

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Stays Us, No Fear Shall Awe"
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Agriculture Reorganization

The public in general and farmers in particular will be interested in the recommendations of the Hoover commission for reorganizing the department of agriculture. It is now, as the report states, "a loose confederation of independent bureaus and agencies." The commission proposes a regrouping into eight different services which would report directly to the secretary. They would be:

Research, extension, agricultural resources conservation, commodity adjustment, regularity, agricultural credit, rural electrification and a secretarial staff to handle departmental house-keeping.

A recommended reshuffle of functions might end a feud of long standing between the departments of agriculture and the interior. The commission would transfer the interior department's work in land, forestry and soil saving activities to agriculture, but combine in the interior water development activities. This seems sensible. Here we have the federal forest service under the department of agriculture and the forestry division of the interior department handling O & C lands and forests on public domain. The duplication is costly and unnecessary.

Farmers will be specially interested in what the commission recommends regarding local federal farm activities. It would make the state and county production and marketing (AAA) committees advisory only, leaving administration to an employed staff.

Also reorganized would be the soil conservation service. Conservation payments would not be used as "income supplements in disguise" as they were at the origin of the program. Farmers would get benefits on adoption of a complete and balanced conservation program which would terminate with completion of the program.

The recommendations would result in savings of \$80,000,000 a year, it is estimated, and give more efficiency in operation.

There is need for this reorganization of the department which has expanded greatly in the past 20 years, its employees increasing in number from 22,000 to 82,000. Changes of administration, fresh laws, swings of ideas about agriculture and federal aid have made it quite a jungle of bureaus. It will take a major operation to accomplish integration and consolidation which are needed.

Farmers and farm organizations should begin at the grass roots to insist on a reorganization, because it is in their own interest and that of the country as a whole.

Repairing County Roads

A bill to levy an extra one-cent gas tax for one year, the proceeds to go to the counties as extra money for repairing roads damaged in the late severe winter has been in circulation at the statehouse. So far it has not been introduced. If it is it should be scrutinized carefully by the legislature.

It is a matter of common knowledge that county roads have been seriously damaged by the rains, frost and ice in recent weeks. In many

places surfacing is gone and deep chuckholes abound. Slides have taken away sections of highway or piled earth, rock and trees over the roadway. Road crews are at work everywhere to open up roads to use and do emergency repairs.

While the damage is common knowledge the extent of it is not. It seems premature then to rush through legislation for state aid. A one-cent gas tax would yield about \$4,000,000 in a year. Counties now get from the state about \$5,000,000 a year. It is doubtful if they would be able nearly to double their expenditures and get good value for their money. They do not have the engineering and construction crews and equipment for the doubled load.

The legislative committees on highways have before them the report of the interim committee. That is a mine of valuable data, with numerous valuable recommendations. It affords a chart to go by in planning legislation for the road program. The county special need should be considered; perhaps some emergency relief can be provided. But it all should be made part of a big, constructive program. Money even for roads will not come too easy; its spending should be guarded so it will give maximum returns to highway users.

Feeling Their Oats

There is no doubt in the current legislative assembly that democrats are feeling their oats. One doesn't have to glance over the list of legislation to prove that point, albeit no one can deny the democrats have jumped on the popular bandwagon for a good many issues. But it is apparent otherwise, too.

Except for periodic blasts by Sen. Thomas Mahoney, who was never a man to hide his voice under a bushel, and for less effective harangues by former Sen. Lew Wallace, republicans have lived in comparative peace for many a session.

Rep. Henry Semon, Klamath Falls democrat, never was prone to rouse the partisan ire, and but for his admitted ability there is a good chance the more so-called progressive elements of his party would have disowned him. The same went for the late able Sen. W. H. Strayer of Baker. And other democrats haven't seen fit to do much challenging of late years.

But 1949 is different. The note seems to be struck, and fairly well maintained, by fledgling Rep. Howard Morgan of Portland who many a time in recent weeks has alluded to "the majority party" and the "minority party,"—thereby attempting to draw a definite party line on every piece of legislation to which it possibly could apply.

Not that there isn't an over-lapping of interests—many bills have both republican and democratic sponsors. And there are the usual conservative democrats and progressive republicans, to give them the understood labels. But it would be in error to say that politics are not playing a big part in the 1949 legislature—bigger than in many a year.

Joseph Freck Still Holding 17 Safes

By Ralph Watson
After the new liquor control commission gets through worrying over its budget and the legislature has adjourned and things get back to normal so that the raveled ends of the commission's business can be combed out, after all that has happened maybe Joe Freck may get his 17 safes off his hands.

