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ARTHUR EDWARD POWELL
Editor and Proprietor

EDITORIALS



LAUGH THIS OFF

The Quinquennial Report of the Bureau of the Census of Electrical Industries for 1932 is out. It's a rather embarrassing document to whooperups for municipal ownership.

Like all government reports, it is terse, casual and it sticks to the facts. It doesn't deal with theory—it doesn't favor either side of the argument. It simply tells what happened. And the facts, in this case, speak volumes.

In 1932 there were 1802 municipal plants in the country, and 1627 private plants. The municipal plants charged an average of 3.1 cents per kilowatt hour for all power sold by them. The private companies charged 2.7 cents.

Between 1927 and 1932 the rates of private utilities were reduced 19 per cent. The rates of municipal plants were reduced 14.5 per cent.

Municipal plants, according to the report, have done little in developing farm service. The vast majority of rural electrification projects have been carried on and developed by private utilities.

Municipal plants, in 1932, charged an average of 5.6 cents per kilowatt hour for farm service. Private plants charged 2.8 cents—almost exactly the same rate as their average for all types of consumers.

And to all this it should be added that the private utility pays out about 17 per cent of gross revenues for taxes—and municipal plants pay nothing at all.

These are cold, hard, relentless facts that every citizen should know. They require no comment. It is going to be interesting to watch the enemies of private enterprise and private investment attempt to laugh them off.

AMERICAN HIGHWAYS A SHAMBLES

A recent release of the National Safety Council points out that laws to control pedestrians on streets and highways may be necessary, unless walkers themselves take steps to eliminate the pedestrian hazard.

In an average year, about one half of all automobile deaths are suffered by pedestrians. And, contrary to the general belief, the pedestrian is not an innocent bystander run down by a Machiavellian motorist. He is, in a great number of cases, where death or serious injury results, solely to blame.

Larger cities, for the most part, have laws against pay-walking—the practice of crossing streets against the signal bell or lights. Smaller towns may be called upon to pass similar legislation—pedestrian carelessness isn't limited to the metropolitan centers. Again, thousands of accidents are caused by pedestrians walking on the right on highways and roads, where they can't see cars coming up behind them. It is being urged that this offense be made punishable by a fine, precisely as fines are levied against an automobile operator guilty of driving on the wrong side of the road.

There is great need for unremitting, concentrated educational work against automobile accidents, modernization of driving laws, and law enforcement. The American highway is a shambles—over 30,000 killed in 1933—where the reckless, the incompetent and the careless menace the lives and property of us all.

SILVER—THE NEXT STEP

The Presidential proclamation fixing the price of silver at 64½ cents per ounce is, in the view of a number of monetary experts, simply the first important step in bringing the silver problem to a logical conclusion.

The 64½ cent price marks a definite advance over recent silver quotations. But during the last few months there has been a jump in the

value of gold of more than fifty per cent, as part of the government's dollar devaluation policy. The result is that silver, in relation to gold, is actually cheaper than usual. It is the belief of many that the essential thing is the establishment of a definite relation in the values of gold and silver—so that when gold goes up or down, the value of silver will automatically follow. They believe that only in this way can foreign trade be really stimulated, and our lost commerce regained.

This theory, of course, has its expert opponents, precisely as it has its expert advocates. That is an excellent thing—the debate will bring it before the public, and widen our general knowledge of the whole question of money. It is something for every citizen to watch.

A FORTY YEAR OLD PROPHECY FULFILLED

In a recent editorial, the Portland Morning Oregonian quotes a prediction made by Justice Brewer of the United States Supreme Court soon after that body declared the income tax law of 1894 unconstitutional. The Justice made a commencement address on the subject, and in giving it to a young editor for publication said:

"We shall probably have an income tax. They will amend the constitution so as to permit it. None of us are very long remembered, but if I should be remembered at all I should like to be remembered for my position on this question. Let me indulge in a little prophesying, which is said to be a dangerous business. We shall have, as I remarked, an income tax. It will turn out to be the greatest incentive to extravagance the world has ever seen. The boys on Capitol Hill will think that they can put the screws on a comparatively few without endangering their popularity, and they will increase the pressure and squeeze until there is nothing left to squeeze."

Today Congress is working on a bill designed to make the income tax yield \$270,000,000 more a year, at a time when money is vitally needed by industries which provide the nation's payrolls, jobs, taxes, investments. As the Oregonian comments Justice Brewer's prophecy "has been more than fulfilled. Regarding the income tax as an unfailing source of new revenue, congress has indulged in expenditures on new adventure in government until then that tax has proved insufficient, and the government is borrowing billions." The Oregonian might have added that exorbitant income tax or any other kind of tax puts the screws on all of us and makes it more difficult for every person to hold or to find a job. It discourages capital and forces it into non-productive channels, such as tax-free bonds. In brief, it slaps progress in the face.

