

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe" From First Statesman, March 28, 1851

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Due-Bill

When Gov. Arthur Langlie of Washington announced several weeks ago that he intended to comply with the provisions of Initiative 141, the voter-approved measure setting the old age assistance amount in Washington state at \$40 and removing restrictions as to need, there was a lifting of eyebrows throughout the northwest...

The democratic legislature of Washington had thought to embarrass the republican governor in this matter; had hoped in the first place, presumably, that he would refuse to pay the increased pensions and thus get himself "over a barrel" or that in the unlikely event that he proceeded to comply with the law, would get the state still further "in the red."

Now Gov. Langlie has presented the "due-bill." Appearing before a joint session of the legislature, he has recommended an increase in the state sales tax from 2 to 3 per cent, with the effective date set at such time as will assure collection of the necessary amount within the biennium, the tax to revert to 2 per cent if and when the voters enact an income tax law.

The contrast with the "public welfare" policy in Oregon is worth noting. Here the legislature has allocated to old age assistance and relief all the funds it can spare out of existing revenues and apparently will refuse to raise additional revenues. We have a notion the people will thank the legislature—especially about the middle of this month when the federal taxation shoe does its heaviest pinching for this year and the people realize it is going to pinch even more painfully next year.

Incidentally, persons disposed to deplore the slow progress of major legislation in Salem might cast their eyes toward Olympia, where virtually no important bills have been approved in either house; the leadership has just gotten around to drafting a "program." Our legislature is taking its time; at this distance it appears that the Washington legislature has not even been using its time.

Horror

Not since the German Library of Information favored us with a disgusting study in 250 pages of "Polish Acts of Atrocity against the German Minority in Poland" have we observed horror more carefully drawn and excruciatingly conveyed through the written word than in the current offerings of Jan Valtin in his book, "Out of the Night," and in current magazines, notably Reader's Digest and Life.

Mr. Valtin—whose editors assure his reading public that he does not write under his real name... the OGPU, you know—is reported to be a communist secret agent turned nazi Gestapo man under German torture. He is supposed to have seen both the German and the Russian secret police at their indescribable worst, and to have escaped death at their hands himself on a number of occasions. He has much to say of physical horrors endured at their hands, though less of the more devastating gray tortures of loss of freedom and spirit.

Only a fellow communist-nazi can properly judge Mr. Valtin and his writings. Very possibly he is what he represents to be. Very possibly the things he tells with a certain gusto—inhumanities in German and Russian prisons, sufferings which make the fate of the Inquisition's victims seem like Sunday afternoon in Peoria, brutalities more animal than human—have actually happened somewhere, sometime.

All an unknowing outsider can say is that Mr. Valtin's tales, like the composite pictures of world's fair fame, tell a little too good a little too beautifully. They are too good—or too awful—to be completely true in the life of one man. A collection of most of the horror tales, real and fancied, told for the last 10 years about the secret police methods of Europe, in fact, if collected and woven together, would probably read about like Mr. Valtin's chief d'oeuvre of brutality, inhumanity and treachery. Truth may be stronger than fiction, but it seldom sells as well.

Assessment

The Salem water board, the city of Salem, the Salem school district and Marion county are all tangled up in litigation relative to the collection of taxes alleged to have been due when certain properties changed from private ownership, under which they were taxable, to public ownership which exempts them from taxation.

Though the agencies governing these several governmental units and the attorneys who advised them may not be entirely blameless, the tangle has resulted in part from ambiguity or at the very least, obscurity of the present law.

Competent advice is to the effect that this ambiguity or obscurity is corrected by legislation which has passed the house of representatives and was at least reported in the senate assessment and taxation committee. This legislation also changes the official date of assessment and it is understood that this feature has drawn objection—but only from tax collection departments of some counties. It appears to have the support of all groups interested in making assessment and taxation of real property more orderly and equitable, and this objective outweighs any minor inconvenience to sheriffs' tax deputies.

Examinations

The medical examination required by law for teachers will consist in future only of a tuberculin test, according to a measure approved by both houses of the legislature. This is perhaps proper; with the exception of tuberculosis, no chronic ailment the teacher may have is likely to be transmitted to pupils, and

if a disability exists which impairs efficiency, that fact will become apparent without an examination.

