

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor sways Us, No Fear Shall Awe"
From First Statesman, March 23, 1851

THE STATESMAN PUBLISHING CO.

CHARLES A. SPRAGUE, President

Member of The Associated Press

The Associated Press is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news dispatches credited to it or not otherwise credited in this newspaper.

Assessment Squabble—Chap. IV

From their vantage point safe behind two inter-county boundaries viewing with fine detachment Multnomah's assessment ratio debate, inhabitants of the Salem vicinity have been privileged themselves to become assessors—assessing not real and personal property but the extent to which intellectual honesty is prevalent among ordinary human beings and its degree of resistance to the commercial instinct. Humanity's imperfections in this respect may in truth be traced throughout all the history of taxation. Why this is true, history also records. "Taxes," observes our handy but too succinct encyclopedia, "are usually resisted by those who must pay them." Such resistance may well be hereditary. Early taxation was often a process of brutal, unjust and lawless extraction. How many taxpayers, we wonder, recognize that taxes have been outstandingly the means of man's release from oppression, of his acquiring those civil and human rights whose preciosity today's events serve anew to emphasize? In becoming such means, we grant that their role has been that of irritant, even as now.

England's parliamentary system, the French Revolution, the American Revolution—none of these would have come to pass, when they did come to pass, had it not been for taxation and human resistance thereto.

Reverting to the subject of intellectual honesty, a childish departure therefrom is discernible in the circumstance that almost universally, property is assessed at considerably less than its "true value in cash" in open defiance of laws equally universal. If there were any profit to any taxpayer in this traditional practice, it would be at the expense of justice and of other taxpayers. But to the sole end that men may feel—through ignorance or self-deception—that hereditary glow of satisfaction at somehow beating the tax-collector, the practice persists.

Though the "true cash value" mandate may be ignored with impunity, the law is with reason more unyielding in its insistence that property "shall be subject to assessment and taxation in equal and ratable proportion," that taxation "shall be uniform on the same class of subjects" and that taxes "shall be levied and collected under general laws operating uniformly throughout the state."

Defenders of Multnomah's recent assessment practices are wrong. Both law and common, uncomplicated justice tell them they are wrong and only their pocketbooks tell them they are right. And now we come to the fourth chapter of the controversy.

The first chapter is a long one, extending back more than 30 years during which the variable assessment ratio practice has prevailed. Second chapter was the state tax commission's ruling upon an appeal prepared by one Carey Martin—an attorney, but not Salem's veteran attorney of that name. Oddly enough, Mr. Martin lost his case but won his point; the commission held that the assessment practice was illegal. Third chapter was an instruction to the Multnomah assessor by the county board of equalization, in effect to continue the condemned assessment practice.

The tax commission has opened the fourth chapter by declaring the equalization board's order void and ordering the board to vacate it and substitute one which, the commission insists, will correct the inequities which had accompanied the assessor's hasty attempt to comply with the law as interpreted by the commission.

Now there is effort to label the commission's act as a compromise. It is asserted that home owner's taxes will be increased no more than 11 per cent rather than the 25 to 50 per cent previously indicated. The relative accuracy of either estimate may not readily be ascertained. Several things are clear. True equalization cannot be effected in one sweeping order; it is a matter of individual adjustment for each parcel of property. This year, at this late date, no assessment can be revised upward; downward revisions constitute the only available means of smoothing out inequities. This too is clear: The record for relative intellectual honesty in this entire proceeding is all on the side of the tax commission.

Quandary

For how long have people in downtown Salem been governing their perambulation and their automotive progress by the alternating appearance of green, amber and red lights? It seems incredible to those of us who have been here much longer, to whom the innovation still seems relatively new, but the truth is that this has been stop-and-go for a trifle over four years. It was about a week after the 1937 state fair that the traffic lights were first operated.

Vividness of recollection varies as between different classes of experiences. Obedience to the traffic lights involved a change of habit, the development of a new habit; an experience striking enough to be long remembered. Controversy on the other hand is, in a democracy, so common an experience that last week's burning issue and the debate that revolved about it is already forgotten. Though institution of the traffic lights seems recent, one has the impression that the argument pro and con over their installation was an occurrence of the long ago.

