

The Oregon Statesman

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

THE STATESMAN PUBLISHING COMPANY
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Not in the Public Interest

The sale of 280 acres of timber land in Deschutes county bearing a fine stand of Ponderosa pine violated a rule adopted by a former state land board to retain forest land and sell only the timber on it. In this case the land board sold not only the land with the timber, but sold it at a negotiated sale rather than on sealed bid or auction, and at a price \$2.00 per thousand board feet under the minimum recommended by the state forester. State Treasurer Scott opposed the sale but Governor Hall and Secretary of State Newberry put it through.

The tract will bring over \$104,000 to the state, which is tempting; but the method of sale followed was wrong and not in the public interest. The state forester's recommendation should have been followed. On auction the timber itself should have brought the minimum of \$20 and perhaps a great deal more. And the state should have retained the land to grow successive crops of timber on.

The value of the land to the purchaser is this: since it is pretty well surrounded by federal forests he can make an exchange with the forest service whereby the latter will get the land but he will get cutting rights on a similar tract of federal forest lands. So the purchaser stands to earn two profits.

There has been some finger-pointing because Ralph H. Cake, republican national committeeman, represented the purchaser, as though he were mixing politics with his law practice. As far as Gov. Hall is concerned we doubt if Cake has any influence at all. Secretary Newberry thought ought to get away from being a carbon copy for the governor. While Hall appointed him he made the grade himself in the spring primaries and so should feel on his own now.

Some months ago the land board sold a small tract of tidal land on Coos Bay, Treasurer Scott objecting, for a sum which looked large on the basis of the small acreage involved but was small in comparison with the lease value of the land. Now another instance has arisen where it does not appear that the land board has exercised proper business prudence.

It sets a bad precedent to sell timber on a negotiated price basis when timber is in as great demand as it is at the present time, and then at a price less than that recommended by the state forester. Why call on the state forester at all if his advice is to be discounted so heavily?

In this instance the purchaser wanted the land board office to take his cruise. The office had a cruise made by the state forester's office which showed 50,000 more board feet than the other cruise. This became the basis for the computation. If the forester's advice had been followed clear through the state would probably have obtained \$10,000 more for the timber and still held title to the land.

Efficiency for DPs

Two months ago congress authorized entry into the United States of 205,000 of Europe's more than 850,000 displaced persons. Not one of the would-be immigrants has yet reached these shores.

Instead of starting a new life in a new world at a time when their labor could have been easily absorbed — during the summer harvest season — Europe's modern Les Miserables have remained in idleness, growing daily more discouraged and more difficult to rehabilitate.

It will be another month before the DP program actually gets going and the innocent victims of war start coming to America.

The reason for this delay, of course, is that everything has to run like clockwork in this country and sometimes it takes a while to get the clockwork together.

"Channels" are the bloodstream of a bureaucratic system; everything has to go through channels. Rules, regulations and official directives form the channels. So far, the plans made for the DP's are still somewhat tentative because, you see, the U. S. DP commission, appointed by the president when congress adjourned, has not yet formulated all the rules and regulations.

Shipping a couple hundred thousand strangers 3,000 miles away to Ellis island and communities all over the country is not as simple as it sounds. It involves fingerprinting, verifying records (a monumental task because a lot of filing cabinets got blown to bits during the war), checking birth certificates (a lot of people can't prove they were born at all) and digging into police records. Also a DP's political beliefs must be scrutinized since communists are now barred from entering this country. And every emigrant has to have a medical examination.

Meanwhile, the plight (and expense to U. S. taxpayers) of the DP's in Europe gets desperately worse, but perhaps if the DP program is stalled long enough, it will not be necessary to have it at all. The DP's will have died off or have fallen into Russian hands or been taken by other countries. And that would be so much more convenient than doing away with red tape on their behalf.

Labor Vote to Divide

While President Truman was making his strenuous effort to capture the labor vote in a Labor day drive through industrialized Michigan and a big speech at Detroit, Uncle Dan Tobin, long right bower for FDR in the labor movement, and his team-mates were getting set to stay (officially) neutral. Instead of making any endorsement the union isn't even going to hold a political action conference; and its magazine gives its million members a pass to vote as they please, though Tobin urges support for congressional candidates who opposed the Taft-Hartley bill.

Despite all of Truman's efforts he is not going to corral all of the labor vote. The CIO is pretty well lined up behind him, barring the Wallace splinter section. But Dewey is going to gather in a good measure of support from AFL.

For one thing, labor leaders are politicians too; and they know a bandwagon when they see one. The Dewey vehicle has the popular calliope now and enough AFL leaders will get a ride on it to have a foot in the White House come next January.

Another distinguished neutral this year is John L. Lewis. He will have no truck with Truman who broke John L.'s pick with a Goldborough injunction twice; but the GOP isn't angling for a Lewis endorsement such as he gave Willkie in 1940.

Truman's hope of political salvation lies in labor. Tobin's on-the-fence stand indicates that Truman isn't going to get the massed labor vote which four times stayed with Franklin Roosevelt.

