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 The Register-Guard's policy is the complete and impartial publication in its news pages of all news and statements on 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, fair and helpful in the development of constructive community policy.

**Interpreting "The Soviet Man"**

An unusually interesting journalistic effort is an issue of a new fortnightly magazine called "The Reporter" which seeks to give this "western world" of ours an interpretation of "The Soviet Man." The editors say:

"We don't go into the ideological problems of Communism... we do try to see the Soviet regime through the human beings it has molded. There are about 193 million of these human beings. Ideologists may change their tunes... but the Soviet Man is a more enduring, formidable fact, perhaps the most important fact of our contemporary life..."

So they present a series of swift-running sketches, by people who have lived the Russian life. They endeavor to show us the Russian child in school, the artisan in his daily routines in state factory and state-owned apartment house; the peasant and his wife at their labors on the collective farm and on their own little garden plot; the common soldier, on and off duty; the famous artist who represented the highly favored "intellectual class"; the high-ranking official of party and government.

Most revealing, perhaps, is George Fischer's account of his progress through the Soviet schools, until his father, an American correspondent brought him to the United States in 1939. Till he arrived in America, the boy had only one ambition—to be a tank commander in the Red Army, but—

"Becoming a Red Army officer was more than merely the adventurous, glamorous, and popular thing to do. I had another motive—one that is fostered as carefully among Soviet children as getting ahead on one's own is among Americans. That is the creed that nothing is so sacred, attractive, and rewarding as service to "the cause." This means service to the state, and to the cause of Socialism and its Soviet fatherland for a better and happier world."

George was in the Russian schools during the period of the great "purge." To appreciate how completely the minds of the very young can be warped:

"When the father of my closest friend, a veteran member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, was arrested, the boy was burning mad. But his anger was aimed—at the time, anyway—only at the rudeness and harshness of the secret-police officials who had arrested his parents and kept him from them. The sixteen-year-old daughter of the Commissar for Foreign Trade did not show her feelings upon her father's arrest. Soon thereafter, at a mass meeting of the whole school, she made the usual statement renouncing all ties with him, a proven enemy of the people and of her beloved Soviet government."

"At the height of the purges, my mother raised a question about a family friend, a devoted Communist official, whom my brother and I idolized. Suppose, she asked, this man were found by the Soviet government to be a spy. My unhesitating answer was that I would merely be surprised at how cleverly the enemy in our ranks was able to disguise himself."

But is it possible to command the thinking of people all through life even by this process of rigid indoctrination in early youth? The answer in the "portraits" of adult Russians is "NO!". Even in Russia there is the germ of a healthy skepticism. And there is a very real and often expressed desire for freedom of speech and thought as we know those things. But there is a lingering predilection, as evidenced in the statement of the Russian DP in Germany who asked not to be returned to his native land for a while:

A young mechanic from Dnepropetrovsk, who was not going back at once, told me this: "Life in Russia is unbearable, and that is why I have not returned home. You do not know what it means to live in constant fear of deportation to a labor camp and not to be able to speak one's mind." Yet he planned to return home eventually: "Life is nice here in the West," he went on. "I can talk to my heart's content. But it is a silly and degrading business to work for the private profit of another man, and not for the good of the community. I cannot understand this either. It will be a nice diversion to stay here, but I think I will have to go back. If only they gave us some freedom, there would be no country in the world better than ours."

The effort to interpret the Russian people to the rest of the world is significant and praiseworthy. Nobody can read these simple accounts of how Russian people live and think without saying to himself:

"There but for the grace of God go I." The problem of Russian relations is not new. It is as old as the hills. It is the problem of getting behind the barriers of "governments" and self-perpetuating ruling groups to an understanding of human beings. The Russian child is taught definitions of "freedom" and "democracy" which do not coincide with ours. The Russian people are being taught to hate us and our institutions and that is a danger which we must seek somehow to avoid.

**We Owe Claude a Dinner**

When the League of Oregon Cities was meeting in Eugene last fall, Claude Gerlach, then mayor of Springfield, offered to bet a good dinner if Springfield—then sweating out a 96.4 tax rate didn't go into the coming year with a lower rate than Eugene. Thanks to the Springfield Chamber's energetic campaign for revaluation and County Assessor George Stock's thorough-going job in the Springfield area and rigid economy in city and school operations, the Springfield rate has been hacked down to 58.3 compared with

Eugene's 72, so it's up to us to say along with congratulations:

"Come and get it, Claude. The steak will be thick, and how do you like it done?" The real problem in assessments is to capture new values as they develop and of course to prevent escapes. What John Citizen actually pays in dollars is not actually changed by a mere change in the ratio of assessment because if the valuations are uniformly low, the rates will be high or the reverse. Springfield's complaint last year was that even on our assumed 50 per cent of market value, much property in that area was appraised far below that point and some not at all. This, of course resulted in distortion of the rate and a heavy burden on those whose appraisals had been brought up to date.

