

GORDON TAX PLAN UNRESPONSIVE TO PEOPLE, CRITICISM

City Commissioner Barbur and
County Commissioner Holman
Say Proposed Bill Is Illadvised.

A. L. Barbur, speaking in behalf of the city officials and Rufus Holman, as a Multnomah county commissioner, take positive positions against the Gordon tax supervising and conservation commission bill now pending before the legislature.

Commissioner Barbur, in a letter written to Senator Joseph, gives some of the reasons why he is opposed to the bill.

"The city government has been conducted economically, and the main items tending to increase taxation have been due directly to action taken by the people themselves, ordinarily acting upon the advice of the Oregonian, and, in fact, all of the large newspapers of the city," Barbur says.

"If you look at the statement showing the decrease of receipts due to abolition of liquor licenses and cost of engineering and advertising in connection with street improvements, you will find that since 1911 the principal receipts of the city have been reduced from \$1,071,267 to \$1,617,789 in 1920, or a net loss of \$500,000, which means that to offset this loss in receipts it has been necessary for the city to increase taxes by 3 mills. Allowing for this loss of receipts, the city is only procuring 2.1 mills more income for its general fund in 1921 than in 1914."

ORDERED BY PEOPLE
"It is unnecessary to discuss the tax levy made for other purposes outside of that levied for the general fund, as every item of this levy has been ordered directly by vote of the people, and, therefore, is beyond the control of the council, or, for that matter, of a tax conservation commission."

"At the present time the city of Portland has the lowest rate of taxation of any large city along the Pacific Coast. The council has not, since the advent of commission government, at any time levied a tax up to the limit of the powers granted by the charter and vote of the people."

"I also wish to emphasize the personal equation which is bound to enter into a tax conservation commission appointed by the governor and responsible to him alone. We have had an advisory tax commission appointed by the governor functioning during the past year and it is certain that the personnel of an autocratic commission will in caliber and ability differ very slightly from the present commission. This committee consists of J. D. Farrell, I. N. Day and W. H. Hightower."

FIGHTS CITY PLANT
"As you know, I. N. Day is a paving contractor who personally appeared in the council to protest against the installation of a municipal paving plant. He has at all times fought any activity of the city which tended to secure pavement at proper prices with consequent

VETERAN MULTNOMAH LEGISLATOR



Senator John Gill of Portland, who is one of Multnomah's members in the upper house of state legislature

saving to taxpayers and property owners. It is certain that if he were a member of a commission possessing plenary power that an application for a municipal paving plant or a similar activity would receive scant recognition."

"Furthermore, in the case of Farrell: He must, as president of a railroad corporation, see to it that the interests of said organization are not adversely affected by any activity of the city or a similar municipal corporation."

"It is self evident that the solution of our tax problem lies rather in consolidation of governments and departments than in supervision. If the county of Multnomah and the city of Portland are consolidated in such a manner that instead of having 80 scattered units of government you have one centralized commission it will be easy to fix responsibility, eliminate waste and cut taxes where necessary and yet your commission will be elected and directly responsible to the people."

HOLMAN OPPOSES BILL
Commissioner Holman in his statement says:

"My objection to house bill No. 9 is that it confers tremendous powers upon a commission that is not responsible to the people to be taxed and governed by it, and from whose acts the people taxed and governed have no appeal or recourse."

"The object sought is a reduction of the tax burden, which all will admit is great, and yet taxes have not increased in so great a proportion as have car-fares, the price of shoes, sugar or beans. Undoubtedly the present year has witnessed the peak, and whether or not a supervising commission with autocratic

powers is created a reduction in taxes will result on account of a lessened cost of all those things which produce taxes. The way to reduce is to reduce, and yet this bill at once adds \$5000 a year increased expenses for salaries alone, for which no budget has been prepared."

ADVICE NOT SOUGHT
"Although the present tax supervising and conservation commission has a complete and tentative budget of the board of county commissioners in their hands on December 11, 1920, they have not even to this day consulted or advised the board of county commissioners relative thereto, and yet the board members have adopted their final budget on the 31st day of December, three weeks after the present tax supervising and conservation commission was created."

"The commission was asked for their advice and counsel. Never has a recommendation been received by the board of county commissioners from the present tax supervising and conservation commission, who under this bill ask for increased powers."