Dr. Edward Benes had the misfortune to live too long—too long for his own peace of mind. Disciple and successor to the great Thomas Masaryk, Dr. Benes, one of the ablest statesmen of Europe, sought to preserve Czechoslovakia from the nazis and to make it a mediator between east and west. His hopes were dashed with the communist coup which he validated with his reluctant signature. His memory, though, will serve to kindle love of freedom among Czechs who kept it alive through centuries of subjugation.

Russ Escapees Flee Westward By Thousands

By Joseph and Stewart Alsop
WASHINGTON, Sept. 7 — A Russian who deserts from the Soviet occupation forces in Germany knows that he will be shot if he is caught. He knows that the ruthlessly efficient MVD, Soviet secret police, is more than likely to catch him. He knows that his family in the Soviet union will almost certainly suffer as a consequence of his desertion. He knows that the dreary half-life of a man without a country is the best he can hope for if he succeeds. Yet it can now be revealed on undoubted authority that each month more than a thousand Soviet soldiers and civilian officials are risking death to flee to the American zone of Germany.

The astonishing total of deserters to the American zone in the last 12 months is just over 13,000. Of these about 4,000 were officers, including two generals, one a lieutenant general on Marshall Sokolov's staff. Approximately 8,000 were enlisted men, and 3,000 were Russian workers and civilian officials.

These figures, moreover, are certainly on the low side, simply because the total includes only those known to have escaped from the Soviet occupation forces. There is no doubt that many more Russians have crossed the zonal borders and quietly faded into the German population wholly undetected by the authorities.

It must be emphasized that the figures listed above apply only to Soviet desertions to the American zone in Germany. They do not include the Russians who have deserted to the west in Austria and elsewhere, nor do they include those who have fled to the British zone of Germany.

Also in British Zone
British figures on Soviet desertions to the British zone are unobtainable. Yet it can certainly be assumed that at least as many Russians have fled to the British zone as to the American zone. Indeed, the total may well be higher. This is for a very simple reason.

For a long time after the war, Russian deserters to the American zone of Germany were handed over to the Soviet authorities, and thus to certain death, as a result of a post-war Soviet-American agreement. The agreement has now in effect been jettisoned. Deserters are returned only if the Russians can precisely identify the individual, and specify exactly where he can be found — and for obvious reasons this happens exceedingly rarely if at all.

Nevertheless, the fate of Russian soldiers who escaped earlier to the American zone certainly became known to would-be deserters in the Soviet zone, and although American policy has changed, the memory lingers on. The never handed Russian deserters over to the tender mercies of the MVD. Therefore Soviet desertions to the British have very probably been higher than to the American zone.

25,000 Risk Death

Thus it is a pretty safe assumption that 25,000 Russians at the very least, have risked certain death to escape the iron grip of the Soviet system, in the last 12 months alone. The American authorities are at last awake to the fact that this army of Russian deserters is a gold mine of invaluable information. Many are, of course, unlettered peasants and workers, and these are merely allowed to find what place they can for themselves in the German economy; about two thirds are working on German farms as agricultural laborers.

As well as the two generals already mentioned, however, many responsible officers (including a number of officials of the MVD itself) and a number of high civilian officials have fled west. Such men are sources of information otherwise wholly unobtainable, both military intelligence, and, in addition, but equally valuable information on the inner workings of the Soviet system.

Red Experiment Fails

The mere fact that this mass peacetime desertion is taking place is itself an immensely significant commentary on the Soviet system, far more meaningful than the occasional individual escape of a Kravchenko or a Kasenkina. For the plain fact is — and it is becoming plainer every day — that the Soviet political experiment is a ghastly and tragic failure. This fact is attested not only by the utter desperation which must motivate the mass desertions from the Soviet zone, but by the almost equal desperation with which the Russian rulers are attempting to isolate the whole Soviet sphere from the free world.

This does not mean that the structure of power which the Soviet rulers have so painfully constructed is about to disintegrate. For every Russian who has fled west there are thousands who have not. No doubt these men would fight courageously, as the Russian soldier has always fought, in case of war. Yet clearly there is a deep inner weakness in the Soviet system. For only a system rotten at the core could produce the massive and incredible phenomenon of the flight to the west which is now going on.

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We Fear the "Worst"!

IT SEEMS TO ME

(Continued from page 1)
it is pertinent to inquire, When do company profits become "high enough?" Or "too high?"

Consumers of petroleum products as they review oil company earnings can't help coming to the conclusion that prices have been raised faster and higher than is justified. It is true that demand continues strong and refiners are overbidding posted prices for crude but there ought to be some degree of restraint when it comes to taking profits and not merely the limit of what the traffic will bear.

On thing certain: consumers do not want this strike prolonged to where essential services are curtailed, or even when less essential service is seriously impaired. And they do not want to be made the goats of any wage settlement. There is cushion in current earnings so the wage increases should not be rolled along to consumers.

Jaycees Hear Rosebraugh

Elimination of corner trees and shrubbery as traffic hazards was recommended Tuesday by W. W. Rosebraugh, former member of the Salem city council, in a talk to the Salem Junior Chamber of Commerce at the Golden Pheasant. Rosebraugh pointed to the new telephone building on the corner of Winter and Court streets as "a violation of the set-back ordinance," predicting that "the building will cause the death of more than one resident in traffic accidents."