Resistance to the council's decision, it may faintly be recalled, did not die with its effectuation. There was dire prophecy, in the face of immediate benefits, that presently the public would be racing "to beat the lights" and that serious accidents would ensue. Nothing of the sort happened. Unpleasant results, to the extent of our observation, are limited to the circumstance that some pedestrians still jaywalk in mid-block, to the greater peril of life and limb, and that some motorists steer clear of the light-controlled streets, resulting in undue congestion on those adjacent, particularly Ferry street.

In all these four years however, few motorists have learned to be nonchalant at such moments as they discover themselves inadvertently to have over-driven a red light, or to have rolled across the safety line just a split second

after the light changed from green to amber. The more conscientious in such event will endeavor to mitigate the offense by stopping where they can, in such position as to impede either vehicular or pedestrian traffic. Or what is worse, he may reverse (that rhymed; maybe we should start over and make this a poem, but never fear, we won't). He may shift into reverse and try to rectify the error, to the actual end and that others are twice rather than once imperiled.

Now the chief of police and Earl Snell's hired men may chide us and shout heresy, but we have a conviction that when one has once crossed the forbidden line the damage is done, and that the best thing to do is to keep going—cautiously, of course, and making a right turn if the flow of traffic from the other direction has already started. That solution, at any rate, keeps one from looking so blamed conspicuous.

Simple, isn't it? Editors have to figure out answers for everything. But here's one who is thankful there are no one-way streets in Salem. We never yet have figured out what to do after entering one of those from the wrong end. Without fail, a dozen people will tell you you're wrong, but nobody tells you what to do about it.

Hitler spoke for 65 minutes. Though the fact was obscured by the bombast of his delivery, his words when reduced to cold type are defensive, in the nature of an alibi. He was answering someone, and our guess is that someone is the German public. Of course, he said Russia was "so stricken that she never again will rise up." We trust that is as true as the general run of his other statements, and no truer. He did tell the truth in at least two instances. He said that never since 1933 had he lost sight of his goal and that it had all along included the crushing of Bolshevism. And he said that "truth will triumph." Which just goes to support the contention of those who insist he knows the Nazi cause is hopeless.

Stewart Views Washington Scene

By CHARLES P. STEWART

Due to Paul Mallon's illness, the Washington column of Charles P. Stewart, widely-recognized news analyst, is being substituted temporarily. The Statesman is pleased to offer Mr. Stewart's authoritative observations to its readers, but hopes soon to be able to announce resumption of the Mallon column.

Can a post-war depression be prevented? Economist Leon Henderson of Uncle Sam's new Supply Priorities and Allocation Board says, "Yes"—provided we do our preventing in advance, right now, while the war's still raging, and the slump hasn't hit us yet. If we don't have a boom we shan't have the slump, he contends. That's why he's trying so hard to hold down boom-time prices, by discouraging buying all he can, on civilian consumer's part. For one thing, he wants a minimum of civilian competition with defense, for our industrial products. Aside from that, though, he's looking ahead to the post-war period.

Economist Adolf A. Berle, one of State Secretary Hull's assistants, maintains that there'll be no slump if the right kind of peace is made finally—a peace so just and considerate of everybody that the whole world will be too comfortable and happy not to prosper, practically involuntarily.

As for unemployment, there'll be enough reconstruction to be attended to, according to Adolf, to make jobs fairly go a-begging.

"Phooey!" comments Executive Secretary Leo M. Cherne of the Research Institute of America, a private organization. "With the war still going on, before the end of this year we're going to have as bad an unemployment problem on our hands as we had in the midst of our last depression. Defense priorities are being granted to big industrial concerns at such a rate that the little ones can't get raw materials. They'll have to shut down, throwing their workers out of jobs a good deal faster than defense industry can absorb 'em."

Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney of Wyoming, chairman of a committee that has done more economic investigating than any other group in congressional history, inclines to agree with Economist Cherne.

Big Boys First
His account is that a few corking big companies send to Washington spokesmen who, on the strength of their vast size and influence, win priorities to the exclusion of lesser and yet pretty good-sized ones, which consequently may have to suspend and perhaps go bankrupt, leaving 'em still bused after the war's ended. And what'll that do to post-war employment?

The senator has a bill pending in congress for the creation of a government body to give ear to these comparative industrial peewees' lamentations, and regulate the situation.

