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Who'll Save the Alcohol Plant?

It is not surprising that local lumbermen turned down flatly the proposition of a group of Milwaukee promoters by which the local men would come in for 48 percent of the \$500,000 needed to bid in the alcohol plant at Springfield, leaving the "furriners" with 52 percent and control.

What is really surprising is that to date the efforts to raise the \$500,000 in this area have produced only about \$187,000. This plant at Springfield seems to offer to the lumber industry a chance to spread out into the field of chemical production and waste utilization which could stabilize their operations.

"For the third time lumber is passing up opportunity in its own field. It missed out on paper, on rayon, and now it is missing out on chemicals and alcohol."

It would be gratifying if a group of local patriots could take this plant, make the necessary mechanical changes and make a go of it, keeping all the profits at home so to speak. However, the community must take a broader view. Actually the community must say: "We don't care who takes this plant or where he comes from, so long as he is a bona fide operator who means business—and NOT a stock jobber or speculator."

If this first plant can be made to succeed, many like it will follow. The community will still get the benefit of the payrolls and the saving of materials which now go to the burners.

It is not difficult to understand why lumbermen are timid. Newspaper publishers and book publishers both use the same basic machinery and materials, but the industries are distinct, requiring entirely different talents and experience. We don't hope to see "sawdust savages" transformed into Duponts or Grassellis who have been chemists for generations.

But investors and owners do not have to be operating experts, and the failure of the campaign to enlist local capital leads us to one of two conclusions:

- 1. Our lumber magnates are not as rich as they are commonly supposed to be, or
2. No convincing program for operation of the plant has been set up by the promoters.

The mechanical corrections needed at Springfield are not serious, probably would not require more than half the \$500,000 needed to take over the property. With industrial alcohol selling above \$1 per gallon a plant which has demonstrated that it can produce at 25 cents per gallon should be better than a good gamble.

There may not be time before the August 20 deadline to revamp the plans of the new Industrial Alcohol, Inc., but our guess is that the \$500,000 could be found locally and quickly, if the plans for carrying on were definite, detailed and backed by the judgment of leaders who command confidence.

In the House That Jack Built

"This is the House that Jack Built! This is the Malt that lay in the House that Jack Built."

In today's reader editorial, we have an interesting contribution from R. S. Nicholson on high prices and inflation. He is pretty sure he has found the RAT that has been eating the Malt in our economic structure.

We don't know just why this old nursery jingle popped into mind (with a little help from Rhoda Banks) upon reading this letter—unless it is because what we call Economics is a sort of "rat race."

Unfortunately, we do not reach the same happy conclusion of the nursery rhyme: "This is the priest all shaven and shorn, who married the man all tattered and torn, who wed the maid all lone and lorn, who milked the cow with the crinkled horn, who hooked the dog that chased the cat that ate the rat that ate the malt that lay in the House that Jack Built."

There is a question which we would put to Mr. Nicholson and others who attack along the line of farm bloc and farm subsidies and government spending:

"What would be the effect on Oregon's economy if the potato subsidy were withdrawn, having in mind our important Klamath, Deschutes and Ontario potato growing areas? What if the wheat and grain markets are not supported in the coming year as a result of this year's surplus?"

The METHODS of support may be waste-

ful and open to criticism, but in our lifetime we have seen paradoxical disasters:

Surplus years when farmers dumped their grains into rivers or burned it as fuel. DROUGHT and shortage years as in '34 which were almost a national disaster. Labor chases the RAT of corporate greed; management says labor is eating up the Malt; nearly everybody blames somebody else for the inflation rat race.

Our American economy cannot be separated from the economy of the rest of the world, and that produces complications which make the price of porkchops even harder to understand. On V-J Day we began kidding ourselves that the war was over, and now we have the "cold war" which is getting hotter every minute.

"Do we want to disarm? Do we want to abandon our vast projects for power development, flood control, roads, schools and internal improvements? Do we want to give up our automobiles, our liquor, our movies, our radios and television sets, our 'beauty parlors'?"

The simple life might be the answer to a lot of these problems, maybe that won't come till after the "atomic war," and then if there is "a priest all shaven and shorn to marry the man all tattered and torn who weds the maid all lone and lorn"—well, they'll be saying:

"We'll have to build something better for our children."

Jack shouldn't have left his malt lying around for the RAT to get at. As everybody nowadays knows, before building his house, Jack should have eaten his "Wheaties."

