

the OSEA news

The monthly publication of the Oregon State Employees Association

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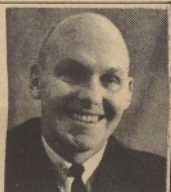
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From the Executive Secretary



They Have Problems, Too

Many Oregonians appear to agree with the statement of the court in the New York case of I. Tucker (248 N.Y. Surr.) in the year 1866: "No man's life, liberty or property are safe while the legislature is in session."

State employees who are closer to the legislative process, however, may face the legislative session with some trepidation, but also with appreciation of the fact that the legislators have their problems, too. As the session opens, it seems appropriate that we quote the following from OSEA's Political Education Guide:

(1) The salary of State Representatives and State Senators is \$250 per month. The President of the Senate and Speaker of the House receive an additional one-third. The time demands of meetings, service on interim and special committees, and handling constituent problems results in few legislators serving without personal financial sacrifice.

(2) The secretarial help furnished to legislators, even during the legislative sessions, is very limited. OSEA often hears complaints that a person has written a legislator and not received an answer. Legislators would like to answer all of the letters sent to them, but when their mail is heavy it is just physically impossible for them to do so.

(3) Legislators like to hear from their constituents. They do not, however, particularly appreciate form letters or petitions. Obviously, an insulting, abusive or threatening letter does more harm than good to the cause of the writer.

A legislator recently told OSEA he cannot understand why he receives so many unsigned letters from state employees. If an employee writes a letter to a legislator, he can expect both his opinion and his privacy will be respected.

(4) The great majority of legislators are very friendly people. It is also to their advantage to meet and talk to people. Chapters should not be at all shy or reluctant about asking them to meetings or social events. Legislators do not expect that you will always agree with them, and most appreciate honest expression of opinion and proper argument. But, like you, they expect courteous treatment and not abuse.

(5) Many demands are made upon legislators, but the thanks they receive are few. Like all of us, they appreciate an occasional few words of praise or gratitude. As a practical matter, you will probably be calling on him again, and he will be more receptive if he remembers that you expressed some appreciation for what he did for you last time.

A Better Oregon

An Oregonian is an individual unique in his fierce independence—but equally unique in his readiness to work effectively with his fellow citizens, as part of one team, when the chips are down. All of us know that the chips are on the table now, and the stakes are high.

Members of the Assembly, we cannot shape a better Oregon by ourselves. We are leaders, but we are not magicians. Only the citizens of Oregon themselves can attain this goal.

Oregon's citizens are equal to the challenges which the 1970's already are hurling at them. The time is upon us to proceed to the business at hand and demonstrate that we are worthy of their confidence. —Governor Tom McCall's Message to the Fifty-Sixth Legislature, January 11, 1970.