

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us, No Fear Shall Awe"
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Enough Numbers

It's getting tough when some of the powers-that-be want us to be a vital statistic all our lives instead of just when we are born, get married or die. Take this plan to number all babies, for instance. In fact, take it out and bury it as far as the state of Washington and a lot of other states are concerned. But Oregon apparently will adopt the plan.

It appears that the U. S. public health service wants to have all babies numbered at birth, but several states have said "no" after testing the water of public opinion and finding it sub-freezing.

We're inclined to think it would get a chilly reception here, too. We've got house numbers, social security numbers, car-license numbers, driving-license numbers. If we get tossed in the pen we get another one, and we're tabbed with one if we venture into a liquor store. We've got 'phone numbers, postoffice box numbers, rural route numbers, political district numbers, school district numbers, lot numbers, township numbers and bank box numbers.

In fact, if we'd put all our numbers end to end with a dollar sign in front of them, we'd dadgum near have the total of the debt we'll be in after Christmas.

We're inclined to think it will get a chilly. It looks as though we've got enough numbers now without being one.

Threat to Democracy

California voted itself a pension headache without the escape hatch of a bill clearly unworkable and unconstitutional. It moved pensions and blind aid up \$10 a month and lowered the minimum age to 63, freed relatives of duty to support their kin, and allowed beneficiaries to hold up to \$1500 in property. Also the bill named a woman to a \$12,000 job as pension administrator.

The budgeteers have been estimating the cost of the measure and find that the number of pensioners will be increased by about 95,000, and the costs will increase by \$86 million in the next fiscal year and nearly \$111 million in the year following. The bill, like Oregon's, put a lien on all moneys in the state treasury, so reserves that had been held for other state purposes may be raided as long as they hold out.

The San Francisco Chronicle, noting that the voters have put their state government "into a situation bordering on financial depression," says it will take increased taxes to feed the maw of the pension promoters "unless other state agencies are to be plundered or the state government as a whole sent spinning into a financial deficit."

What should give the public concern is not just the immediate problem of trying to finance ill-advised pension schemes but how to save democracy from itself. Many people think the public treasury is a bottomless reservoir and proceed by ballot to open wider the pipes draining it. There is grave danger they will exhaust public funds or pile up taxes so burdensome

Truman on Horns of Defense Dilemma

By Joseph and Stewart Alsop
WASHINGTON, Dec. 18.—The extreme oddity that sometimes marks policy making in the Truman administration is being brilliantly illustrated at the moment. On the one hand, the president seems determined to demand from congress strong economic controls and much higher taxes. And on the other hand, the president seems equally determined to entice his whole foreign policy by cutting back the rearmament plans that were adopted with such drama and urgency last spring.

There are hidden ironies and concealed contradictions on here which deserve careful investigation. In the first place, the president's more conservative economic advisers, Budget Director James Webb, Secretary of the Treasury John Snyder and the chairman of the Economic Advisory Council, Dr. Edwin Nourse, are responsible for the rearmament cutback. They persuaded the president to impose the \$15 billion ceiling on defense spending. And it is this budget ceiling which is knocked into a cocked hat the services' plans for making America strong.

The sole motive of Messrs. Webb, Snyder and Nourse was to avoid the necessity of strong economic controls and higher taxes, which would certainly arise from defense spending above \$15 billion. But subsequent to the imposition of the \$15 billion budget ceiling, the expected struggle over the president's fiscal and economic poli-

cies took place anyway. And this struggle has now apparently been won by the other portion of the president's advisers, with Dr. Nourse's colleague on the economic council, Dr. Leon Keyserling, and the White House counsel, Clark Gifford, in the lead. They reminded the president that he had already twice publicly asked congress for extensive economic controls, an excess profits tax, and other unpalatable measures. And the president decided to renew his former requests without much change, and to insist upon them strongly.

Thus precisely what the sponsors of the \$15 billion service budget ceiling so much wished to avoid is now to be done after all. But thus far at his meetings with the service chiefs, the president has given no sign of grasping that this ought to alter the situation with regard to the budget ceiling.