Authoress of "Forever Amber" says her life with Bandleader Artie Shaw outdid anything she ever dreamed up for "Amber." In our old bones, we have an ache which says another bum novel's coming.

When you see "bullets" in a report of a Tennessee election it is not a typographical error.

Ajax McGurk has it figured out that if you can hang on till after Labor Day, the vacation season will be over.

There is just a touch of fall in the air—time to buy season tickets for the home games and rainchecks for the Rose Bowl.

Most of the birdies still are picked up at the 19th hole.

Scantier bathing suits are getting by this year—just barely!

Some men don't seem to realize that it's the auto that's supposed to have the pickup.

Home is a place where some men go to rave because something went wrong at the office.

No question a youngster asks is silly—unless the parents can't answer it.

Here's an earful that will please everybody: watermelon is here again.

Reader Editorial

GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION TO "BOOM" EUGENE — (To the Editor) — In the Register-Guard recently, much space on page one was devoted to the details of a story headed "Women Call Buyer Strike."

The gist of the story was that a group of Eugene women, sincerely motivated, but sadly lacking in knowledge as to the true cause of present high food costs, were launching a seven-day "buyers' strike" against the high cost of meat.

We all wish that by such simple action by housewives throughout the nation, the high cost of living could be brought under control. But any thinking person realizes that their efforts will be futile, and their "buyers' strike" soon forgotten.

Until the American people can grasp the real reason for present high food prices—the government "crop-support" program and "parity prices"—they will continue to grapple unrealistically with symptoms and not with the real cause.

"Time," the weekly newsmagazine, in the August 9th issue, pointed out how the Department of Agriculture robs the American taxpayer and keeps food prices high by citing one commodity—plain, ordinary potatoes.

Last year, the federal government paid farmers forty million dollars to support potato prices. Twenty-two million bushels, bought at high prices with taxpayers' money, were allowed to rot last year while consumers "groused at high prices."

This year, to keep the price of potatoes high, and enrich the farmers, the federal government is buying surplus potatoes from farmers at \$1.55 a bushel (plus paying freight, which averages another 40 cents a bushel) and selling them to manufacturers of "potato flour" for only nine cents a bushel. The only condition is that the buyers make the flour which the government will use to feed occupied Germany.

To give the "potato flour" manufacturers further incentive, the government assures them a profitable market by buying the "potato flour" back from them for around \$25.60 per hundred pounds—five times what it has to pay for wheat flour!

Meanwhile, artificially stimulated by the federal government, the retail price of potatoes stands at \$2.60 a bushel, twice the 1941 price.

Fantastic! It is so fantastic as to be virtually unbelievable. The clerks, mechanics, professional men and housewives pay at both ends: high taxes to enable the government to carry out its program to benefit one group, the farmers, and, ultimately, in buying the food which the government uses their taxes to build stills under.

So, you see, girls, your real efforts should be expended, not in "buyers' strikes," but in effecting a wholesale congressional housecleaning in Washington, D. C. and busting the "farm bloc" which bends senators and congressmen to its selfish ends.

R. S. NICHOLSON, 2662 Potter St., Eugene, Ore.

South Willamette Region Ponders Disposal Problem

By TED GOODWIN Some 500 householders in the South Willamette district Friday could ponder three courses of action outlined in a meeting Thursday night when about 175 of their number met at the Dunn School to discuss the legal quandary caused by the annexation last May of a part of the South Willamette Sanitary District to the city of Eugene.

With a part of the district in the city and most of it still outside, the district can:

1. Dissolve and start over. A course of action which will further delay any chance of getting sewers built in the area where sewage disposal problems have reached a critical point.

2. Seek annexation of the entire district to the city of Eugene and wait for sewers to be built in the regular course of the extension of city utilities. . . possibly more than a year from now.

3. Proceed to launch the bonding program for the sanitary district as if nothing had happened, as far as the part already annexed is concerned, and operate under the sanitary district organization toward the actual construction of a sewer system until stopped or approved by a court ruling on the status of the district.

Both of the two latter courses of action will probably require a state supreme court ruling before bonds can be sold, the meeting was told by Attorney William S. Fort, Which Quickest?

Still unanswered: Which plan will bring sewers to the district soonest?

City Manager Deane Seeger, invited to explain the advantages and disadvantages of merging with Eugene, told the meeting that the city could not promise sewers cheaper or sooner than they could be provided by the sanitary district, but that annexation may solve most of the legal problems involved.