No doubt there will now be some loud complaints that Springfield valuations have been placed too high, but as we understand it Mr. Stock plans to move just as rapidly as he can over the entire county. An analysis of the percentage of increase does not, at this time, give a conclusive picture, but the percentages are interesting.

Taxing Body	1948 Valuation	1949 Increase	Percent
Coburg	79,868	96,404	21
Cottage Grove	1,462,796	1,904,458	30
Creswell	235,430	254,975	8
Eugene	22,112,790	27,113,164	23
Florence	308,804	472,026	53
Junction City	884,920	1,250,096	39
Oakridge	411,020	655,784	110
Springfield	4,197,924	7,454,652	79
Whole County	74,000,000	94,000,000	27

The percentage of increase in the last year is not an accurate index because growth is never uniform. Likewise the percentage of increase is not so marked where the start is made from a large base. Also it is quite likely that Eugene and some of the other areas reflect previous increases due to reappraisal in preceding years.

It should be recognized that Assessor Stock is getting over the ground as fast as he can.

"What will happen if we get into a run of hard times?" There will be re-adjustments just as there were during the '30's, but the process never quite keeps pace with economic changes. The biggest problem at all times is to achieve something like parity in assessments in every part of the county and on every class of property.

**Oakland Tackles Its Parking**

Of interest to those who are wrestling with Eugene's traffic management problems will be a report of the effort now being made in Oakland, California—as summarized in a bulletin of the Commonwealth Club. John G. Marr, director of the Oakland City Planning Commission, gave the results of a fact finding inquiry:

Oakland's central business district comprises 212.4 acres—a space actually not greater than Eugene's central business district. In Oakland's central business area, a total of 41.6 acres is devoted to off-street parking—or about 20 per cent. Oakland has 12,868 parking spaces in the central district, of which 7,800 are off-street and 5,000 at curb. In Oakland, 150,000 people enter the central business district during 8 business hours; this figure includes 15,000 employees. Six additional off-street parking areas have been recommended to the City Council. Also recommended is the earmarking of 50 percent of all parking meter revenues for off-street parking acquisition.

Mr. Marr reported that neighboring cities in the Bay area—Richmond, Hayward, Alameda, San Leandro—are busy developing both public and privately owned parking facilities (developing their trade at the expense of bottle-necked San Francisco). The summary does not include any reference to Mass Transportation, but an intensive study on this problem is being made for the entire Bay area.

Evidently Mr. Marr came in for the usual lively question period, as to whether publicly owned parking facilities would violate "free enterprise," as to the use of parking meters as a taxing device and not merely for traffic regulation.

Mr. Marr put "the clincher" on the arguments in this exchange:

Q. Is it not true that if NO PARKING were allowed on the streets in the central districts, it would greatly reduce the parking problem?  
 A. Cities MUST provide public parking facilities in the central districts if property values and public volume are to be maintained.

In other words, it doesn't matter whether the job gets done with public or private funds, it must be done, if cities are to hold their importance. The horse and buggy is gone. The motor age must be served.

A Buffalo man lets his hair grow because he says haircuts give him heart trouble. One more raise from the barbers and we may have that, too.

A philosopher advises us to have a daily hour of meditation. The tip isn't needed by people who wait for busses.

In hot weather, advises a doctor, find a good spot and sit tight. But he doesn't mean it the way you're taking it.

