

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

(Published Every Evening and Sunday)
 EDITOR AND PUBLISHER - Alton F. Baker
 MANAGING EDITOR - William M. Tugman
 NEWS SERVICE - Associated Press, United Press
 MEMBER - Audit Bureau of Circulation
 Entered at the Post Office at Eugene, Oregon, as second-class matter.

The Register-Guard's policy is the complete and impartial publication in its news pages of all news and statements of news. On this page the editors of The Register-Guard offer their opinions on events of the day and matters of importance to the community, endeavoring to be candid but fair and helpful in the development of constructive community policy.

NO TIME TO STAND ON DIGNITY

Admirable as was the handling of rescue and relief work during the recent New Year's flood, in most particulars, there was a good deal of confusion as to the dispatching of rescue boats and emergency crews. This confusion was due mainly to the fact that The Register-Guard and Radio Station KORE has announced that the rescue work would be handled by the local office of the U. S. Engineers. The local Red Cross insisted that all calls should be routed through its office and that rescue work should be under the direction of its disaster chairman, Ford Northrop.

All's well that ends well, and somehow the work got done, but with heavy snow on the ground, reports of warm chinook rains moving in from the south to create danger of another "flash flood," Howard Merriam, Lane county's defense coordinator, attempted Thursday at the suggestion of the Register-Guard, to call a meeting of officials and agencies most concerned, to straighten out in advance all details of who should do which and why.

Invited were representatives of the Red Cross, the U. S. Engineers, the county sheriff, the state police, civilian defense leaders, reporters. The Red Cross declined to attend, thereby making it impractical to hold the meeting. The reason for the Red Cross attitude, as stated by Miss Grace Jackson, executive secretary, is:

"The Red Cross for more than sixty years has been chartered by Congress to have complete charge of all disaster work. There is a written agreement with OGD which gives the Red Cross authority. If anybody is going to call a meeting the Red Cross should be the organization to call it. Mr. Northrop will answer for the disaster committee."

We beg to disagree with that attitude. Flood disasters are much too serious to permit any standing on dignity or official priority. We find on talking to Charles Wiper, county chairman of Red Cross that there may have been some friction also with Merriam during the last flood, making it inappropriate for Merriam to call a meeting and send out invitations. We hold no brief for Merriam. We all "get on each other's toes" at times.

If that is the case, then all the more reason why there should be a meeting, and we don't care who does the calling. We hope the Red Cross will take the responsibility.

We have in this community the remarkable McKenzie boatmen, the state and county and city police and their various defense reserves, the ambulance corps, doctors, nurses, all the facilities to meet any flood emergency. And we now have as a result of the flood control projects, a permanent station of the U. S. Army Engineers, with all of their skill and experience in flood work the country over. They probably know more about these rivers than anybody else can know; they are better informed than anybody to give out advance warnings and to direct the work of physical rescue during floods.

Flood work falls always into two phases:

1. Warning and rescue and physical emergency period.
2. Relief and rehabilitation, the housing, clothing, feeding, rehabilitation of victims.

Because the Engineers will be on the job year after year, we think they are the logical people to direct the first phase of flood work, possibly under the nominal direction of Red Cross. So far as chartering by Uncle Sam is concerned, both are agencies of U. S. government. Our boatmen and others who do rescue work don't care who directs them so long as they know where and when to report and where to go.

If we ever have that major flood which the Engineers say "will come again," we may need to set up some central telephone bureau adequate for the handling of hundreds of incoming and outgoing calls. We mention this only as one of the many details which need to be understood NOW.

It is no time for personal feelings or organization rivalry. We have a high regard for the Red Cross, have worked with it and in it for years. What we have tried to suggest is merely a gathering of leaders which will hold a friendly "critique" on performance in the last flood so that we can have a swifter, better plan of action for the next emergency.

Someone ought to invent an extra leg to stand on when a proud father starts telling about the baby's cute tricks.