The story of former commissioner Freck's 17 safes begins way back around October somewhere when it was decided by the liquor commission that it ought to buy safes for 17 of its stores in which to store money pending deposit time in the banks. In that connection it received a letter from then Governor John Hall telling it to buy the safes, on competitive bids and through the state board of control.

The directive was somewhat surprising to the liquor commission, or some of it, because always theretofore it had made its own purchases and under competitive bids, except in cases of small or emergency materials. However the liquor commission as directed from above asked the board of control's purchasing department to advertise for bids and ultimately bids were received from several firms, the low bid being by the Freck Stationery company offering Herring Hall safes at \$64.50 each.

The next low bid was by the Needham Book store of Salem, which offered to furnish 17 Melink safes for \$66.70. The latter carried the fire underwriters label and a "relocking device." The Freck safe had no relocking device, carried the manufacturer's label. Both were to be attached to the automatic burglar alarm system.

When the Hall-Freck war started the safe purchase stopped, until finally on December 3 the board of control instructed the liquor commission to buy the Melink safes.

Prior to that time however, it

stores do not have the safes which the insurance companies covering the commission have been insisting upon. Between December 3 and the change in administration the old and somewhat fragmentary commission did not feel that it had pep enough to handle 17 safes weighing some 300 pounds each.

So there the matter rests, in the lap of the commission, with Joe still loaded up with 17 safes, "the basis of discussion" and a margin of \$41.80 dividing the settlement of the issue.

Literary Guidepost

By W. G. Forbes
FROM THE CITY, FROM THE PLOUGH, by Alexander Baron (Ives Washburn; \$2.75).

How to get across the channel from England to France, how to prepare for the trip, what to take, how to get acquainted with traveling companions, what to do when seasick, how to behave in a foreign land... that's the story told in this novel about the journey made in the teeth of Nazi Germany's opposition in August, 1944, by the Fifth Battalion of the Wessex Regiment.

Lieut. Col. Henry Potchary is commanding officer, and Maj. Noel Norman is his second, but this is not a book about brass but about brass tacks, about a Corp. Shuttleworth whose wife has deserted him, about Sergt. Ferrissey and his way with women, Charlie Venable who takes Dutch leave and Dickie Crawford who wangles a pass, Alfie Bradley and Floss, Mulrooney and Scannock, Barnicoat, Smith, Meadows, Warne, Blair, Richardson.

With hundreds of other war novels read and forgotten, the public cannot be interested in a new book unless it's some-

thing extra special. This is something extra special, made in England. By turns funny and moving, honest, real and told by an expert, it's the prose version of Mauldin's cartoons of the common man in uniform.

TO THE SWIFT, by Anne Hawkins (Harper; \$2.75).

There was a time when the average boy's ambition was to grow up to be a pony express rider who carrying the mails for the last 2,000 miles westward to the Pacific, fought storms in the mountains, or flooded rivers, or bears, or bad white men and redmen. But it took a woman, it seems, to turn those exciting days into a novel with a little love, a lot of bloodshed and plenty of adventure.

Started in 1860 by Russell Majors - Waddell, it lasted only until telegraph lines were strung over plains and mountains. It carried less than two tons of mail in all, says Miss Hawkins, but it was important mail. It's a job managed, in her story, by Bol Roberts and Sierra Dave Wagenet astride such tireless, tough steeds as Clipper, Surveyor, Cinnabar and Fool-Killer.

THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER (IN FINLAND, ETC.)



IT SEEMS TO ME

(Continued from page 1)

contribution to the fund. Under social security worker and employer have both contributed for over a dozen years.

The fund is big enough to permit an increase in payments. Present receipts amount to a billion and three quarters in a year but the outgo is only a third of that. It is figured that if benefits were doubled and the rates not increased, if payrolls remain high the balance on hand would be as large at the end of 10 years as it is now.

The special committee named to investigate the old age annuity program urged that benefits under it be at least as high as under the assistance programs, and concludes: "Unless the insurance system is expanded and improved so that it in fact offers basic security to retired persons and survivors there will be continual and nearly irresistible pressure for putting more and more federal funds into the less constructive programs."

When relief and social security programs were instituted the idea was that social security financed through deductions from payrolls and paychecks would make unnecessary eventually the relief grants for aged, except for special classes. Actually the latter have grown while social security has remained almost static except for additions in numbers.

