

CITY OWNERSHIP OF TRACKS

RAILWAY HEADS RETICENT

When the public service commission, holding all other remedial action in abeyance, proposed that the street railway problem be placed before the voters of Portland for solution, it met with a genuine dilemma into the city hall, where it formed the chief topic yesterday.

The proposal of the commission, that a general vote be taken at the May election on the issues of whether the city should purchase the tracks of the company in Portland, and whether the Portland Railway, Light & Power company be relieved of the burden of special taxation, found partial favor with Mayor Baker.

Mayor Baker believes that the suggestion of the commission that the city acquire the tracks is the best way out of the transportation fiasco, which he is in no respect converted to municipal ownership and that even the partial partnership proposal should be accepted only as a last expedient.

Solution Last Resort. Mayor Baker asserted that this solution of the transportation problem, indicated by the action of the commission in declining, for the present, to grant an increase in fares, in an obviously disagreeable one, but the best that can be afforded under the circumstances. The mayor said that the city council will discuss at an early session the advisability of placing both proposals on the ballot.

But Mayor Baker, in admitting that this was positive in voicing his distaste for the shifted responsibility, known in current argot as "passing the buck," the city's executive did not indicate directly that these comments were targeted upon the commission, but spoke in a broadly general way of the situation.

The transportation problem is one that we must meet, said Mayor Baker. "By the pronoun I mean those who are charged with looking after public affairs. There must be some plan devised that will solve Portland's street railway riddle, safely and sanely."

War Condemns "Back Passing." "But the great trouble, as I see it," continued the mayor, "is that men elected to office and charged with certain responsibilities are afraid to do the right thing. They are prone to pass their difficulties along and get out from under. I will not call them duty dodgers, but in some instances it is evident that public officials have declined to face cold circumstances."

"I'm not accusing anybody, nor do I speak with particular reference to the present situation. It has had many parallels. The fact is, however, that we cannot move this street railway enigma by 'passing the buck.'"

Though, considering the proposition of the commission, seems to have points in its favor, I am inclined to believe that the proposal as it now stands, should be passed along to the people for their approval or rejection. The justification of any such step is for the people to decide. The findings of the commission must be given its best and unbiased opinion, clarifying that some relief must be afforded.

City Ownership Not Liked. "I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of the city ownership of tracks under the present peculiar circumstances I think it would be a good idea for the city to purchase the tracks. This is a desperate emergency, requiring an immediate remedy. We cannot wait."

000,000, which includes water power values, assigned to the operation of the street railway.

Street railway officials say that even though the matter of track ownership should be approved, great difficulty would arise in the transfer of title. The properties of the company are bonded, as an entity, and a trustee of the title would be required to transfer the title of property in connection with the street railway operation.

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MAX BROTHERS POPULAR

The Orpheum show, of which the four Marx brothers are the heads, will be presented for the last time in the engagement here this afternoon as the Portland Symphony orchestra will occupy the theater to-night. The show headed by the Marx

brothers has proved to be one of the most popular bills of the season and it is reported to have broken box office records in every Orpheum city. "N. Everything" is the title of the act offered by the four talented young men. It is a melange of songs, dances, music, bright patter and comedy.

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MANUFACTURER IS SUED

Hans Hirschberger, owner of a sheet metal plant, is named as defendant in a suit for divorce filed in circuit court yesterday by Alice Hirschberger. They were married 28 years ago and have two children, both of whom are of age. The plaintiff alleges extreme cruelty, and asks for a month in alimony and division of property.

SYMPHONY SEASON TO END

At the Helic theater at 8:30 o'clock tonight the last concert this season of the Portland Symphony orchestra will be given. The program will include a number of new compositions, and the orchestra is expected to give a most successful performance.

Burglar Alarm Installed

The Hood River Or., March 23.—(Special.)—The Hood River Or. has installed a burglar alarm system, which will be in operation by the first of the month.

Table with 3 columns: Item, Amount, Total. Includes items like Street Railway, Repairs, etc.

Recommendation made in Order That Matter of Taking Over of Trackage of Portland Street Railways by City Be Put Up to Vote of People at Special Election May 21.

Whether the companies applying the 10 percent rate are sufficient to meet the needs of the city, and whether it is necessary to increase rates, will be a matter for the voters to decide.

It is believed that a logical deduction might be that increased fare do not in themselves accomplish the full purpose of the present plan, which is to increase in fare never brings a proportional increase in the revenue.

Equitable Distribution of Transit Costs. From the testimony given at the recent hearing in this matter not only did it seem to be the consensus of opinion that the cost of the street railway should be borne by the general public, but it was also felt that the cost should be equitably distributed.

Public Charge Factor. The street railway is performing an important and necessary service for the city, and it is believed that the cost of the street railway should be borne by the general public, and not by the company.

Testimony of Interest. The testimony of a prominent business man of the city, who is interested in the street railway, is of interest. He stated that the street railway is a public utility, and its cost should be borne by the general public.

Seattle Offers Comparison. It was also pointed out that the Seattle Municipal Railway department is relieved of the burden of special taxation, and this is a factor in the city's consideration of the street railway problem.

Relief Lies Outside. Based upon the findings of the commission, it is believed that the street railway problem can be solved only by placing the matter before the voters at a special election.

Increased Fares Not Permanent. Upon the assumption that there would be no falling off in traffic, revised calculations show that the revenue from a 10 percent increase in fares would be insufficient to meet the needs of the city.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Next maintenance directly allocated to operating expense is eliminated and the public profits at the expense of the car rider are unfair, unjust and discriminatory.

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Advertisement for Chamberlain's Cough Remedy, featuring the text 'Chamberlain's Cough Remedy' and an illustration of a man coughing.