all.
Pear trees in bloom.

Readers mail this to your friends and relatives east of the Mississippi River now. We invite them to live here now, or when they retire.

A. Windmaister
Member of Port Orford Chamber of Commerce

TELEPHONE EMPLOYEES VOTE ON CONTRACT

West Coast Telephone company employees today were voting on a two-year contract between the company and Local 77 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL-CIO).

Fifteen hundred sixty-five company workers in Oregon, Washington and northern California are eligible to pass on the proposed agreement on wages, fringe benefits and working conditions. Voting is by secret ballot, and the results will be tabulated Saturday.

West Coast Personnel Director Bob Putman and Business Manager Arthur Kenny of IBEW Local 77 announced Dec. 4 that negotiators had concurred on terms of a new contract to be submitted to the employees for ratification. Bargaining began October 29, and its successful conclusion was disclosed at the 19th negotiating session.

A two-year contract between West Coast and the union expired at midnight Nov. 30.

A joint company-union statement described the terms of the contract as "comparable to those negotiated by the nation's major telephone utilities this year." West Coast is the 11th largest of the country's 3300 independent telephone companies.

The joint statement went on to relate that improvements in the new two-year proposal would cost West Coast an additional \$400,000 in the next two years. Included are wage increases and better fringe benefits featured by higher medical payments by the company.

Bus Firms Ask Change

Salem — Two passenger bus companies have filed applications with the state public utility commissioner asking for route changes that would drastically affect their Western Oregon operations.

Commissioner Jonel C. Hill said Western Greyhound Lines, Portland, has asked for authority to abandon its regular route service between Portland and Salem via highway US99E; between Corvallis and Eugene, through Junction City via highway US99W, and between Junction City and Eugene on highway ORE223 via Santa Clara.

Coincidentally, Hill said, Ben Houck, owner of Valley Stages, Salem, filed an application asking for extensions in authority to allow his busses to serve these routes and schedules. The Salem-Portland authority would exclude service to points between Portland and Oregon City. Hill said hearings will be held on the applications.

Urban freeway traffic increased 2.2 percent. Traffic on other urban portions of the Highway System increased 3.9 percent.

The only rural highway route to indicate a consistent increase in October was Interstate 5. General decreases were recorded on US20, US26, US97, and US101.

Sunday, Oct. 21, was the heaviest day of traffic for the majority of the rural highway counters.

The Deadly Pigeon

A fungus disease carried by pigeons may account for as many as 60 deaths a year in the U.S., a government scientist says. The disease is often mistaken for pneumonia.

Local Air

The atmosphere of every community has its own unique spectrum of substances that are in need of study in the quest for causes of lung cancer, six experts on environmental cancer report.

How Do YOU Measure Up?



National Forests Allowable Cut Rate Is Increased

The rate of annual allowable cut of timber in the National Forests of the Pacific Northwest Region will be increased 124,600,000 board feet to reflect adjustments announced Friday by Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman.

J. Herbert Stone, Regional Forester, U. S. Forest Service, said the increase is part of a 547,000,000 board feet increase for 42 western National Forests that encompass areas where demand for timber is greater than that available for sale.

Eleven National Forests in Oregon will see increases, with two forests unchanged in their allowable cut rates. Three National Forests in Washington will get increases, with one forest unchanged and two in which the allowable cut rates will be reduced. The adjustments will be made in fiscal year 1963.

The increase will bring to 4,265,600,000 board feet the total annual allowable harvest of timber in the region. Stone pointed out that there have been other substantial increases in recent years. For example, the cut effective January 1, 1962, of 4,141,000,000 was an increase of 219,000,000 over the previous year. Since 1950, the allowable cut for the region has increased 74 percent, from 2,450,000,000 board feet.

Procedures and techniques for allowable cut calculation have been under continual review.

This includes studies to find more precise means of determining factors that effect cut such as rate of timber growth. The methods of calculating allowable cuts were recently reviewed by a board of highly competent foresters headed by Dr. Kenneth P. Davis, chairman of the Department of Forestry, University of Michigan. Secretary Freeman said the announced increases result primarily from modernization of methods to reflect long-range trends of utilization as endorsed by this review board.

Secretary Freeman emphasized that attainment of the new allowable cut rates is heavily dependent on the expanded timber access road program recommended by President Kennedy on July 26 as a part of his program to assist the timber industry.

The secretary said the allowable cut rate increases will come from areas of National Forest land already designated for commercial timber harvest. Calculation of the cut includes restriction of timber cutting in some areas to harmonize timber harvesting as fully as possible with other resource uses of the National Forests, such as wildlife and recreation.

Another objective, Secretary Freeman said, is to increase the volume of timber under contract to timber operators as rapidly as practical and still maintain the sound conservation prac-

Fare Increase Held For Study

Salem — A 10 percent fare increase proposed by the Southern Pacific Co. for Oregon patrons of its passenger service was suspended until April 14, 1963, by Jonel C. Hill, public utility commissioner, to "... provide an opportunity for public examination of the proposal."

The proposed increase would affect first class and coach passenger fares on SP's lines in Oregon as well as joint fares from stations on the SP to stations on other railroads within the state.

The increase of 10 percent is identical with the 10 percent fe-

tures geared to multiple use management.

YOUR CAR and the LAW



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

CHEMICAL TESTS OF DRIVERS

Oregon was one of the first states in the nation to pass a law providing for the admissibility of chemical test evidence in cases involving driving while intoxicated. The law was enacted in the early 1940's.

The law now in effect in Oregon provides that a person arrested and charged with being under the influence of intoxicating liquor may, upon his consent, be given a chemical test to determine the amount of alcohol in the person's blood.

The test may be of the blood, breath, urine or other bodily substance, but if a blood test is to be given only a duly licensed physician, or a person acting for the physician, may withdraw the blood.

Several key words affect administration of the law.

In the first place, the person must be arrested and charged with the specific offense of driving under the influence; he cannot be asked to take a chemical test in connection with any other violation.

Secondly, he must give his consent to the test. The consent

may be verbal or written. Until 1961, consent had to be in writing.

Should the person refuse to take a chemical test, none can be taken. Further, the refusal to permit a test is not admissible in evidence against him at his trial.

The law in Oregon, and most other states, provides that .05 per cent or less alcohol in the blood is prima facie evidence that the defendant was not under the influence; over .05 per cent, but less than .15 per cent, is considered relevant evidence, but cannot be given prima facie effect in indicating whether or not the defendant was under the influence.

If, however, analysis shows that there was .15 per cent or more alcohol in the blood, this is considered prima facie evidence that the defendant was under the influence.

To understand these figures, it is necessary to explain briefly what happens when alcohol enters the stomach in the form of a beverage.

Scientists say it is absorbed through the walls of the stomach and the small intestine into the blood stream.

The blood carries it to all parts of the body which contain water, including the brain.

Thus, the degree of intoxication and its effect on driving ability can be determined by the per cent of alcohol in the blood, breath, urine or saliva, though the latter test is seldom used.

Many scientists believe the 15 per cent figure is too liberal.

Further experimentation, they say, indicates that practically all human beings are unfit to drive with as much as .10 per cent blood alcohol concentration, and that many are unfit at much lower levels.

Chemical test evidence is not as widely used as safety proponents believe it should be because many people refuse to permit a chemical test.

Chemical test proponents maintain that greater use of the tests would protect the innocent, as well as aid prosecution of the guilty.

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

Doctor, placing a thermometer in woman's mouth: You'll have to keep your mouth closed for a couple of minutes."

Husband: "Say, Doc, how much does one of those things cost?"

add excitement to...

his Christmas

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