There is on the other hand a type of examination which teachers should be required to take at reasonable intervals; an examination which will reveal the existence of any nervous or mental disorder. For this is a type of ailment which does affect teacher-pupil relations, and one against which, because "the teacher is always right" the pupil has little protection. Especially in large school systems, the percentage of psychopathic teachers is considerable, as a recent survey in New York City revealed.

Strange to say, it is rather difficult to deprive teachers of their certificates if they are un-entitled to the work for this reason; and if they are under the tenure law, it is difficult to remove them from positions held when the disability is disclosed.

Oscars

If ever there was an actor who merited the Academy "Oscar" it is Jimmy Stewart; not alone for his performance in "The Philadelphia Story" which set a new high for elevated comedy, but for everything he has done in the past year. As for Ginger Rogers, from our way of thinking her selection was the case of a nice kid whom everybody wanted to give a break.

And when it comes to giving "Grapes of Wrath" any plug at all, for its alleged artistic merit, that appears to be a confession that 1940 wasn't much of a year for great motion pictures.

We hope, and presumably they hope, that the public has noticed all the bouquets handed by luncheon-speaking legislators to the Marion county delegation, particularly Senators McKay and Jones.

News Behind The News

By PAUL MALLON

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 28—Next tough government clampdown will be dropped on the nation's major industry, steel. Sharp mandatory priorities are in line for spring or early summer.

Not all at the OPM or defense commission can yet see this prospect, but certain government men who are working up the needs of production against capacity consider it certain. (Incidentally they forecast a month in advance the recent mandatory priorities on aluminum and machine tools.)

A peculiar circumstance is that the government can do anything it wants with management but not with labor. If steel employers strike, the law allows confiscation of their property. If they even hesitate on government work, mandatory priorities can be invoked. But no rule or law in any way restricts steel workers who do the same thing.

CIO is headed for a lot of trouble when its newly appointed organizer of the vital aviation industry, Richard Frankenstein, first starts exerting pressure involving defense contracts. The Dies committee has a record on him a yard long. Privately committee authorities say the record does not indicate Frankenstein is a member of the communist party but wedges him so deeply into that crowd, the difference will hardly be perceptible to the naked eye.

Union sources explain his prominence in articles of the Daily Worker and in suspected communist peace propaganda societies by saying he needed communist support for his drive to gain control of the United Automobile Workers at the time of the break to the AFL. Their story is that the communists were Frankenstein's fellow travelers rather than he theirs, but they will certainly have a hard time distinguishing who was traveling with whom.

Perplexed defense promoters have been trying to run down that story about Brazil buying 21 new passenger airplanes in England with our money after purchases here had been denied them on the ground that everything we had here must go to England. They cannot prove anything definite about the 21 planes, but they have found the equal of that story has either happened or could happen and they are trying to reform their policy.

This much they proved: The Brazilians bought 80 to 100 airplane engines from England recently. The British accept the order to help Latin-American trade and to prove to the Latins they were well enough fixed in airplanes to make such a sale.

Lockheed aircraft has asked approval to begin negotiations to sell about 21 small transport ships to Latin America. The American concern wanted a ruling from the priorities division on such sales to Latin-American countries. Apparently the priorities division was willing, but the war department objected. War Secretary Stimson repeatedly has insisted that even our own commercial airlines limit replacements.

No leaks ever develop from appearances of State Secretary Hull in secret sessions of congressional committees. He has a system. After testifying he calls for all copies of stenographic transcripts and locks them in his personal safe. Then he requests that the stenographer's notes be burned.

Hull did precisely that with his testimony in secret on the sell-lease-or-give-away bill.

Most effective of all speeches for the president's bill for all-out aid to Britain were made by Hitler and Matsuoaka. The Hitler speech proclaiming the doom of capitalism has been used effectively in the cloakrooms by the administration workers as absolutely requiring us to defeat him. But even better use has been made of the Japanese foreign minister's speech in which he said that the white race would have to cede all Oceania to the Japanese. Both foreign relations chiefs, Walter George, and the president, have used Matsuoaka's ultimatum around in private to convince senators the Ellender amendment (preventing FDR from sending troops abroad) must be killed, or else we leave undefended our possessions in Oceania.



