

State Civil Service System for Oregon

By JOHN ANNING

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on Civil Service

Intelligent participation in government is the birthright of every American. State government should have our enlightened attention for it is the backbone of our own way of life. The fact that we in Oregon have been fortunate, under several administrations, does not justify us in depending upon a continuation of such luck to carry us indefinitely through the postwar period and the problems that lie ahead.

A far-sighted legislature and administration coupled with the interest of the tax-payers and the state employees has given the State of Oregon an excellent Civil Service law based on the principle of merit.

Since the policies of good state government must be determined by our elected and appointed officials, and carried out by state employees, it follows that the efficiency and success of state government and the service which it renders, rest upon the character and capacity of the men and women who constitute it. Thus the key to good state government lies in well selected, well trained and well supervised personnel encouraged by opportunity to advance in the service on the basis of

merit. This opportunity has been offered to state employees through the recently adopted Civil Service Act. It is our duty as citizens and as state employees to concern ourselves with every detail of this law. Our first obligation is to acquaint ourselves, individually, with the various phases of Civil Service. By so doing we will be in a position to take advantage of the opportunities offered to us and to be of service to those charged with the responsibility for the administration of the Civil Service Act.

In an effort to fulfill this obligation, the Oregon State Employees Association has set up a Civil Service Committee for the purpose of studying all phases of Civil Service systems and familiarizing ourselves and other state employees and the public with the principles involved and to develop understanding and appreciation that we may be of some assistance to the recently appointed Civil Service Commission in establishing an equitable set of Merit Rules and Regulations.

The recently enacted legislation, excellent though it is, merely provides a framework around which may be built a Civil Service System, good or bad. Naturally it is our desire to see that the clearly defined wish of the Oregon legislature is carried out by educating our membership in some of the things which they may expect from such a system as well as some of the obligations which they owe to it.

So far the only concrete action taken by the Civil Service Commission has been the appointment of Professor William Griffith, present director of the Merit Council which now governs the State Unemployment Compensation Commission, the State Board of Health and the Public Welfare Commission personnel system, as temporary director

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Should those early plans, coordinated into one satisfactory to the Social Security Board, be promptly adopted for the particular classes of employment covered by the early systems; and should plans for other classes of employment, utilized in other divisions and formulated in cooperation with the divisions involved, be adopted as quickly as formulated, the state's man-power problem would be greatly improved.