If the president does not change his mind, the outcome will be different from what it would have been at the time of the great seventy-air-ground row last year. There has been a sharp reversal of thinking among defense department leaders, including Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal. This time, if the budget ceiling holds, air rearmament will be cut back less than either ground or naval rearmament. But there will still be some reductions in planned increases in air strength, and there will be very severe reductions in planned increases in army and navy strength.

The effect abroad, of course, will be to terrify all our potential allies. And immensely to encourage the Kremlin. In truth, such a rearmament slowdown in this time of visible danger of eventual war savors of British policy in the mid-thirties.

The effect at home, moreover, is likely to be just as drastic. The congress will be about as eager to adopt the president's proposals for strong economic controls and much higher taxes as to drink his health in a flow-

ing bowl of Mickey Finns. There is one ground, and one ground only, on which the president can hope to secure acceptance of these proposals. That ground, of course, is the existence of a grave world emergency.

The world emergency required the draft of man power last summer. If the president insists now that the same emergency now requires the draft of money and resources, no one can refute him. But he cannot make this point if he simultaneously makes nonsense of any plea of emergency by slowing down rearmament. If we do not need to be ready to defend ourselves by 1952, which is the target date for present rearmament plans because it is the first year when the Soviets are thought capable of producing an atomic bomb, one wonders why we need to be strong at all. The president cannot find any way over, under or around this inconsistency.

What makes the situation odder still is the way strange political bedfellows have been brought together. Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal, the supposed banker-in-government, began talking of the need for controls and taxes many months ago. The chief advocates of controls and taxes, the supposed left-wingers, have emphatically not participated in the drive to enforce defense plans.

To be sure, these men advocate immediate legislation for housing, aid to education, health insurance and power development. But the whole resulting addition to the budget will not run much above \$1 billion, and this social effort is considered entirely consistent with a strong defense effort, always provided the right economic safeguards are adopted. And the sense of world emergency is as much the motive for the administration's desire for economic safeguards as it is in the mind of Forrestal. Altogether, the whole business would be comic if it were not tragic.

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Workmen to Start on Parrish School Project at First of Year

By Winston H. Taylor
Staff Writer, The Statesman

Fourth project in Salem school district's current building program will get under way by the first of the year, contractors announced Saturday. Lumber is already being accumulated for start of the work at Parrish junior high school, whose addition will be the most costly out of the \$1,500,000 bond issue approved last spring.

Viesko and Post of Salem have the contract on a bid of \$362,616. The project is expected to be complete, or nearly so, when school opens next September. At least part of it will be usable.

Meanwhile additions to Bush and West Salem schools are in the finishing stages, and the latter is expected to be available when classes resume January 3 after Christmas vacation. Officials hope Bush's six new classrooms will be ready about March 1. West Salem work includes four new classrooms, a library and a cafeteria, as well as remodeling of gymnasium locker and shower rooms.

Desks Available
Securing of equipment and furnishings is one of the district's primary problems in the program since deliveries are a year and more behind orders. Desks are available for the new rooms at West Salem, but considerable hardware is lacking. At Bush no more desks will be required than now in use, but they will have more space to occupy.

First work at Parrish will be excavation for footings, since the structure has no basement. Additions will be constructed on both sides of the building's central rear wing, and the contractor will work on them simultaneously. But the one at the south will be specially rushed, since it contains a new boys' gymnasium which must be finished before the present rear wing can be remodeled into a girls' gym and a cafeteria with folding tables. It now serves as the school's only gymnasium, auditorium and

lunch room, where lunches served in an adjacent cafeteria are eaten.

Folding Bleachers
Present dressing rooms and boiler room will be converted into a kitchen and storage. The new gymnasium will include folding bleachers, adjacent dressing rooms and equipment drying rooms for physical education and athletic teams. The public entrance will be on Lamberson street.

On the north side will be erected a 1,000-capacity auditorium with sloping roof. The stage will be on the north and the entrance through the present corridor from Capitol street, with an auxiliary door on D street. This wing will also include two new classrooms and storage space.

Between the new construction and the present gymnasium will run corridors, along which will be students' individual lockers. Between the additions and the rear of the main building will be bicycle sheds along open corridors.

Present remodeling plans call for removal of partitions to increase the size of one classroom in each end of the building by adding in a locker room. This work and conversion of the present gym will not be done until after school is out next June.