ARGUMENT ATTACKED
"Senator Mulkey, Friday, in speaking for the bill in a debate before the realty board, criticized the arrangement entered into by the board of county commissioners for the rental of the O.W. R. & N. bridge, and set forth that if brilliant men like those on the tax supervising and conservation commission had reviewed this proposal, that no such arrangement would have been entered into, whereas in truth and in fact, a member of the tax supervising and conservation commission, who is also an official of the company from whom the county rents the bridge, did, in fact, sit upon

an advisory board that prepared and passed upon both the original rental of the bridge and also upon the subsequent rental of the bridge."

"I am satisfied that the arrangement entered into by the board of county commissioners, but Mr. Mulkey's argument in this instance nullifies his entire argument in favor of the bill, in my opinion, for the reason that it demonstrates that this very commission will undoubtedly be composed of men who have bridges, office buildings, paving plants and all those things that the county deals in, for sale."

"If it is expedient to have a tax supervising commission or some central organization whose function it will be to coordinate the work of the several tax levying agencies of Multnomah county, then my suggestion is that the commission be elected by the people whom it is to tax and govern. Remember, the power to tax is the power to govern, and I warn the people of Multnomah county if they surrender the control of this important function to those not responsible to them, they will see the day when they will regret their folly and that at no distant date."

ZIEGLER ATTACKS PORT PROPAGANDA

Complaint to Governor Raps Alleged "Invisible Government" Methods; Names Not Filed.

Dr. J. B. Ziegler has filed with Governor Olcott and with the state legislature a statement in which he calls attention to the fact that names of contributors to the campaign fund for the Port of Portland bill which was defeated by the voters of the state at the last election have not as yet been filed with the secretary of state and that failure to file constitutes violation of the law.

He states that he has appeared before the Multnomah county grand jury with the same charges. He ascribes to "invisible government" the propaganda for a large port project both as it was embodied in the measure submitted to the electorate and in the bills now pending before the legislative assembly. In part, his statement reads:

"The supporters of the measure were confident that their appeal to the state to secure the fruits of the burdens they were asked to impose upon the people of Portland would win, and while before the election they had argued it was a state matter, after the election they abused the voters of the state roundly for deciding adversely on a local measure."

"Yet, with all their intriguing and paid propaganda they failed to carry their state measure and now come to the representatives of the people who voted down the measure with their specious and misleading pleas. When a candidate enters a primary, he is held in honor bound to abide by the result. Why not these people to the decision they themselves invoked?"

The statement also calls attention to the fact that Gus C. Moser, attorney for the port commission, is plotting the port measures as a member of the state senate, and argues that now is "a good time to cut out the high financing of the tax promoters, or they will bankrupt everybody."

According to the report of Postmaster Herman Wise, the payroll of the Astoria postoffice is more than \$50,000 a year. This includes salaries only.

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FINANCIAL NEEDS OF INSTITUTIONS WILL COME FIRST

Ways and Means Committee Will
Then Give Consideration to
Other Claims, Chairman Says.

State House, Salem, Or., Jan. 29.—The financial needs of the state's institutions will take precedence over all other claims before the legislative ways and means committee.

This dictum, uttered by Representative Gordon, chairman of the house and of the fund finding organization of the state legislature, is echoed by all other members of that body without exception.

DEMANDS INCREASE

That end of its arduous labors once disposed of, the committee will devote its attention to the work of pruning the demands of the numerous other departments and commissions clamoring for state funds—a task which looms larger with each passing day and with each added demand for the demands upon the state's finances are still accumulating.

Estimated needs of the 10 institutions as set forth in the original budget aggregate \$2,424,965 for the biennium as

which will probably be added, judged by present indications, approximately \$100,000 for new buildings, which it is acknowledged are badly needed at some of the state schools.

Especially has the request of the state school for the blind for a new building at an estimated cost of \$65,000 met with a sympathetic ear on the part of the ways and means committee, which also evidenced an apparent sympathy for the needs of a new cottage at the state school for girls and a new industrial building at the state school for the deaf. Bearing in mind the fact that the estimate of the various state institutions have already run the gamut of the board of control which has lopped off several thousands of dollars from the original estimates of the institution heads no great amount of paring is expected on these budgets.