The self-financing plan is better, better for the people, better for the government. We ought to revise our social security program to include more people under it who will be contributing to their old age annuities and to pay larger annuities both because the present allowances are not realistic and because the money is in

Mayor Lauds Contributions For Red Cross

Calling on all Salem citizens to do their part in assisting the annual fund campaign of the American Red Cross, which starts March 1, Mayor Robert L. Elfstrom has issued the following statement:

"The American Red Cross has been a consistently good neighbor. Wherever disaster strikes, there you will find Red Cross giving assistance to the suffering victims. Members of the armed forces have learned to turn to Red Cross for friendly guidance and counsel in personal problems. Veterans, their dependents, as well as disabled veterans still in the nation's hospitals, know that Red Cross caters to their needs, acting as the agent for a generous public in supplying those needs.

"The Marion county chapter of the American Red Cross is asking the public for \$52,165 this year to continue its work for the next year. As mayor of Salem, I urge each of you to participate in this campaign by giving as generously as possible. Your contributions determine the extent of the assistance which may be given to aster sufferers, members of the armed forces and veterans.

"Let's all assist with this vital work through our contributions to Red Cross."

hand to pay larger benefits.

One provision of the bill not needed now is that reducing the age for women to get benefits from 65 to 60. We can't take on added burdens such as this too fast.

If congress will extend the coverage of social security and increase monthly benefits under it that is all it needs to do now. We can do this without burdening the producing mechanism of the country. "Home relief" and other wrinkles of generosity should be shelved.

The Safety Valve

Favors Junior College in Portland To the Editor:

Whenever talk is heard of a junior college in Portland, or whenever the legislature holds hearing on the subject there emanates from the offices of the chancellor of the state system of higher education, Dr. Packer, assurances that "expansion of existing institutions is preferable to establishment of a new institution at Portland." Apparently these are mere assertions since no data, reasons or arguments ever accompany them. HB 213 would make an existing institution, Vanport college, permanent. It remains to be seen whether Dr. Packer will issue a statement opposing that too.

This is real danger involved in this frequent issuing of statements in that the people tend to let officials think for them. Soon the statement alone comes to carry much weight in and of itself. Voting citizens should demand not only that Dr. Packer demonstrate just why it is not a good idea to have a junior college in Portland, they should demand that all public officials give an accounting of the reasons behind their statements. Reputation of assertions is a favorite propaganda device.

Amid cries that we must practice stringent economy in government the opponents of a junior college in Portland are ignor-

ing two, very pertinent facts. First, about 65 per cent of the students who enter college go only the first two years. Second, experiences in Oregon and California indicate that the cost per student per year is about half as great for junior colleges as it is for four year colleges.

Typical figures are, for the school year 1946-47, Vanport college \$242, University of Oregon \$302, Oregon State \$474. In California, where junior colleges are permanent, the official estimation of cost per student for the school year 1947-48 was \$278 for junior colleges and \$666 for the University of California. Statistics from other sources and states indicate about the same thing. These figures are operating costs, not what the student pays. Sources of above statistics will be furnished to anyone interested.

Having studied this problem for two years and written an article published in the Sunday Oregonian, Feb. 1, 1948 in support of a college in Portland I have reasons behind my contentions. As the author of HB 213 I will welcome debate, written or oral, anytime with anyone who cares to publicly oppose the proposition of a junior college in Portland or Multnomah county.

Thank you,
John Hakanson
980 Locust St.

Tuesday at 7:30 p. m. in Salem Chamber of Commerce.

Sam Hall was chosen chairman at a recent meeting, but completion of organization was delayed. Hall, who will be out of town on business next week, has appointed Ervin Potter acting chairman to conduct the election of a vice chairman, secretary, treasurer and executive committee members.

WSCS at Lyons Makes Tea Plans

LYONS—Mrs. Sarah Cookingham was hostess for the meeting of the Women's Society of Christian Service Tuesday afternoon. Mrs. Alex Bodeker presided over the business meeting. Mrs. George Clippell, devotional leader, gave a

talk on "The Newness of Life."

Plans were made and March 29 set for the silver tea. Mrs. Laurance Walworth, Mrs. George Clippell and Mrs. Floyd Bassett were appointed the program committee. Mrs. Roy Huber, chairman of the fancy work committee, asked each member to bring pot holders at the next meeting.

Present for the afternoon were Mesdames Albert Ring, Eugene Roy, George Huffman, Floyd Bassett, George Clippell, Wallace Power, Albert Julian, Glen Julian, Oral Toland, Robert Fetherston, Roy Huber, Alex Bodeker, Art Boltzer, Loren Chamberlain, Mrs. Anna Johnson, Mrs. May Swank, Mrs. Daisy Johnston, Mrs. Catherine Julian, Mrs. Minnie Smith, Mrs. Sasfield, Rev. Quirin and Mrs. Cookingham.

Young GOPs to Elect Officers

Election of officers and consideration of a program of activities will feature a Marion County Young Republican club meeting

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