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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.

\$400,000,000 To "Halt Communism"

"Do you recall the 'lend-lease' program which Franklin D. Roosevelt initiated in the summer and fall of 1941—BEFORE Pearl Harbor. Congress finally passed the act on October 28, 1941, and it authorized our government to aid any nation whose defense the President might 'deem vital to the defense of the United States.'"

President Truman's message to Congress asking \$400,000,000 to help Greece and Turkey "resist communism" is in direct parallel with the "lend-lease" by which we sought to stop the aggressions of Hitler, Mussolini and the Jap warlords without engaging in war ourselves.

President Roosevelt did not mention Germany, Italy or Japan. President Truman does not mention Russia now. But everybody knows what he means. The Russians have recalled their ambassadors at Washington and London for "consultation." That does not mean that diplomatic relations have been severed, or that they will be. The conferences at Moscow and at Lake Success will struggle on. But we think the American people should realize the gravity of the situation!

We are dangerously near a break with Russia!

There will be loud outcries in the United States against the policy which President Truman and his advisers propose. We have a great many people who are Communists, others who are "party members" who believe sincerely that we MUST "get along with Russia." During the mid-thirties there were many who felt the same about Germany, Italy and Japan. It took a long time for the American people to realize that we could not let the dictators crush the "little peoples" without being crushed too.

If it had been possible to mobilize American opinion against Hitler in time, it might never have been necessary to fight World War II.

How far does the same reasoning apply to our misunderstandings with Russia?

Is Russia actually an "aggressor" in the Balkan and Mediterranean areas?

Is the Russian type of "aggression" any worse than the "domination" practiced by our ally Britain in those areas, or by France in Indo-China or Holland in Java and Sumatra.

Is there any essential difference between the "totalitarianism" of Russia and that of Hitler or Mussolini, because it is "proletarian"?

But the only question that really matters is: Can we prevent another disastrous war by taking a firm stand NOW?

Any nation which by itself can control the Mediterranean can eventually dominate all of Europe and probably all of Africa and Asia—approximately seven tenths of the world's total resources in materials and man power. Hitler had that figured out.

But what about England's centuries of domination in the Mediterranean and India?

The British have never had actual control. They have lived by juggling 'the balance of power.' The Russians use a most forceful technique.

But maybe the people, the masses in Greece and Turkey actually want communism, would vote for it if we and the British would stop meddling?

Who knows? One thing certain is that there can be no determination in Greece or Turkey by any other means than force, unless or until people in those countries can be fed and clothed and some semblance of order restored. That is what Truman proposes to do with \$400,000,000.

Isn't that a job for United Nations, not for any one country?

Right! But United Nations hasn't been able to set up any effective police organization; it has no funds, no practical plans, and the crisis is immediate.

It is our belief that President Truman's proposal must be SUPPORTED. Perhaps it should be provided that as soon as possible all duties of this nature should be transferred to United Nations. By all means there should be no break with Russia, on our part, and it should be emphasized that we do not intend to meddle with Russia in Russia, but that we shall insist that the Russians stop "crowding."

TIME: The world needs time to straighten out all its troubles. Uncle Sam is sort of like the cop who must say:

Stand back and give the little guy some air! It's a tough job, a dangerous one. They will accuse US of aggression and forcing our ideas on unwilling people. But as President Truman points out we spent \$341 billion to stop Nazi aggression (and too many lives). We are willing to "play ball" with anybody who will play with us, but the Russians have shown very little willingness to play except by their own rules.

We have the very high hope that, with time and fair play, most of the troubles of the world can be solved, but we do not need to apologize for being perfectly selfish in our policy.

We do not want to fight another BIG WAR over and if a little money and muscle now will

prevent such a disaster, it's worth the cost.

It will help greatly to understand the situation in Greece and Turkey if we think back a few years. We could have nipped Hitler, Mussolini and the Jap warlords in the bud—IF we had had the courage and intelligence to act promptly.

Riddles In Tax Valuations

It is perfectly evident from Roch Bradshaw's articles on Lane County "tax valuations" that our county assessor or any other would have to combine the talents of Houdini and Hitler to make the "tax structures" conform to the necessities of rapid growth and economic change. Our Mr. Stock might covet Houdini's "magic" but he wants none of the late Hitler's attributes.

In the Eugene area we can ponder this riddle:

Population has increased over 50%,
Bank deposits have multiplied 55%,
Building permits show a dollar value 39% greater than 10 years ago, but—
Assessed valuations have increased only 28% and, and—
There are endless inequities, house to house, farm to farm which elude assessors.

Now, of course, if all assessments were raised uniformly, all local tax RATES would drop in proportion but the DOLLARS each property owner would pay would remain the SAME. So there is no net gain there. The real problem is to CORRECT INEQUITIES and PREVENT ESCAPES and that is an appalling task.

Some years ago we made a detailed study of tax structures, 1930 to 1945, and put them in color charts copies of which may be had at the Chamber of Commerce. Those studies showed plainly that during the last post-war boom, taxable valuations ROSE but with a big LAG behind business increase. And after depression hit, there was another LAG. Business hit bottom in 1932-33 but tax valuations did not hit bottom till 1935. Perhaps it would be stated as "law."