Congressman Joseph W. Martin, minority leader in the house of representatives, goes Senator O'Mahoney one better. His forecast is that unemployment may develop to such proportions as, perhaps, to force a dictatorship. Joe Martin, to be sure, isn't particularly an economist and he IS a Republican. Still, he's quite a figure on Capitol Hill—not to be sneezed at.

The National Resources Planning Board and Federal Works Agency seem to have a notion that there's a possibility of a sufficient post-war slump to make a cushion desirable, to put under it.

Their scheme's to have a huge program of public improvements planned in advance, ready to start in on the minute unemployment begins to manifest itself. The other day the Planning Board announced that, in co-operation with the Works Agency, it has 51 cities in 19 states enlisted in this piece of preparation, and it hopes to win more cities and states in the near future.

Toward the end of the last war Herbert Hoover evolved a similar idea, but never did much toward getting the necessary plans formulated. "Leaf Raking"

True, a tremendous amount of public building was done in Washington during depression years, but it needed to be a lot more widely spread out than that to make any considerable impression. Subsequently there was a deal of "leaf raking," but nobody regarded it as very sound economics.

Today the economists, in short, are in a lot of disagreement.

And maybe it's no wonder. None of their past tinkering, in such emergencies as the present one, ever has proved efficacious. Now they're trying numerous new kinds of experiments, but they haven't been tried out yet. Whether any of 'em will work, actually tested, naturally is a mere matter of theory.

There are about as many theories as there are economists.



"Beyond the Alps Lies Italy"

Bits for Breakfast

By R. J. HENDRICKS

When the Battle Creek 10-4-41 camp ground was a long way out; and fashionable place for high Salem society:

(Continuing from yesterday.) Mr. Minto wrote in the little book:

"During the five years preceding the surrender at Appomattox, our neighborhood (called the 'Pringle neighborhood') had met on a day appointed and taken dinner together at some pleasant spot, sometimes chosen for the beauty of its surroundings or the long-distance view, like that from Prospect Hill, seven miles southwest of Salem.

"But three of those meetings were in a beautiful, sheltered spot on Battle creek, on the donation land claim of Mrs. Martha A. Minto.

"The neighborhood had met there on the 15th of May, 1865, in rejoicing for the return of peace, and there was recited the foregoing parody." (That parody was composed by Mr. Minto as his contribution to the day's proceedings. Martha Ann (Morrison) Minto was his wife, and the camp ground on Battle creek was on her half of their joint donation land claim of 640 acres.)

The parody was on "Johnny Comes Marching Home," substituting "The Johnny Rebs March Home from Appomattox." That was a month and six days after the surrender of Lee's army at Appomattox, which was on April 9, 1865. The parody went like this:

"Come ring the bells and fire the guns,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
Bring forth your wives and little ones,
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!
Hoist up the flag and raise the shout,
The boys and girls must all turn out,
For we all feel gay, since the Johnnies went marching home.

From Appomattox field they went,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
With steeds and side-arms kindly sent;
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!
No more secession's husks they'll eat,
But milk and honey—flour and wheat;

And we'll all feel gay, since the Johnnies are marching home.

In the Union House the board we'll spread,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
For there is plenty—wine and bread;
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

TRAFFIC TIPS AND QUIDS



We'll kill the calf to crown the feast,
We'll freely kill the fatted beast,
As we all feel gay, since the Johnnies went marching home.

And we'll have no talk of East or West;
Hurrah! Hurrah!
But honor those who fought the best;
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

We'll have no strife 'twixt Union men,
But all be for the Union then,
And all feel gay, since the Johnnies went marching home.

(Slowly)
But we'll not forget the Boys in Blue;
O no, Ah no,
Who gave their lives like heroes true;

Ah no, Oh no, Ah no,
We'll deck the graves of those who fell,
No more to hear the Rebel yell,
But down to future ages tell

BARRED SEVENS

By MARYSE RUTLEDGE

Chapter 25, Continued
Breanu broke the silence. "Have a cigar?" His brain flashed in distant lightning, and grumbled with far away thunder. Many things were vividly clear as before a storm.

"Thanks," Kurt Helm accepted a cigar.

"You knew my wife," Breanu said harshly.

"Slightly. And so long ago," Kurt took time to light his cigar. "I was of so little importance in her life," he murmured as if absorbed in the savor of his first whiff. "I hardly expected you to recognize me, Breanu." There was a touch of insolence to his pronouncement of the name.

