

ment in California to know they can advance through the procedures of the merit systems in accordance with their own abilities. When this thought is firmly ingrained in the minds of all

the people in the state service, the science of government will be enhanced and, I am quite certain, there will be a general increase in the well-being and happiness of the State itself.

## Oregon Needs State Retirement Plan

The total inability of Oregon to provide any financial assuagement whatsoever for the widow and family of a highly valuable servant such as the late Dr. Donald Erb, president of the University of Oregon, serves well to illustrate the inequity which now prevails between the families of men who die in industry and those on the payroll of the state or any of its subdivisions. The state makes no provisions whatsoever for either the sudden death of its employees or for their retirement at a meritorious age. Under law, it must cease to pay them the day of their death.

While various attempts have been made to work out a retirement system in higher education, all have met an asserted legal barrier which forbids payment of widow's benefits, or retirement pay, whether or not it comes from matched funds. A legislative committee is now working on the problem of general employees of the state; the need is urgent and the matter should be given attention and definite action by the next legislative session.

In all industrial pursuits, wage earners and executives are by force of federal statute compelled to provide for annuities at 65. With this social security provision go modest but extremely helpful payments to the widow with children who are under 18 and to the children themselves while they are less than that age. After the children are grown and when the widow is 65

years of age, a monthly annuity for life is resumed.

Quasi-retirement payments are now made in many state and county positions by keeping on the payroll inept persons, some on half-time and half-pay. Neither the pensioner nor the recipient of the services he offers is well rewarded. Instead the state and its subdivisions should provide a comparable retirement setup to that in private industry; if it does not do so soon it will be in increasingly poor position to command the services of able, competent, thrifty men and women who wish to make provision for emergency and for retirement. Increasingly heavy taxes on income, diminishing return on sound investment, all make the task of accumulating adequate capital, the return on which will provide for old age, exceedingly difficult, particularly on salaries paid a public servant.—Permission of Albany Democrat-Herald.

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