

PALMER IS MIFFED AT PRESS STORIES

Refuses to Deny Anything,
Then Suddenly Grows
Very Angry.

REPORTER ROUSES LAWYER

Ex-Judge Root's Partner Very Sensitive When Questioned Regarding Report He Had Been Outraged by Law Firm.

SEATTLE, Wash., Dec. 10.—(Special)—"I guess that when the Legislature gets ready to oust me I will know it a lot quicker than I will by reading newspaper reports made against me just because, you know, I was chairman of the Republican state central committee. I turned down a bunch of newspapermen who persistently misquoted me and to whom I declined to give out further news."

"I have never denied anything that has been printed, and I don't intend to begin now."

Mr. Palmer was considerably peeved when he was asked about his connection with the Root investigation, wherein he is alleged to have been the influencing factor in court cases where his law partner, ex-Judge Milo A. Root, wrote the decisions while a member of the Supreme Court of the State of Washington.

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MEIGS WILL BE SPEAKER

Yakima Man Has Promise of Support From 49 House Members.

SEATTLE, Wash., Dec. 10.—(Special)—Fifty-nine members of the Lower House from the 49th district have signed an agreement pledging themselves to vote for L. O. Melgs, of North Yakima, for Speaker, or written letters assuring Melgs that he would have their votes. Nine other members have made verbal pledges to Melgs and still another has offered his vote, making it certain that he may be possible to accept.

Of the 95 members of the House, Melgs is assured of the support of 58 or 59. In a Republican caucus it would require 45 votes to nominate, as there are only six Democrats in the House. In an election from the entire membership it would require 48. Despite the fact that Melgs' election is assured, J. W. Sladey of Pierce County, was informed for Speaker by all of the nine Southwestern Washington Representatives at a caucus at Centralia yesterday, except two men who were pledged to Melgs. The southwestern delegation made the alliance with Melgs solely to swing Pierce County to support and appropriation for the Southwestern Fair. It is proposed to hold next year. Several fairs will come before the Legislature for appropriations, and the Southwestern delegation feared that as Melgs comes from North Yakima he would put the State Fair, held in that city, above all else.

SALMON PACK IS LIGHT

Less Than Half of 1907 Output, According to Seattle Estimate.

SEATTLE, Wash., Dec. 10.—(Special)—Estimates of the 1908 salmon pack, announced today by the Kelly-Clegg Co., the leading salmon brokers, give the total for the year, including the red Spring pack, as 1,000,000 cases, compared with 700,000 cases last year. The total value of the pack is given as \$1,635,000. Of the total 162,238 cases were sockeyes, 55,862 cohos, and 51,184 chums.

Comparing corresponding years of the four-year salmon cycle, the pack in 1904 was 265,000 cases and in 1905, 402,000 cases. Next year is due to be the big year of the pack.

The Pacific American Fisheries Company was the largest producer, as usual, packing 83,000 cases. The Alaska Packers' Association was next, with 45,500 cases.

PUBLIC SEEKS FOR FACTS

Publicity on Railroad Business Cannot Be Throttled.

PULLMAN, Wash., Dec. 10.—(Special)—"Let the people have the facts" is the keynote of the address delivered this evening at the 'Farmers' convention here by Chairman Harry Fairchild, of the Washington Railroad Commission. He took for his topic: 'Is an Increase in Rates Necessary to and Will It Restore Confidence in Railroad Securities?'

He declares that the investor in railroad securities is not timid because of his investments, and that his returns, for instance, received by the original investors in Northern Pacific bonds, which besides interest that has been received right along and original investment of \$78,000, now have a market value of \$92,000.

As a striking commentary upon the different ideas of value of railroad property, Fairchild recites some of the efforts of the Washington Railroad

Commission to ascertain the value of the railroad property in Washington. Between the figures prepared by commission experts and the railroad experts there is a great difference. Northern Pacific witnesses, under oath, testified it would cost to reproduce its property in this state now, exclusive of equipment, \$137,143,702. The commission found the cost would be but \$94,543,212. The O. R. & N. valued its property in Washington at \$35,919,881, while the commission valued it at \$17,000,000. The Great Northern valued its property at \$96,637,888, while the commission fixed the value of its lines at \$59,577,212, a difference of \$37,060,676. In other words the three railroads in this state claim the right to earn an annual return on \$93,581,048 more than the commission allowed.

He says there is lack of exchange of proper confidence, and thinks this should be mutual and positive between the farmers and grain owner meet the railroad men, the railroad men know to an exact certainty the value of land, the expense of cultivating and harvesting, in other words exactly what wheat will cost the farmer and what freight it will pay to give the farmer a fair margin of profit. But here the farmer is at a disadvantage, as the manager does not inform you of the amount of his investment, his receipts and operating expenses, so you can apply the same general rules. He tells you the business is of too complex and complicated a character to demonstrate or explain what may be a reasonable charge or rate from a consideration of the facts affecting the revenue of the road.

Railroad managers are human. They have, in the past, operated their properties answerable to none but their directors and stockholders. They represent an enormous interest in the management of the affairs of the people to obtain this information, which will result in a mutual exchange of confidence. I believe this sentiment will rapidly change, and in my judgment the day is fast approaching when the representatives of the people and the railroad officials will get together to amalgamate and publishing all facts necessary to a full and complete determination whether rates are or are not reasonable. If rates are too high they will be reduced; if too low, the people will promptly acquiesce in an advance that is reasonable return may be secured.

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