THE CO-OPS GROW

"Continued growth and improvement in farmers' cooperative associations during the past few years... constitutes one of the hopeful factors in the agricultural situation," says the Dairymen's League News editorially.

"There are now more than 11,000 cooperative associations... actively engaged in business in the United States. The dollar volume of business of these cooperatives last year is placed at \$1,340,000,000..."

"Emphasis is everywhere being directed toward strengthening the organization structure, management and financial positions of existing cooperative associations and in assisting associations inadequately organized and lacking sufficient capital, to meet the present situation."

That is something worth talking about—and it is an indirect tribute to the wisdom, foresight and plain good sense of the average American farmer. During depression a number of the better co-ops, dealing in cotton, dairy products and other goods, have shown what aggressive organizations can do for their members. The steady accelerating growth of the cooperative movement is one of the rightest signs of recovery.

"DEBT CERTIFICATES" GROW

A question which will shortly arise in this country is this: In spending public money for relief and recovery activities, where does the point of diminishing returns occur?

In other words, it is possible to reach a point where the best intentioned activities, simply because of their cost to businesses and individuals, defeat the ends they are designed to further.

The public debt will be the greatest in history by June 30, next, and climb steadily to June 30, 1935, according to present program, when a halt is contemplated. The estimated total Federal debt will then be about \$31,000,000,000.

States and municipalities are similarly burdened. Their position is worse because their credit is obviously much less solid than that of the Federal government. They have spent, collectively, untold billions—

with slight idea of how the money will be repaid. They have frightened investors, property owners, prospective builders of homes and factories and stores. They will suffer for it accordingly—as will workers, taxpayers and the entire public.

When Mr. Roosevelt said that, unless something extraordinary occurred, he meant to begin reducing indebtedness within the year, as all expenditures necessary to his policies would have been made, overwhelming public approval greeted him. That shows which way the wind blows. All ranches of government, down to the smallest hamlet in the land, should take decisive steps to reduce public debt and eliminate the fear of taxation which is rapidly becoming confiscation.

CONSTRUCTION AND RECOVERY

The importance of the construction industry, as an employer of ordinary and skilled labor and as a stimulator of all manner of other industries, is vividly illustrated in statistics published in a recent editorial in the American Builder.

In the years between 1923 and 1926, inclusive, home construction (which amounts to a little more than fifty per cent of the construction industry as a whole in normal times) was a four billion dollar business. It gave employment to several million men actually employed in building, and to as many more in factories, mines and forests supplying necessary materials. Employment was nicely alanced between large cities, small and medium sized towns and rural areas.

In 1929 one-tenth of all gainfully employed workers were engaged in construction. And in 1930, when census figures were taken, there were 167,500 builders and building contractors, 929,400 carpenters, and 34,670 lumber and building material dealers. There were likewise 22,000 architects, 33,700 designers, 170,500 brick and stone masons, 436,000 painters and glaziers, and 240,000 real estate agents.

The nation's normal requirement, to quote the American Builder again is 800,000 new homes each year. At the moment, a tremendous housing deficit exists, due to the almost entire lack of building, particularly in the low and middle cost field, during the past four years, and the abnormally high rates of depreciation and obsolescence caused by insufficient repair and maintenance. Aggressive efforts are now being made to speed home building by making financing cheaper and easier. Success of such a movement is essential to recovery.

Best Features for Oregon Farm Homes

"Soaking the rich too hard and too often would ultimately leave nobody but the poor to pay all the taxes."—Weston, Oregon, Leader.

The country needs honest, well-reasoned opinion—not blind idolatry or partisan ranting on either side.—Industrial News Review.

Information Wanted For U. O. Atlas

EUGENE, Ore.—Compilation of an archeological atlas of the state of Oregon, that some day will tell at a glance the history of races of men who lived in Oregon long before the coming of the white man, is the aim of Dr. L. S. Cressman, professor of sociology of the University of Oregon, he announced today.

Dr. Cressman has already done a great deal of research and exploration in the state, and has discovered some remarkable evidences of ancient life in the Willamette valley, in Southern Oregon near Gold Hill, and at several points in Eastern Oregon. This information will be transferred to the atlas along with findings of other scientists and residents who are interested.

Persons who have found Indian relics, or who know the whereabouts of ancient habitations, camp sites, trails, rock writings, burial grounds or other evidences of older peoples are asked to communicate with Dr. Cressman. Collections of relics will be of special value, he says.