The Old Man of Mare Nostrum on Der Fueher's Hands

Bits for Breakfast

By R. J. HENDRICKS

How Salem schools 3-1-41 have grown; her public schools now are employing a total of 258 men and women:

(Continuing from yesterday.) Who furnished the funds for erecting that first little frame house in which the first schools were taught on the site of Salem, excepting in the mission Indian manual labor school that became the home of the Oregon Institute that became the first home of Willamette University? This writer has not yet been able to find out, though diligent inquiry has been made, dating back to a long ago period.

Perhaps the labor was donated. (The site did not belong to anybody.) Perhaps this included the labor of cutting down the trees and hauling the logs to the mill. It may be that there was a subscription list of labor for putting up the building, and of the blacksmith who made the square headed and square shaped nails. For the modern wire nail with a round head had not then been invented, or thought of. It is possible that the work in making the doors and window sashes was donated; it is likely they were of cedar wood, for cedar trees were then plentiful here, especially on the west side of the Willamette, above and near where West Salem is now.

Political meetings were held in the little frame building in the forest that was afterward reduced to the trees in Marion square. Perhaps slavery and anti-slavery doctrines were discussed there, for some slaves had been brought to Oregon with the covered wagon trains. The general elections were held in that little frame building; showing that it was evidently regarded as a public building, in which all the people had an interest. What became of the little building surrounded by the forest?

The little frame building that was the school house, etc., and housed the book store was torn down to become the Capitol National bank building; that afterward became the First National bank, its present quarters State and Liberty streets; in Salem's first and only skyscraper.

In 1855 the Salem school district was organized, in 1857 construction of the "big Central" school house was commenced, and it was finished in 1858. So Salem children could have the advantages of free public schools.

Next to the "big Central" school building was erected, in the 1860-70 period, the "little Central" school house, for negro children.

The Salem of those days had a considerable negro population, the slaves who were brought in the covered wagon trains, and their children; by that time having become free. But the white people of that short period would not allow their children to mingle with those of black parents. Hence the "little Central" school house. (Concluded tomorrow.)

State street; afterward the Patton book store, and A. T. Yeaton in the furniture business on the east side of Commercial, between State and Court streets; nearest Court.

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Editorial Comments

From Other Papers

DUTY OF THE STATES

In the opening days of the Oregon legislature now in session, scores of bills were introduced. A considerable proportion of them involved revenue and taxation. With but one exception—a measure proposing to reduce the state gasoline tax by one cent a gallon—all of them would, if passed, impose a further drain on the taxpayers.

That is the normal tendency of state legislatures throughout the country. But in these highly abnormal times, the lawmakers face an obvious duty which so far seems to have been generally overlooked. That duty is to pare state expenditures to the bone.

This year we will pay higher federal taxes. And, as every informed person knows, the increases so far approved by congress mark but a very short step along a very long road. Further tax boosts cannot be postponed for long—federal income is now not meeting the regular expenses of government, to say nothing of the tremendous appropriations made for defense. In short, we are going to pay record-breaking federal taxes, and the general standard of living will suffer accordingly.

The states don't pay for war machines. The world emergency has imposed no special burden on them. And that goes for towns and school districts and counties and all the other myriad taxing bodies that cover the country. Local government must retrench as it never retrenched before. The best brains in local governments, from governors down to village officials, must figure out how tax savings can be made.—Mt. Angel News.

THE IDEA WAS GOOD

Possibly because it was heartily endorsed by freshman house member Neuberger, the bill to banish billboards along our state highways has been postponed to indefinite postponement at Salem, the vote being 51 to 7.

For several years groups who are opposed to commercial ex-

ploitation of Oregon's scenic highways have held to the hope that, sooner or later, a majority of our legislators would be able to see billboards on our highways as they really are, not only an eye sore but a definite hazard to safe driving.

But the majority of members of the house in the present session, intent on knocking down the ears of leftist Neuberger, are losing sight of the main issue—the welfare of the public at large. Which any way one looks at it, is unfortunate.— Hood River News.

Representative Rennie voted against the congressional redistricting bill because he wants Benton county left in the first district where most of the Willamette valley counties are. Dean Walker will make an attempt to have the county transferred to the first district when the bill reaches the senate.