District Attorney C. E. Luckey gave the opinion that if the sanitary district proceeded under its present authority, a test case would be brought in the courts and eventually the state supreme court would rule on whether or not the district can assess the property owners already in the city.

There were two things on which everyone agreed. The area is manifestly unsuited for existing septic tanks and sewers must be had. Also, the nearby garbage dump must go. Seeger said it was on the way out, and that the city is moving as rapidly as possible toward obtaining a new site, some three and a half miles south of town.

At meeting's end, two major factions appeared. The larger group, mostly small householders, was rallying around Realtor Otis V. Gilmore in support of a move to petition the city council at its Aug. 23 meeting for an annexation vote on the November ballot.

Opposition The opposition to the annexation move centered in Charlie Witham, who fears that his stables might be zoned out of business, and L. A. Wirtz, of the new \$125,000 drive-in theater. For a number of reasons, but mainly because of the three-percent city amusement tax, the theater management prefers the "country."

In addition to the businesses which would be materially affected by annexation to the city, a number of long-time residents of the area, many of whom have small farms, will resist any form of annexation that may cost them their cows, horses, and other livestock.

Most of these people were farming the area when Eugene was an hour's drive by team and wagon, or are people who moved "out in the country" in order to enjoy the privileges of keeping livestock. Gilmore planned to circulate petitions this week and invited others in the district who wanted to seek annexation to help get signatures before the Aug. 23 council meeting.

Householders After that meeting, it will be too late to get the annexation measure on the November ballot, but a special election could be held later. The householders, who want sewers as soon as possible, prefer action now.

Throughout the meeting, there was general feeling that "too much time has been lost already." Most said they didn't care which course of action was taken, as long as it would bring sewers to the area at the earliest date.

Annexation to the city will take time, and then there is no guarantee of immediate construction. On the other hand, proceeding as a sanitary district will require litigation and delay.

No one Thursday night could tell which would be the quickest. Other Angles Other things being equal, it was believed that the city could provide sewers at about the same cost to the homeowners, and in addition, would provide a number of other advantages. These include reduced fire protection costs, police protection, street lights, reduced utilities costs, which in general more than offset the increase in taxation.

District Commissioners E. Dodge and Robert Willan presided at the meeting. Howard Smith of the city-county health office spoke on the need for prompt action, and a number of speakers from the floor were heard.

Daughter of First Governor Protects Old Place Names

Anne Whiteaker of Eugene, daughter of Oregon's first late governor, traced some of the early history of the state for Realty Board members Wednesday noon. Miss Whiteaker is the daughter of John Whiteaker, the man who became Oregon's first governor after it was admitted to the union. She said her father handled his state business from their farm at Pleasant Hill, because there was no state house at Salem.

The pioneer woman told Realty Board members how four Montana Indians went to St. Louis in search of the Book of Heaven during the Northwest's early days, and how their trek resulted in the bringing of religion to the new country.

She recalled how Senators Linn and Benton, for whom neighboring counties are named, fought in Washington for the admission of Oregon as a state.

Miss Whiteaker was born on Spencer Creek six miles west of Eugene and was reared on the family farm between Pleasant Hill and Creswell. A wiry little woman with a candid memory for dates and names, she said "it makes me mad" to hear some of the old Oregon names mispronounced.

For instance, she said, people pronounce Row River like they "row a boat."

"That's all wrong. They had a row there and one man was killed. That's how the river got its name."

"Sladden Park is not pronounced Slaydon," she noted, adding that it was named for a Mr. Sladden.

Miss Whiteaker lives at the Osburn Apartments, and she said making a speech to a group of men and women was "quite a change from my little apartment."

"There were no combined efforts for the betterment of Oregon from a governmental standpoint for a great many years," she noted.

"Oregon's future will be what we make it."

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Journalism School Hears of Two Men News of two former University of Oregon journalism school members was received Friday. Hillier Kriehbaum, former associate professor, has joined the journalism faculty at New York University where he has been teaching part-time since February. Vishnu V. Oak, former student, is author of "The Negro Newspaper," a critical study published by Wilberforce University, Oak received his bachelor's degree in Journalism from Ohio State and has since taken four other degrees from various universities. Education ranks third among public expenditures in the United States. A. W. Mortensen Co. Steam BOILERS Eugene 6041 Portland VE 5185

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