CLOSE DOORS SOON

This being the case and taking it for granted that the claims of the institutions will be granted very much as presented there will then remain some \$8,250,000 available for distribution over estimates which in their original form aggregated approximately \$6,950,000, but which now looms up more nearly as \$7,250,000.

In other words, the task of the ways and means committee resolves itself into one of pruning approximately \$1,000,000 from estimates aggregating slightly in excess of seven times that amount.

So far the activities of the committee have been confined to hearing presentation of the needs of the various institutions, departments and commissions to which must administer in a financial way.

This procedure will continue for at least a few more nights, after which the doors of the committee room will be locked to the prying public, the committee will peel its coat and the work of pruning will begin in earnest.

Parent-Teachers Are Not Behind Staples' Bill, Says Mrs. Hill

"Any claim that the Parent-Teacher associations of Portland are, as a body, officially supporting Senator Staples' bill for the abolishment of an appeal commission for teachers is absolutely without foundation," said Mrs. J. F. Hill, president of the Portland Parent-Teacher council, Saturday.

Some individual members of the council, it was reported, had been lobbying for the bill at the legislature.

"The bill was debated before the council some time ago and because of a difference of opinion we felt that any action would not be expressing the sentiment of the entire body," Mrs. Hill continued.

"The fact that the impression was broadcast that we were backing the measure was brought to my notice last week and at the meeting of the board of directors I called the attention of the board members to our action in the council. The activity of any Parent-Teacher members either for or against the bill should not be construed as carrying the official sanction of the council."

Robber Suspects Taken

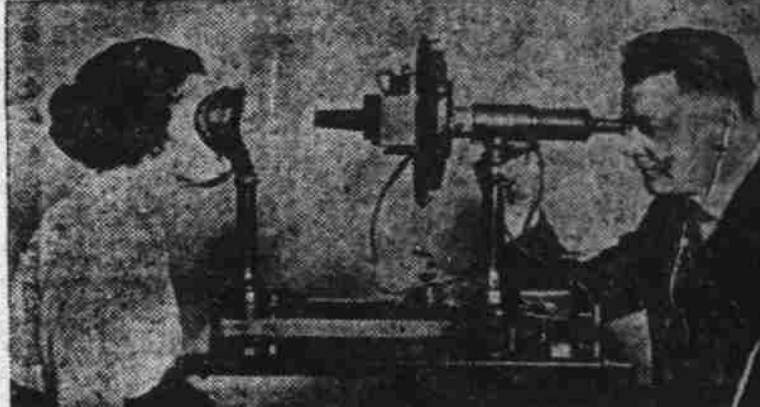
George Faries and George Brown were arrested Saturday afternoon by Patrolmen Harms and Nutter and turned over

to Chief of Police J. L. Hadley of Oregon City, as suspects in the clearing up of the recent robbery of the F. W. Crooks store in that city. A quantity of new shoes, which are said to have been stolen from the store, were recovered.

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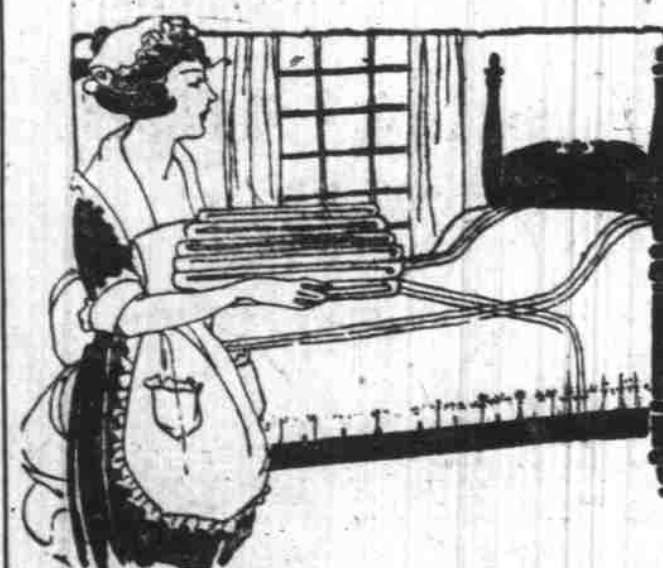
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