

in any agency by taking and passing one, instead of four, examinations. Also, one, instead of four, eligibility lists would be established. This results in attracting more applicants to take the test. As larger lists of eligible employees are established, the agencies are able to select better employees and examinations are held less frequently.

As much of a consolidation as could be made under our present law was effected July 1, 1944, resulting in a more efficient operation of each State agency. It is estimated the cost of operation will be reduced \$7200.00 the first year, and further reduced in succeeding years. The Committee on October 16, 1944, unanimously requested the Attorney General of the State of Oregon to prepare, and he now is, the necessary bills to be submitted to the 43rd Legislative Assembly, which bills are designed to enable a complete consolidation of the merit systems of the four State agencies.

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On the Main Question, the Committee Renders a Divided Report:

The majority report being:

"After hearing all arguments pro and con, it is our opinion that a merit system would practically freeze in their positions, State employees to the point where it would be almost impossible to discharge one for any reason after he had qualified under a merit system examination. Therefore, we do not think that such a law would be fair to our elected public officers who are held responsible for the efficiency of their officers. For a further reason, to adopt a merit system at this time would not be just to our boys and girls now in the Armed Services."

J. N. Jones
Lew Wallace
W. W. Chadwick

The minority report being:

"We recommend that the State of Oregon adopt a merit system for the selection, protection and removal of its employees. The law need not freeze employees into their position but should provide that an employee may be discharged by his superior. If such employee feels that he has been arbitrarily discharged, he may appeal, not to a Court, but to the Merit System Commission, whose decision shall be final. The burden of proof as to the employee's right to keep his position must always be placed upon the employee. As a merit system is designed to select only qualified employees, it will not reduce, but will enhance the efficiency of elected public officers.

"The present law gives no preference to veterans of the Armed Services. The law should provide that all State employees hired subsequent to September 14, 1940, the date the National Guard was mobilized into the United States Army, should be temporary employees until six months after the termination of this war. Thus, the veterans would not only have an equal opportunity, but the advantage of the established veterans preference.

"A merit system selects only qualified and competent state employees. Their promotions, demotions, lay-offs, and discharges are made objectively and on a basis of merit, free from personal, political, or religious considerations. The seven to ten thousand state employees should not be employed by the state on a personal basis without any set standard for qualifications, but should serve the state after competitive tests prove their ability. Instead of the 64 departments using any method at any time, there should be a fixed norm to determine competency for all employees in all departments.

(Continued on page 35)

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