"I never forget," Breanu's tone was smooth, with guttural undertones. He carefully crossed his legs, and felt the broad-headed shaggy pup nuzzle up to him. "It was a great shock to me," Kurt Helm strolled over to the window.

"Yes?" Breanu crushed out his cigar, all pleasure of the day destroyed. In the quiet room he faced an adversary, long sought. He could have killed Kurt Helm then and there, without further questions. He got to his feet, stocky and formidable, joining Helm at the window.

"I don't know what there was between you and my wife, or what you've been up to since her murder," he said. "Several pretty queer things have happened, though, and a blonde man seems to have been mixed up in them. Was it you?"

Helm shrugged, denying nothing.

"I think we must have a long talk," Breanu continued slowly. "I'll expect you at my office tomorrow morning." It was meant as a command.

Kurt Helm swung around. I'll be there," he snapped.

Neither rules nor persuasion could keep Bill Wright in the hospital. Within ten days he was out, his left arm in a sling. Bill had done considerable thinking while he grinned at pretty nurses and chatted with doctors. But he was mum to the questioning detectives, most of whom he knew. Breanu's torpedoes, who had waylaid him and David along the bleak Jersey meadowland, were his affair.

Bill was a busy young man that brilliant October morning when, reluctantly, the hospital let him go. First he rang up

what caused our Nation's woe.

That picnic of 1865, "in a beautiful, sheltered spot on Battle creek, on the donation claim of Mrs. Martha A. Minto," was either on or not far from the spot on the west side of the present Pacific highway where it crosses over the same stream, now hidden under a fill some 20 to 30 or more feet below the surface of the road at that point; the hidden stream being a few yards north of the spot that is under the flickering electric light, kept in order to warn automobile drivers to be careful, on account of the meeting there of the highways from the north to form the single Pacific highway leading on south.

In fact, three highways come together near that point, including the one first built, extending through the Sunnyside district.

(Concluded tomorrow.)

Greenwich, Connecticut. He said to the voice at the other end of the wire, "Tell Mr. Swift that my name doesn't matter. I think I have a lead on who murdered his daughter. I only want to ask him two questions."

Arnold Swift came to the phone. His answers were brittle. The next step he studied maps of New Jersey, and the route Matt Breanu had taken across Overpeck creek. Then, from an FBI man he knew, Bill obtained information which had nothing to do with Breanu.

Later, he wandered in to see a short-tempered editor who had the European war on his mind. "What's a murder when the world's going to blazes?" this seasoned veteran growled. "But have it your own way. The job's yours." Bill said thanks, and spent an hour in the paper's morgue. From there he traveled to lower Broadway. His arm hurt; his brow was creased.

He sought out a withered crone, who sold papers next to the building where Matt Breanu had his "front" office. Sure she knew "The Big Shot." With a dollar from Bill Wright in her claw, she croaked scant information. Only yesterday, she saw Breanu get into his car with a sick blonde fellow. They seemed chummy. It was unusual because Breanu was always alone.

Bill's mind whirled back to the inquest, the witnesses. Something—someone eluded him. He drove into the subway, making for Garrison's swanky apartment in Rio house.

Garrison was out. But David Farland was there. "So you're around again," he said drily; so glad to see Bill that he could have hugged him. "You old son-of-a-gun, I almost sent you flowers."

"When you send me flowers, I'll be under the sod. What's new?" Bill examined the handsome surroundings, his lips pursed for a whistle. "Nice place."

"Yeah!" David drawled. "I wish I knew what I was doing in it. I'm supposed to be a sort of secretary and strong-arm man. But nothing goes on, Garrison's a regular guy, and he has some cock-eyed idea I can help him."

"You will," Bill comforted. "I—" and he stopped short. To be continued.

Radio Programs

Table listing radio programs for various stations including KSLM, KOAC, KGW, KEX, KALE, KOIN, and KOEN, with their respective schedules and program titles.

There was no smile on Petroleum Coordinator Harold Ickes' face when he picked up a cartoon lampooning his efforts to conserve gasoline and oil while testifying before a special senate investigating committee in Washington. Entitled "Slightly Embarrassed," the cartoon depicted the committee as a gas-line station attendant telling Ickes, "Why, Mr. Ickes, we have plenty of gas." Ickes told the committee he had "gravely misunderstood" the conversation program by reporting no shortage in the east.