

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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NOT AN EASY POSITION

ANTER ALL, the position of the conscientious legislator is not the most desirable, these days. He is a sort of arbiter between the taxpayer and taxeater. And while most of the appropriations which he is required to pass upon are meritorious, in the aggregate the sum is so great, he knows the burden will be much too heavy for the taxpayer to bear.

With the necessary expense of our administrative and judicial departments of government, our penal and eleemosynary institutions, our state colleges, numerous state commissions, agricultural fairs, etc., a system of government has grown upon us which absorbs a too great percentage of the peoples' earnings. Good government and all that pertains thereto is valuable and, no doubt, desirable; but the matter can be overdone and that point in the government of Oregon seems close at hand, even if it is not already upon us. The expense per capita should not increase faster than the growth of wealth and population but, in Oregon, the expense is two or three times as great as it was two or three decades ago.

The appropriations asked for at the present session, including the necessary expense of running the state government, amount to nearly five million dollars for the biennial period, or two and one-half millions annually. This means more than \$3.50 annually for every man, woman, child, Indian Chinese and Japanese in Oregon. When we add to this, county, municipal, school and road district taxes, the amount is multiplied five or six times. The per cent. of tax levy in many localities of our state, amounts to three and four per cent. of the cash value of the property. Almost anyone will agree that we are paying a price too high, for the benefits we receive. All of these facts the conscientious legislator should and will consider, when he is asked to appropriate the peoples money, especially for purposes not absolutely necessary.

Bills are now before the legislature asking for appropriations as follows: For the two state colleges special appropriations of nearly \$1,000,000; over \$800,000 for the asylum for the insane at Salem, and for the branch asylum in Eastern Oregon more than one-half as much will be required; \$300,000 additional for the locks at Oregon City; \$250,000 for the San Francisco fair; \$100,000 for the Astoria fair; \$125,000 special appropriation for the State fair, and smaller sums ad infinitum for various other purposes are asked. As a matter of fact, all of these appropriations cannot nor will not be granted. Hence, as stated in the first part of this article, the duty of the conscientious legislator is one which is liable to cause him loss of sleep.

His only safe rule is to first fix in his mind the amount of money the people can afford to pay to the state treasury for the conduct of the state government and the various state institutions. From this deduct what is necessary for the conduct of the various branches of the state government and for the maintenance of our necessary state institutions; for money must be provided for these

purposes, at any event. Then what is left of the jackpot can be used for what may be termed, the states' luxuries, such as colleges, fairs, etc.

There is no question but what the people of Oregon are being overburdened with taxeating institutions. Our money is being voted away, in many instances, for purposes which should be supplied from private sources. We must, for the safety and comfort of society, take care of criminals, bad boys, crazy folks, and for those who, through misfortune, must depend upon charity; if they live at all. The cost of the above and of the administrative and judicial departments of our state government are obligatory. Then there are appropriations asked for which are of the nature of an investment. We may or may not make the investment, just as we choose. In which case the only question to consider is, will it pay? Will the people of the state receive benefit commensurate with the expense? Can we afford it.

One fact is indisputable. The state is called upon for too large an amount to build, equip and maintain our state colleges. Counting all expenses in connection therewith, every college graduate from our two leading institutions of learning, costs the tax payers from \$1500 to \$2000 each. And what do the taxpayers get in return therefor?

From the State University, nothing directly. True, we are educating lawyers, doctors, dentists, civil engineers, electricians, etc. But after these men are graduated, they give the state nothing in return for their education. Indeed, if one of them should be employed by the state, he would demand the largest possible salary obtainable. The agricultural college does render the state some little return in the way of technical knowledge of soil, of dairying, of horticulture, etc. But other states receive about as much benefit from this source, as Oregon does, from both institutions.

The fact which the NEWS wishes to emphasize is, the state receives but very little return for the vast sums of money which are being expended. Each of these institutions are asking for about one-half million dollars each, in the way of a special appropriation; this in addition to the continuous appropriation each is receiving, annually. They have had the legislature visit them, have wine and dined the members, for no other purpose than to persuade the members to grant a larger sum than they otherwise would. They are using an undue influence upon the members.

All of these facts are matters which the conscientious legislator should consider. Furthermore, the fact that members from these college counties are working shoulder to shoulder to secure these appropriations, should be equivalent to a word of caution to the outside members. Should an appropriation be voted for either of these colleges, make it contingent upon the particular college county voting an equal amount. Then you will see the demands of the members from these counties drop rapidly. When we know that Lane and Benton counties are receiving back from the state treasury four or five times the amount which they contribute thereto, then the mainspring of the enthusiasm of these members is exposed.

Suppose this more than a million dollars should be added to the public and high school fund? Then every taxpayer, or most of them, would be in a position to receive back, directly, benefits from the expenditure of the fund. Then the merchants of Eugene and Corvallis would enjoy no advantages above those of Albany and Independence. Further, the average knowledge of people of the state would be increased, at least, a small amount; instead of a few students being given a college course and make of them a sort of educated aristocracy.

All of these facts are matters which the legislature should weigh well when special appropriations are asked for. The interests of the taxpayer should be considered, even before those of the taxeaters. The taxeater has no conscience and is always asking for more. He is never satisfied. The taxpayer is limited by his ability to pay. He has a duty to his own family, which should be considered before his duty to the families of other people.

The NEWS does not wish to be considered as opposing higher or college education. On the contrary, it applauds every young man or young woman who is struggling to obtain more than the common or high schools can give. But it is opposed to college educations, if they must be obtained at the expense of the advance of the public schools.

Evidently State Senator Bowerman is a disappointed politician and much of his action at the present session, savors much of "get even" disposition. It is because of politicians of his caliber that the direct primary law was enacted by the people. Men, like he, who are in politics for mere selfish reasons, make excellent private citizens.

THOMAS & SON

Grocery Department

Compare our prices with what you pay elsewhere

Good heavy 4 seam broom	25c	Columbia wheat, per package	30c
Arm & Hammer soda, 5c package, 6 pkgs.	25c	Regular 25 cent package of coffee	15c
3 bottles of mustard	25c	Pop corn, per pound	5c
3 packages of rasins	25c	10 pound best ground meal	30c
9 bars of laundry soap	25c	10 pound graham meal	30c
Best quality of peaches in sanitary tins, per can	15c	Delmonico Preferred stock cane syrup in gallon tins	90c
Best corn syrup, per gallon	45c	We recommend Heinz pickles, Shillings extracts Chase & Sanbourns teas, coffees, Hess Stock Food, Cleveland Baking powders, Preferred Stock canned goods.	
Best corn syrup, half-gallon	25c		
9 pound sack of corn meal eastern, per sack	30c		
Olympic pan cake flour per package	25c		

If any of these goods are not satisfactory, we will refund your money. Give us a trial order and just see what you can save. When you save \$2 on a grocery or dry goods bill, you have earned \$2.00, an ordinary days wages. Begin the New Year Right

DRY GOODS DEPARTMENT

Don't forget this department as it is getting more complete every week. We have just received a large shipment of Overalls, Jumpers and Pants. Yes, we have your size if you are not younger than 3 years or larger than 50 inches waist measure. We have a nice line of fancy up-to-date dress goods. Everything is new. Call and see them.

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General Passenger Agent
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