

The President's Message . . .

The fact that the legislative session is over has in no way relieved the pressure that the association has found to be its lot since January. If one is to be realistic he would find that developments subsequent to the closing of the legislative session have increased considerably the pressure to which we are subjected.

The role of the association in the representation of its membership is an activity of many facets. There are times when situations arise that of necessity must become top priority. Such is the special election of October 15 when the voters will decide the fate of the tax measure. The impact that a defeat of the tax program will have on the lives of state employees cannot be calculated in terms of specifics. We can, however, conclude that we will be among the first to be adversely affected, if worse comes to worse.

It has been the responsibility of the board to take actions and make decisions to protect the interests of its members and the State. In the instant case we found it advantageous to go to the council delegates for support of positions that the Association deemed necessary. The support, though positive, did not speak firmly of a group of employees interested in their welfare. It is possible that at times we forget that WE are the association. Each member is expected to be profoundly concerned about the status of his association. It then becomes his responsibility to think logically about what his position will be when he casts his ballot on October 15. He must also be responsible in the actions that he will take during the interim period in convincing his relatives, neighbors and friends of their responsibility to the State of Oregon. We have no choice but to support the existing tax measure. For some of us our very existence depends on its outcome.

The actions of the people of Oregon are looked upon from many quarters as being that of a tax revolt. This may well be true. We must, however, also be mindful of the fact that a revolution to be effective has to be timed perfectly. The association is not saying in its support of the tax measure that this kind of increased taxation is desirable. We are saying that this is much more desirable than the chaotic conditions that could prevail in state service should the measure fail.

If this tax revolt in fact is not stemmed and should the governor choose not to make the necessary budget cuts but rather call a special session of the legislature, this might well be a biennium of referrals. In the meantime the state will be falling more and more into a deficit aided by the cost of the impending special session and possible subsequent special sessions.

Perhaps I should take the line of least resistance and say that things are not so bad. To do this would be a betrayal of the trust that goes with the office to which you association members elected me. I now again call for your support. Let us all go to the polls and vote, and hopefully pull together in support of the tax measure. As dedicated state employees we are tabbed to be directly affected and can choose no other alternative. Think also, if you will, of those who do not work for the state, but who have taken for granted that state services can be cut or completely eliminated without identifying which services may be lost should the tax measure fail.

We have long since concluded that the budget presented to the 1963 Legislature was inadequate and was further impaired by legislative action. Nevertheless we have it and we must live with it to the best of our ability. We further conclude that it is not too soon to look forward to a more vigorous legislative program in 1965 which will include an adequate budget for competitive salaries and adequate service for the people of this fair state of ours.

To insure the protection of the few gains that resulted from the current tax measure let's vote "yes" for Ballot Measure No. 1.

So be it.

Chalmers Jones

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