Compilation of the atlas will take many years, it is pointed out, but such a work will have immense value for students of anthropology, history and other fields. Such atlases are now in use in Michigan and other states, Dr. Cressman says, and hundreds of people have helped to furnish information for them.

Correspondence should be sent direct to Dr. Cressman at the University of Oregon. Information on relics or other items of interest found anywhere in the state will be sent by Dr. Cressman upon request.

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Oregon Newspapers Printing Much of Interest of Schools

Oregon weekly and daily newspapers carried an average of 26 column inches, or more than a full column, of public school news in each issue over a period of a month, it was revealed in a recent survey made by students in a class in public information methods conducted by C. J. McIntosh, professor of industrial editing at Oregon State college.

Four issues each of 76 representative newspaper if the state were clipped during one month and the results tabulated, classified and compared with a similar survey made at Columbia university, New York. Subjects given the most space in the two sections of the country tallied fairly closely, with extra-curricular activities such as sports, dramatics, musical events and the like leading with 47 per cent in the east and 59 per cent in Oregon.

Next in order in this state were P-T. A. activities and management and finance, while in the east news of teachers and school officers was second with P-T. A. activities third. The Columbia survey also includes the order of preference as to school news as expressed by parents in a questionnaire circulated widely.

Replies from parents indicated they were interested first in news of pupils' progress and achievement, second in methods of instruction and third in news of pupils' health, while extra curricular activity news was placed in thirteenth or last place.

"It is not as all certain that parents mean precisely what they think they mean about the kind of news they want," says Professor McIntosh in commenting on the results of the two surveys. "Naturally they are interested in progress and achievement, particularly of their own children, but the element of the unusual is essential to news, which is found most largely in sports, plays and other so-called frills theoretically frowned upon but widely read."

"Beyond this, however, editors are faced with running what they can get or none at all, and to the extent school organizations will make it possible for the papers to get well prepared news on school activities apparently desired by parents, the editors will doubtless be most happy to run it."

WEALTH consists not in what you make, but in what you don't spend.

Farm Situation To Be Improved By New Deal Plans

A prospective increase in raw materials prices including farm commodities, better and cheaper credit and less unemployment with consequent better demand for farm products, are foreseen as likely developments in 1934 in the first of the agricultural situation and outlook reports for this year just issued by the economists of the Oregon State College extension service.

This issue, which is the annual review and outlook number put out at the start of each year, has been prepared by L. R. Breithaupt, extension agricultural economist, assisted by A. S. Burrier, associate, and H. H. White assistant economists. It is now available for distribution through any county agent or direct from Corvallis.

Total supply of agricultural products for the coming year is expected to be less but no great improvement in export demand is foreseen at present, hence any material improvement in the economic position of agriculture must come largely from improvement in the home market, the report points out.

Home demand, moreover, depends on the continued flow of income to industrial workers, hence any improvement in business conditions should be reflected in agricultural betterment, even though it brings some advance in farm labor costs and prices of farm supplies.

The new year starts out with farm prices 14 points above the low level reached early in 1933, though it is not equally distributed to all branches of agriculture. Farm purchasing power is not comparably improved because of the advance in prices of things farmers buy. Complete application of the AAA program and other projects designed to adjust production to the probable demand, are expected to balance the temporary disadvantage to agriculture of the price advances under the NRA and similar movements, the review sets out.

The review is illustrated with charts, graphs and tales which help

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...apan Agnew and... stood picture of the agricultural business outlook as the new year starts. It also contains suggestions and aid to farmers in making operating budgets and keeping accounts so as to put their enterprise on a strictly business basis.

No Fatal Accidents In Forests in 1933

Three hundred and ninety-one non-fatal accidents occurred in work of the U. S. forest service in Oregon and Washington during calendar year of 1933, according to report just issued by the region office at Portland, Ore.

Most of the injuries were caused by men falling, slipping, lifting and pulling; the improper use of axes, and the falling of trees and other objects.

The largest number of injuries were to the hands and fingers—in all. Next in order are 40 to heel and toe injuries, followed by some form of injury to 31 eyes, knees and 18 hands. The complete list of injuries reads like an anatomical catalogue, it is said, but one insect bite and 5 cases of oak are recorded.

Largely because of the more favorable fire season, 1933 showed improvement over 1932, during which 2 deaths and 503 non-fatal accidents occurred, according to report for the North Pacific forest region.

Figures on accidents occurring to the enrolled personnel of the conservation corps are not included in this report, as these records are kept by the army.

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