

The American

Re-established, September 13, 1928.
Devoted to the best interests of Central Point and vicinity.
Entered as second class matter at the post office, Central Point, Oregon, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
One year\$2.00
Six Months\$1.00

Payable in advance.
Advertising rates on application.
Office—Second Street, off Main.
ARTHUR EDWARD POWELL,
Editor and Publisher

EDITORIALS

HAL HOSS

This paper has been supporting Hal Hoss for re-election. But the more we see and hear of the man the less we like him. He thinks not only too much of Hal Hoss and not enough of the common working people. Just now he is fighting Governor Meier over the proposal to accept auto license money on the installment plan. Can't the man see that the welfare of the common people of the state should precede all technicalities? Of course, strictly according to law, the license should be paid in full July 1. But under present conditions how can a man who has been out of work all last winter and this spring, raise the money now? He may have a job at present in an orchard or farm but we all know he must furnish his own transportation to and from that job daily.

Is the fact that there is a certain law on the books, to force him to give up that job? We believe, with the governor, that our people have been and are suffering enough now, without adding to their misery on account of a technicality.

Who in this whole state would raise a fuss if the Secretary of State did technically break the law? We believe humanity should stand ahead of mere statutes.

By all means, regardless of the strict letter of the law, let us give all the aid possible to our working people. What if the LAW is cracked? Is this the BIGGEST thing on earth?

We hope our officials will realize the importance of HUMAN RIGHTS and help our people over the hard pull until the harvest time brings work and money to take up these things in due time. Better to break all the archaic laws in existence than to cause one family to lose a chance to make an honest living these days.

We have as much respect as anyone can have for our Constitution and our laws. But above all else in this world stands humanity. We believe Governor Meier is right in his stand for a COMMON SENSE solution of the situation.

IS COURAGE WET OR DRY?

Tense as is the question sometimes whether a political party convention will follow its leaders, a more serious and uncertain question often is whether the voters will follow the convention. This is the interrelation the Democratic national convention has raised by its decision not only to submit but to advocate repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment and modification of the Volstead Act.

The framers of this plank in the platform no doubt believed they were being politically courageous in committing the party to a frank choice of sides on the ultimate issue.

Yet, while the antiprohibition declaration, from a political point of view, may be courageous, the query arises from more than one direction, "Is it wise?"

Is it, for instance, wise to under-

take to compel every Democrat, regardless of loyalty to his party on its more basic policies, and possibly in violation of his inherent moral and patriotic convictions, to array himself against the national prohibition law in order to continue a Democrat? This is more than a question of political expediency, though as such it tends to divide the party on an issue that cuts across party lines and so may render doubtful the prospects of the presidential nominee in otherwise Democratic states of the South and West.

It is a serious question of freedom of conscience in that the plank purports to dictate the opinion of individuals on a subject hitherto held to be nonpartisan and non-political, but rather moral and social. How will millions of dry Democratic voters and scores of dry Democratic congressmen choose as between conscience and party?

Furthermore, is it wise, as a matter of statesmanship among men who have it in their hands to influence the general economic welfare of the nation in an hour of darkness and need, to divert popular attention to the appeasing of thirst instead of the satisfying of hunger? The tendency of the repeal plank is to raise an issue between Democrats and Republicans which need not have been a party matter had both proposed merely resubmission, to shift the heavy firing in the presidential campaign from the really important front upon which a solution of America's economic problems needs to be worked out and to send a raiding party down a side street while the main objective waits.

The facility of repeal as an answer to the economic problem has been shown repeatedly—how it would deprive the farmer of a bigger market for milk than he would gain for grain, how it would give employment to only a fraction of the number claimed by the wets and to those only at the expense of drawing purchasing power away from more beneficial industries, how it would furnish revenue only by tapping the pocketbooks of the poor.

This leads finally to the paramount consideration whether the advocacy of modification and eventual repeal is wise on the intrinsic merits of the question. This involves the effects of prohibition upon not only the industrial activity but also the social well-being of the country. And in this respect is it not possible that those critics who agree the saloon must never return, ought to be more grateful than they are for the progress that has been made away from that institution and from the poisons which made it what it was? The benefits are in plain sight for those who will look with open eyes.

But the attitude of the noisier sections of the wet crowds at both the Democratic and the Republican conventions implied that these elements do not wish to hear or consider reason. Their rowdiness indicates that a large part of the wet campaign depends upon setting in motion an unreasoning and mesmeric swing of sentiment by playing on mob emotion.

A key argument in the repeal dogma is that the prohibition amendment has failed because it has not enlisted, in keeping with expectations, the full cooperation of the states in enforcement, has not induced a continuance of temperance education and has not received popular support in observance. If this is the case, and if it still is agreed—as seems not to be seriously disputed—that beverage alcohol is a social evil, why should not the critics join hands with the efforts to supply these deficiencies?

It may be politically courageous to declare for repeal, but is it not in a higher degree socially courageous to declare for persistence in this greatest reform of the age?

BARGAIN COUNTER ROADS

Like many other commodities roads are now on the bargain table. A fair quality road can be bought for as little as \$2,000 a mile. Prices range up to \$40,000 a mile for the magnificent super-highways designed to carry an excessive amount of traffic. For \$5,000 a mile a general

utility road, of high quality, may be had. These low cost roads are the answer to the farmer's social and transportation problems. They are suitable for all but the heaviest traffic and are as weatherproof, skidproof and generally useful as their more expensive brethren. According to an article in the New York Times, there is a crying need for 1,200,000 miles of such secondary roads—building them is a job equivalent in size and scope to the building of the Panama Canal.

The United States Bureau of Public Roads has published specifications for the ideal farm-to-market road designed to carry between 1,000 and 2,000 cars daily. The beginning is a properly graded and drained 20-foot road bed. A foundation of broken rock, slag or gravel, six inches deep, is then laid. This is compacted by rolling, and a three-inch layer of crushed stone is laid next. Traffic is allowed to hammer this for a time. It is then bituminously treated and smoothed. The final operation is to lay a top layer of stone chips, tied together by asphalt, which provides the skidproof, long wearing qualities required.

Money cannot buy a better secondary road than this—yet its cost varies, depending on the locality, from only \$3,000 to \$6,000 a mile. Such roads, by stimulating tourist travel, puts farms and small and isolated towns on the map.

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To most of us the silver problem seems very far away. But it hits every pocketbook. Depressed price of silver has deprived half the world of a large part of its buying power. It has caused decisive changes in the economic life of entire nations. In addition, it has had the direct result of retrenchment in our mining operations, thus depriving thousands of men of work and forcing drastic cuts on a multitude of related industries.

"Bring silver back" is a good motto for the future.

Copco Declares Regular Dividend

The regular dividend on Copco preferred stock was declared at a meeting of the Board of Directors of The California Oregon Power Company held in San Francisco June 23. Dividends will be paid on July 15 to all shareholders of record June 30.

It is interesting to note that since the first share of Copco preferred stock was issued April 15, 1921 by the California Oregon Power Company dividends have been paid regularly every three months without exception.

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