He urged the Jaycees to cooperate with civic planning organizations.

Thieves Enter Offices, Homes; Money Missing

Several thefts and attempted thefts Monday night and Tuesday morning were reported Tuesday and investigated by city police.

During the lunch hour Tuesday a thief entered the Oregon building, office of the Camp Fire Girls and took a money bag containing about \$10, Mrs. H. G. Nelson told police. During the same hour an attempt was made by a prowler to enter the Catholic Charities and Oregon Child Evangelism Fellowship offices in the Pacific building across High street. A screwdriver was found by the building manager, Ed Amman, but the attempt to enter the offices was not successful, police said.

Mrs. Joyce Davis, 1180 Jefferson st., reported to police that someone had taken a purse from her car parked at 870 Shipping st., Tuesday morning. The purse contained \$6.

Larcenies Monday night were both from rooms, police report. Andrew Creech, of the Bellevue hotel, reported \$23 taken from his trousers while he was asleep in his room. S. F. Webber, Claremont hotel, told police that \$47 was taken from a wallet on a small table in his room while he slept. The wallet was still on the table, he said.

Toastmasters Start Season

First Salem Toastmaster's meeting of the fall season was held Tuesday night at Nohlgren's restaurant. Announcement was made that meetings will be held there each Tuesday evening during the fall and winter months.

Desmond Long was toastmaster during the meeting and William Hill, table topics chairman. Speakers were Glen Burright, Harlan Pearson, Wally Carson, Ernest Byberg and Ralph Nohlgren.

The Safety Valve

Poor Lighting at Intersection To the Editor:

After driving a number of times over North Capitol street and Fairgrounds road I am convinced that the lights are the reason that so many outside drivers are running through the red lights at that intersection. The driver does not come into the beam of the light until the light is so near overhead that he misses seeing it. While the lights are there they show dimly to an approaching vehicle. This is caused by the curving street at that point. Either brighter lights or lenses that spread the beam sidewise might remedy the trouble.

Lewis Judson.

Morse Terms ERP Dollars 'For Defense'

The European relief plan dollar is a defense dollar and is well spent, U. S. Sen. Wayne L. Morse, Oregon's junior senator, told members of Salem Kiwanis club and their guests Tuesday noon at the Marion hotel.

Possibility of a war with Russia today is exceedingly remote but in the first week of last March the possibility was very close, the Oregon senator said. Subsequent passage of the European relief or Marshall plan and adoption of the selective service changed the picture, he said, adding that he believes Russia now regrets the fact it left the Paris conference and lost the chance to help shape the future of Europe.

While the United States had little over two divisions ready for combat last March, Russia had 71 divisions ready for combat service, the Oregon senator said in telling of hearings before the senate military affairs committee of which he is a member.

Regarding the ERP, Senator Morse said "We cannot ship great quantities of materials to Europe without affecting the domestic economy here and I believe we should tell the people why prices are higher.

Speaking of his attitude toward national legislation, the speaker said he asked only that the people of Oregon wait until he had all of the facts and then ask themselves how they would have voted if they sat where he sat.

20-30s Hear Harvey Scott

Harvey Scott, of the engineering department of the Oregon state board of aeronautics, Tuesday night discussed air markers with members of Salem 20-30 club meeting at the Gold Arrow restaurant.

It was announced at the meeting that the local club, in cooperation with a national 20-30 program, will install an air marker here.

The marker is to be in huge white painted letters and will either be placed on the roof of the Oregon state supreme court building or the roof of the Bonesteel building on Lana avenue. It will bear the 20-30 insignia and an arrow directing air traffic to McNary field. The city's name will be accompanied on the marker with the altitude of the city.

Four new 20-30 members initiated at the meeting are Ronald Patton, Dwaine Hewitt, Richard Wherley and William Troth.

Institutions' Budgets Rise 67 Per Cent

The Oregon state board of control Tuesday was advised by Budget Director George Aiken that the tentative budgets of 10 state institutions have increased approximately 67 per cent for the 1949-50 biennium. Aiken said these compared with actual appropriations covering the current two-year period.

Budgets of other state activities have increased 22 per cent, Aiken said. The budget director indicated that a number of institution budgets probably would have to be reduced materially to keep the

expenditures within the state's estimated revenues.

At the same time the board of control was advised by Roy E. Mills, board secretary, that the value of state property increased from \$52,892,000 a year ago to \$58,476,210 this year. Mills said that there are prospects of a further increase to \$70,000,000 within the next 12 months.

Mills presented the increased state property valuation in connection with fixing the state restoration fund, starting July 1 of next year. The rate of assessment required to raise \$100,000 annually, the amount designated by statute, is 17.1 cents per \$100 of value. Last year, Mills indicated, the assessment was a trifle more than 18 cents per \$100. The increase in the value of state property during the past year was due largely to the building construction program now in progress at the several state institutions.

The state restoration fund is used by the state in lieu of commercial insurance.

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