

## The President's Message

There are still many state employees who do not know about the OSEA. There are many even who have heard of the Association but do not know why it is important that they become members. There are still state departments whose personnel is not represented in the Association Council. They likewise do not realize the importance of having a voice in the activities of the OSEA.

It is important that state employees become members and it is important that department groups form their own chapters so that chapter delegates may speak for them in the Council. It is important because the Association has a tremendous task to perform and it needs the support of all state employees to succeed in this task. It is important also because the individual employee needs the Association to look after his interests as an employee.

The passage of legislation, no matter how well written or of what high purpose, is no assurance that it will be effectively executed. Many methods of evasion, delay, misinterpretation and utter disregard have been utilized in other places in the past. An unprejudiced interpretation and execution of the Civil Service law will contribute to the welfare of both the state and its employees. However, it is possible that classification plan and compensation plan could be so set up that instead of contributing to this welfare, they become a legalized obstacle instead. A watchful Employees Association is the best assurance that employee legislation will be faithfully executed and that employee interests will not be exploited.

The really tremendous task facing state employees and the OSEA is sponsoring the true concept of the merit principle in the public service, not only in the minds of the public but also in



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the minds of our own members and of state officials.

In the past the public service has been exploited by two undermining practices; the practice of political patronage, or making public jobs a reward for political support, and the practice of providing public jobs for those in need, a form of public relief, sometimes referred to as the hidden pension. Neither practice considered the competence or efficiency of the employee and, although not in universal use, both practices were recognized by public opinion as commonplace in public service. These practices in a great measure contributed to the public's mediocre appraisal of the public service and the mediocre wage structure accorded them. This appraisal of the public service is deep rooted in the public mind, the result of many years of exploitation.

The newer concept of a public service based on efficiency and competition and a career service is the direct oppo-