In that effort our representatives have the backing of every Benton county citizen with whom we have talked and we have made it our business to talk to many of them. In addition, we have had a lot of telephone calls asking us to protest against the placing of Benton county in the fourth district. It is to be hoped that the legislature will remedy the house bill.—Corvallis Gazette-Times.

THE HOUSE-ADOPTED bill eventually becomes law a high school diploma will soon adorn barber shop walls—the same as the latin manuscripts hanging in physicians' waiting rooms.

The reason for this strange piece of legislation is not available at this moment but it does appear as one of those freaks which blossom forth every session, to make the voter wonder if some legislators really are worth more than \$3 a day.—Stayton Mail.

The Oregon Statesman this week underwent a major operation, having her face lifted, her eyebrows arched and her figure

Wotan's Wedge

By FRANCIS GERARD

Chapter 28

When order was once more restored and the two men were sitting cupping two big, pot-bellied brandy glasses in their hands, Captain Lee asked, "What are you up to with Slimy?"

"Stuck a gun in my ribs the other night," said Sir John Meredith with an air of studied indignation.

"What!" exclaimed the other. "The impudent—but I bet he had good cause," he ended shrewdly.

"What's the name of your man at the Ministry of Transport?" "Lee," said Captain Lee.

"What another of you? I don't believe it."

"No need to be comic," frowned the other. "And he's no relation. I'm the last of my line."

"Yes," chuckled Meredith. "The terminus all right, buffers and all!"

After his large lunch with Captain Lee, Meredith strolled to the Ministry of Transport. It was in that somnolent hour about 3 p.m., when English thoughts veer towards tea, that Meredith began his fifth interview of the day.

Christopher Lee proved to be an old young man of the type found frequently in the civil service. Possessed of a university degree and a calm official manner, he looked sleepy but was not.

"Makyn's?" he echoed John's query. "Yes, I have assembled some data,"—he pronounced it "datab"—"but it's not, as yet, conclusive."

"May I see what you've got?" "You may, though it's rather irregular."

"So is the fact that you're compiling this when you're supposed to be working for the government," retorted Meredith.

"Quite. But I don't think we need go into that. Here's the file."

Meredith stared rather blankly at columns and columns of figures, place-names, times and mileages.

"All very interesting, Mr. Lee. "But what does it mean?" "Logs," replied the other.

"It might just as well be logarithms as far as I'm concerned. Come on, please explain these logs, preferably in words of one syllable."

Mr. Lee regarded Meredith unwinkingly, then said, "What exactly do you expect to find?"

Sir John smiled. "I don't expect anything I hope. Is there anything you can tell me about this company that doesn't click?"

"Doesn't click?" echoed the other.

"Anything odd," explained John.

"Yes," said Lee promptly. "Ah, now we're going to town," said Meredith slangily. "Tell me—"

"Some of Makyn's lorries run to the north of Scotland. The furthest point, according to their log-books, is Wick in Caithness. That's 15 miles due south from John O'Groats."

Meredith looked puzzled. "What about this John O'Groats?"

"Well, according to these logs, Makyn's lorries usually reach Wick about midnight. Now, I'll tell you an extraordinary thing! Lee looked as though he were about to disclose a cabinet secret. "They arrive about midnight but they don't leave Wick on their return until one the following afternoon."

Having said this, Mr. Christopher Lee sat back with an expression compounded of pride and anticipation.

"Very interesting," said Meredith. "Very interesting, indeed! What does it mean?"

"Don't you know about the law?" asked the other.

"I used to," smiled the veteran minion of it.

Then Lee explained. "According to law, a lorry driver is entitled to ten hours in which to

get a proper meal and sleep after he has been driving a certain number of hours. That applies in the case of these fellows driving up to Wick. We know their time schedule."

"Ten hours off," said Meredith. "And they get there at midnight so you would expect them to be pushing off at 10, next morning."

"Not quite," replied Lee. "They're allowed an hour for loading, filling up with petrol, and so on."

"So there's still two hours unaccounted for. Is that what you are trying to tell me?"

"Exactly," nodded Mr. Lee.

"I can't see the significance of that," Meredith observed. "It may merely mean that Makyn's are kind employers who give their help a bit longer to sleep."