Reinforced Concrete
The entire project will be of reinforced concrete, faced with stucco and conforming with the architecture of the present building, which was constructed in 1924. Architects are now preparing plans for the proposed Capitola grade school, which will be situated on Lansing avenue near Silverton road, to serve a residential area which has grown rapidly within recent years. Bids will probably be called about March, according to District Clerk C. C. Ward, in hopes of having the building ready for pupils by next September.

Other tentative work on the current building program includes a new grade school at Four Corners, and additions to McKinley, Englewood, Richmond and Swegle grade schools and the senior high school vocational shop.

T SEEMS TO ME

(Continued from page 1)

tensions between east and west, with result as dire as we see today. The two final paragraphs of his letter were as follows:

"There is not much comfort in looking into a future where you and the countries you dominate plus the communist parties in many other states are all drawn up on one side and those who rallied to the English-speaking nations and their associates or dominions are on the other."

"It is quite obvious that their quarrel would tear the world to pieces and all of us leading men on either side who had anything to do with that would be shamed before history. Even embarking on a long period of suspicion, of abuse and counter-abuse and of opposing policies would be disaster hampering the great development of world prosperity for the masses which is obtainable only by our trinity. I hope there is no word or phrase in this outpouring of my heart to you, Mr. Stalin, which unwittingly gives offense. If so, let me know, but do not, I beg of you, my friend, underestimate the divergencies which are happening about matters which you may think are small but which are symbolic of the way the English-speaking democracies look at life."

Stalin had clear notice and warning. Why did he not heed the "outpouring" of Churchill's heart in frank but friendly counsel? Probably because he was driven by nationalistic aspirations for Russia, by fears for his system and by the rigid dogma of communist ideology which is uncompromisingly revolutionary. This last thesis is developed in a lengthy article in the coming issue of "Foreign Affairs" which concludes that all Stalin's assurances that diverse systems can exist side-by-side is propaganda and a temporary tactic: "World communism is the supreme aim, Soviet power the major instrument by which it will be achieved."

So long as this bigotry prevails the world has an uneasy truce.

The Safety Valve

Spare That Tree! To the Editor:

The recent felling of the historic "Cedar of Lebanon" tree brings into sharp focus the current loss to the city of many of its fine old trees. The thought has occurred to the reader whether or not this is actually necessitated by the rapid expansion that is thrusting ever onward the boundaries of our business district or if the fruits of a wiser generation has suddenly come of age amid a generation whose value of the manmade far exceeds the inheritance value of those things left to us by nature or our forebears.

It would seem that the pendulum has swung too far off center when the neon sign and the single space for a used car should outweigh all other factors in destroying our inheritance.

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JAMES—To Mr. and Mrs. Gale J. James, 557 N. 21st st., a daughter, Saturday, December 18 at Salem General hospital.

SMITH—To Mr. and Mrs. Charles Smith, Monmouth, a daughter, Saturday, December 18 at Salem Memorial hospital.

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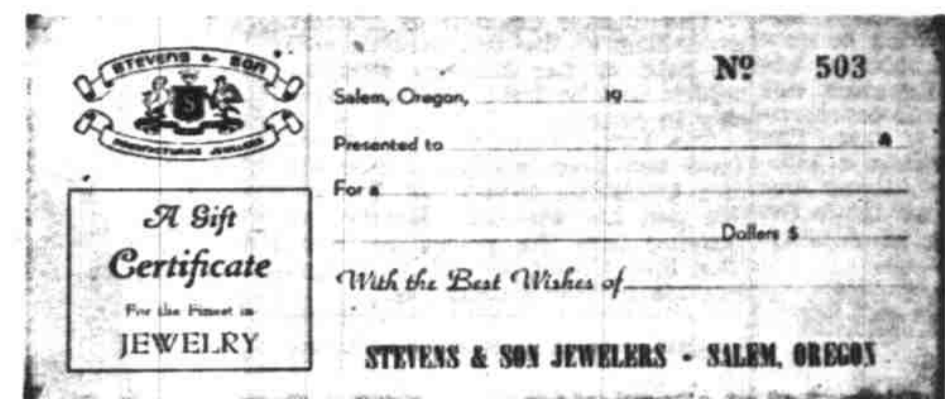
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