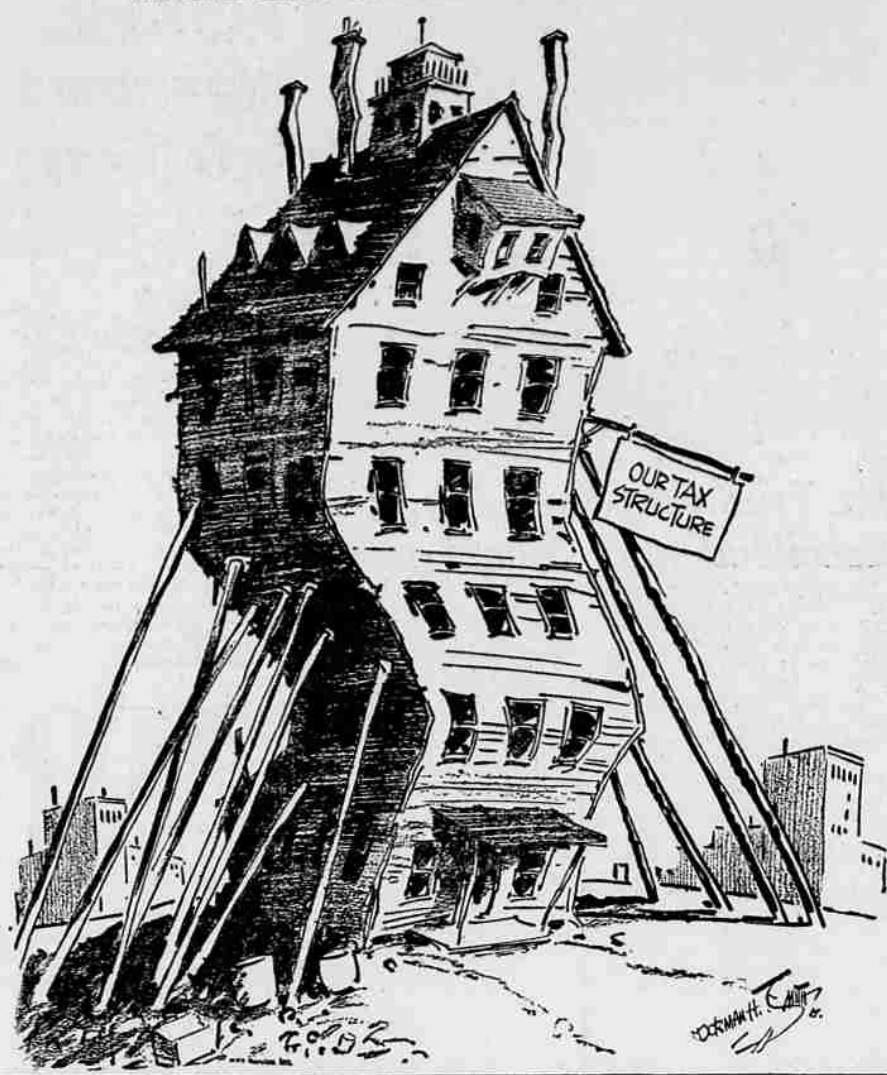
One of the easiest ways to keep your friends is not to say exactly what you mean.

Biologists devote a great deal of time to cell life—criminal courts too little.

If you're afraid to take any chances you get what's left by those who aren't.

Some people's favorite fractions are fifths.

**Another Slum Clearance Problem to Be Solved**



**In The Editor's Mailbag**

**REQUEST**  
 EUGENE—(To the Editor)—Shouldn't the Register-Guard make its readers more aware of the danger to American civil liberties inherent in the Mundt-Ferguson Bill now before the Senate Judiciary Committee?

According to this bill, an administrative board, something like the present President's Loyalty Review Board, can blacklist organizations as "Communist fronts" and compel them to register as "Communist" organizations and to turn in their membership lists, etc. The present loyalty board has listed some hundred and fifty. Presumably these would be a nucleus, and other organizations would be investigated and added by the new board.

Now the term "communistic" is a very elastic one and is often used by conservatives to brand any change in the existing system. It is hard for someone who is doing very well under the "status quo" to see that the welfare of the whole nation may demand changes. What would a Loyalty Review Board under George III have said about George Washington or even Alexander Hamilton? What would a "thought control" board under President Buchanan have said of Abraham Lincoln? We all remember how Roosevelt's New Deal was "Communistic" to some people.

The present Loyalty Review Board is using, so I have been told, the list of organizations declared subversive by a research economist of the National Association of Manufacturers. Cannot you imagine a still more conservative board declaring subversive any organization designed to change (even by the most constitutional means) the economic and political condition of our people. The danger that a few Communists may join liberal organization is nothing compared to the danger that "thought control" legislation may negate our civil liberties.

As a teacher and voter I hope that the Register-Guard will discuss this issue.  
 Very truly yours,  
 RUTH JACKSON.

**TROUBLE**  
 EUGENE—(To The Editor)—You people want a free press and you have it. But are you doing your duty to the American people. I just got my telephone bill

and note there is \$150 tax. I pay income tax no matter how meager it is. I pay tax on all drugs I use in my business. I pay tax on all my food—as all common citizens. I barely make



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ends meet. Yet I love my country. I am getting old but my life is not too important when our census will be more than 150 million. I fought for my country in one world war and I was proud. I note in the paper that Harry's right hand man is a crook. Why not give him a good term and cut taxes a little.  
 Can any one blame people for going on relief when rotters are wrecking the finest country on this earth.  
 Sincerely,  
 George S. McCord

**UNFAIR!**  
 EUGENE—(To The Editor) It has been rumored that of business people looking for McKenzie River valley timber trade so much more than the lumbering industry have gone to the trouble and expense of employing men as the loggers and trappers would like to remain the loggers and trappers principal and nearly all during the winter months.  
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 By Chas. F.

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