"My dear fellow," said Lee suddenly, "if I weren't actually sitting in a government office I'd use some rather ugly language right now! Nice, kind employers, eh? ... Something happens during those two hours. That's my hunch anyway."

After leaving the Ministry of Transport, Sir John Meredith visited a discreet house in Pont street. It housed the offices of Rogers, Peabody and Smithson, Solicitors, upon the ground floor, and also the headquarters of the Intelligence Departments of both foreign and Colonial offices on the first, second and third floors.

Meredith produced a visiting card upon which he drew two small, concentric circles. He handed it to the solicitor's clerk and asked if he might see Mr. Peabody. A minute later Sir Hector McAllister was shaking hands with him across his desk.

"What is it, John?" asked the chief of the Intelligence department. "I can see from your expression this isn't a social call."

Meredith lit a cigarette. "Sir Hector, I've got a strong hunch and it's leading me somewhere." He paused. The department went on. "Has your department men on 'Has your department men ever come across a fellow knogge, as Siegfried Kioffer? No? Well, you know of a gentleman called Igor Levinsky who calls himself a Russian?"

"Yes, I know of Levinsky. He's a Bolshevick with a difference. But why do you say 'calls himself'?"

Sir John shrugged. "I suppose it is possible," he said, "for a German to be called Levinsky, particularly if he's a German Jew; but I've never heard of any Jew in Germany with a duelling scar."

Sir Hector's eyes never left the other's face. "What's this all about, John?"

"Well, it started down in Battersea with a coroner's inquest," said Meredith who told Sir Hector all he had learned up to his arrival in McAllister's office that afternoon.

When he had finished the big Scotsman pressed a bell button on his desk. When his secretary came into the room, Sir Hector said, "Get me Chief Inspector Hailey of the Special Branch on the phone."

"What are you ringing Hailey for?" asked Meredith curiously.

"I'm going to get him down here," replied the other. "We're going to have a three-cornered conference—Special Branch, Intelligence and Sir John Meredith."

Chief Inspector Hailey of the Special Branch was not at Scotland Yard when Sir Hector McAllister's secretary telephoned and it was not until after dinner that night at McAllister's house in Grosvenor Square, that the three noted detectives got together. Meredith had dined with the chief of the Intelligence Department. When Hailey arrived he found Sir John and his host settled in deep chairs drawn up to the fire in the library.

(To be continued.)

With the Troops

CAMP MURRAY, Feb. 28-(P)

Visitors from Oregon to the tent city of the 186th regiment of the 41st division always notice the neatness of the streets, the orderly and cheerful appearance of the men, and the little signs that hang at the end of each line of tents, proudly showing from what Oregon city that certain company originated.

Col. Ralph P. Cowgill of Portland, commanding officer of the 186th infantry, claims the esprit de corps of his outfit is the highest of any regiment in the 41st division. And probably, if pushed further on the point, he would say it was the highest in the entire army.

"I regret the fact we won't be able to advertise the different cities in Oregon from where we come," said Col. Cowgill recently, "when we move down into the new cantonment, because I know the boys are proud of their home towns and are trying to make their home towns feel proud of them. The new barracks at the 41st division cantonment, however, might still display the little signs we

show here, but I'm not sure yet."

The little signs read like an Oregon road map—Woodburn, Eugene, Medford, Portland, La Grande, Grants Pass, Baker, Pendleton, The Dalles, Forest Grove, St. Helens and Astoria. Each of these places has furnished at least one company to the 186th.

At the present time, according to Col. Cowgill, the 186th infantry has lost nearly one third of its regiment to the new training center at the 41st division cantonment. A training cadre, under the command of Capt. Lawrence Devlin of Portland, are busily engaged training recruits which will soon bring the regiment up to a war time strength of 2280. Its present strength is about 1600.

When the recruits have received a four weeks basic training, the rest of the regiment will join them in the new barracks of the huge 1000 building cantonment, located about five miles from the present tent city.

Col. Cowgill, who comes from Portland, was insistent about the subject of regimental morale in his organization.

"I don't think the morale can be better anywhere," he said, "even if you take in the entire army. We have been complimented as being one of the highest on that score."

streamlined. She now looks like a debutante ready for her first coming out party, dolled up as she is in her new type face, caption style, makeup, etc. Yes indeed, we do like her new Easter outfit!—Jefferson Review.