The skeleton in a lot of closets is in the basement.

The meaning of an all-out war is becoming clearer and clearer—all out of gas, meat, coffee, etc.

The main reason it isn't wise to have

your elbows on the table is that it's so comfortable you eat too much.

Uncle Sam saved everybody a lot of trouble—made most of their 1943 resolutions for them.

The annual honey crop of the U. S. is about 250,000,000 pounds. Mighty sweet of the bees!

WASHINGTON LETTER
By JOHN W. KELLY

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 22.—THEY are a sober looking lot, those men on the house ways and means committee. They are wondering where on earth they can raise 16 billion dollars in taxes as proposed by the president. Roughly, it means \$123 per capita for each of the 130,000,000 residents of the United States. Of course the tax cannot be spread on a per capita basis because of the varied incomes of the people and, anyway, most Americans would be tickled pink if they could escape by paying no more than \$123. Washington's share on a per capita basis will be \$213,551,493; Oregon's will be \$134,031,132.

Next March the new income taxes will be due. These are levied on the income of 1942. The general public is becoming tax conscious and will be much alive and sensitive to the subject on and after March, 1943. Sometime in the coming 12 months congress will have evolved a new tax bill to raise the 16 billion dollars on the income of this year, and collections will begin in March, 1944. Those taxes will be terrific. About four months after the people begin paying taxes next year the national nominating conventions will be held. Without going into details as to possible nominees, the Republicans are satisfied that the taxes next year will swing millions of voters to the Republican side. Politics creep into every discussion in the national capital.

The war budget for fiscal year 1944, which starts July 1, 1943, is in excess of 104 billion dollars. This is five times more money than England will spend; three times as much as Germany will spend; twenty times as much as Japan will spend, and about the same proportion to what Italy will spend. Of course what makes the war cost the American taxpayer so much is that the United States is the "arsenal of democracy" and as such pledges have been made that this country will furnish tanks, planes, guns, ammunition, food and clothing to our associates in this global war, plus American soldiers on all battlefronts. And to move these supplies and men means more merchant ships and transports.

REDUCED to fundamentals, the new tax bill has two objectives. (1) Pay as much as possible toward the cost of the war. (2) Leave the people as little money to spend as possible to prevent inflation, which is another way of saying the high cost of living.

It is estimated by the president that there will be only about \$500 worth of goods and services available per person for the civilian population. With high wages in war industries there can and will be competition for these goods and services; not everyone can enter the competition, but a sufficient number may to run the price beyond the reach of persons with average income. This is one of the things the administration hopes to prevent by tapping the purse heavily through various types of taxation.

Compulsory savings, considered and discarded a year ago, has bobbed up again. This would be a tax to make people save whether or not they wanted to; money withheld by the boss and turned over to the federal treasury to be returned to the involuntary saver some years after the war. It would work somewhat similar to the Victory tax, which takes 5 per cent of the salary at the source and some day a percentage will be refunded. (A minister protests that his church is being used as a collection agency when the treasurer is directed by the internal revenue bureau to deduct the Victory tax from the clergyman's salary). It is a fairly safe bet that compulsory savings will be a part of the new tax program principal question to decide is the percentage to withhold. It is claimed that approximately one-half of the 16 billion dollars can come from compulsory savings.

WITH new taxes to be gathered this year there will be a great increase in the number of government employees. Thousands will be hired to handle income tax returns and keep track of the Victory tax. A senate committee which is watching the up-building of all agencies in government and noting the increased cost is preparing to curtail new employment to the minimum.

In the course of the months to come, as appropriation committees hold hearings, it is almost a certainty that the president's budget will be whittled down a few billion dollars. Present reaction against the fiscal 1944 budget is that, by comparison with what all other nations are spending in the war effort, it looks as though Uncle Sam is an untidy too big hearted for his own good. (A government official is sounding out members of congress whether the people will adopt two meatless days a week in order