Tax valuations always lag behind current economic trends.

We believe we can state several other "laws" affecting property tax structures:

In any "urban area" the central business district will provide 30 to 50 percent of taxable valuation and revenue.

Residential properties do not and cannot pay enough tax to cover costs of public service till after a long period of years.

In any urban area the "high value tax" must be included to get a balanced tax structure. But if the entire Eugene-Springfield area were welded into one unit for "tax equalization" there would remain in our mind this question:

Is the property tax, as it has come down to us from the pioneers, any longer an efficient or an equitable tax method?

"Ability to pay" is now the generally accepted guide in taxing. When George Washington was a boy, the number and kind of acres a man owned or the size of his holdings was perhaps a pretty fair index of "ability to pay." In our modern urban and industrial set up it is almost impossible to "appraise" with any degree of accuracy or equity. An army of assessors' deputies could not possibly keep pace with all the changes in an area as big and as complex as have county. Sometimes this "revolutionary" question runs through our studies:

Could property tax, as we know it now, be abandoned and a type of "service charge" be substituted, graduated according to services delivered to any given property, and could all other taxes be based strictly on EARNINGS? We do not agree with those extremists who would "exempt home owners," but we recognize that property tax as it is commonly applied today is a handicap on home ownership.

John Smith builds a new six-room home to get a roof over his head. Luckier Bill Jones has a six-room home built 15 years ago. John may pay twice as much property tax as Bill, for identical services: roads, schools, police and fire protection. In either case there is no income from the property, and the tax is a payment for services, a "use" or "privilege" tax. But there is no equity in the charges. Nor can the assessor do more than guess at the "market values" on which he bases "taxable value." Not till a sale is made or recorded can any part of "unearned increment" be captured.

We have raised a lot of questions. We do not profess to know answers. Legislators and voters must act. In the meantime our Mr. Bradshaw seeks to show the distortions and inequities in our property tax structures and the assessor chases the "escapes," and revenues for counties, cities, schools is far short of needs, and home builders hesitate to build.

The tax is only a small item in the total cost of a home, but added to the payments and interest on the mortgage, it builds up "the rent" and often where income is small, the total becomes prohibitive. The orderly growth of cities is made difficult because many flee to "fringes" to seek at best, temporary escape from a property tax system which puts penalties on home owning and citizenship. The assessment system needs doctoring, but whatever is done will be only about as effective as a corn plaster. It will relieve the pain a little bit. The "shoes" do not fit.

"Morse Not Ready With Labor Bill" says headline, and McGurk suggests that when he is the cannery whistle should give three long toots. Our Senator can give his own "toots."

Some food heats the blood, a doctor observes. And sometimes the price of it makes the blood boil.

Scouting Executive Pledges Steadfast Adherence to Ideal

Whatever lies ahead for this nation and the world, the Scouting movement will meet it with the same spirit in which it forged through two wars and a depression, stated E. Urner Goodman, Wednesday night, addressing the final meeting of the annual conference of Layman Boy Scouts of America at the Eugene Hotel.

"While the Scouting way is essentially that of a simple game, it is inevitably bound in with the vital issues of the day," said Goodman, who is national director of the Scout-program division.

Goodman has been connected with the Scout movement almost from its beginning. He has served as Scout Executive of Philadelphia from 1917 to 1927 and Scout Executive of the Chicago council from 1927 to 1931.

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Chickens Out To Keep Pace

What are chickens coming to these days? The Republicans have taken over Congress, trans-Atlantic airlines are losing navigators through bubble canopies and the chickens are going wild.

Right on top of a Rt. F chicken egg that is large enough to have been the product of an ostrich comes a report from Mrs. E. R. Stratton, 1630 High St., Eugene, that her husband purchased a dozen large white eggs, one of which had another egg within it, complete with soft shell.

The outside egg was white and the inside egg appeared brown; the outside egg was about three inches long and three inches around.

To strengthen her story, Mrs. Stratton said she got two shells, two whites and two yolks.

Record Lime Tonnage Used in West Oregon

A record tonnage of lime will be used this year to sweeten the sour "disposition" of acid soils in western Oregon, E. H. Miller, chairman of the state PMA committee, has predicted on the basis of early orders and deliveries to farmers under the 1947 agricultural conservation program.

Up to 90,000 tons of lime will be used by Oregon farmers this year, Miller estimates. This will be the highest tonnage ever applied—double that used in 1946, and 60 times the annual tonnage of 10 years ago, when AAA program assistance was first offered to farmers for application of lime as a soil building practice.

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Employment Worker Joins Security Office
Miss Ethel Allen, Oregon State Employment Service worker, announced Wednesday that she would accept a position with the social security office in the post-office building March 24. Miss Allen is in the claims department at OSES.
Joe Grammon, also a former OSES worker who took a position with social security, has been replaced by Millard McFarland, recent University of Oregon graduate from Cottage Grove. McFarland spent

43 months in the Army. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in economics last December. He is employment security deputy for OSES.

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