

THE SCIO TRIBUNE

ISSUED EVERY THURSDAY BY
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ANTI LOBBY LAW IS BADLY NEEDED

Oregon has adopted many reform laws which tend toward reforming and purifying our political methods. But we have, so far, failed to correct activities of the disgraceful and corrupting influence the notorious "Third" house which seems to wield an overpowering influence over the action of our lawmakers. In fact, it is a question which wields the most power in legislative matters, the lobby or the legislature.

No doubt the majority of our legislators go to Salem every two years with the full purpose of standing for the interests of the people. Before the session is half over, however, there seems to be a change in the opinions of many or most of the membership. Why this change? It can only be accounted for by the persuasive (?) argument and influence of the lobbyist.

Now most legislators prefer to be good and loyal to the interests of their constituencies. They know that if they prove true and loyal, further political preferment awaits them. But the blandishment of the lobbyist proves too strong and the lawmaker is driven to concede something the aforesaid lobbyist desires. For instance:

A legislator introduces a measure which he knows is much desired by the people. The bill moves along nicely until it is referred to a committee. Here the bill seems to have found its eternal rest. It seems impossible to get the committee to report it back for final action. In some mysterious way Mr. Legislator is informed that his bill will be reported favorably, if he only will vote for a certain other bill which he knows to be wrong in principle. But rather than have his own meritorious measure smothered in committee, he votes for the objectionable bill. His own measure then is favorably reported and probably becomes a law. But look at the price Mr. Legislator has had to pay? He has had to help enact a bad law in order to save his good one. Now such action is nearly always due to manipulation trading or logrolling of which the lobbyist is a past master.

The question here arises, why not restrict the activities or abolish these lobbyists? Why not place the temptation to vote for wrong measures beyond the possibility of corrupting the legislator? Other states have banished the lobby and why not we do likewise?

A measure to abolish the lobby must come up from the people through the Initiative, for the legislature will never enact a law with teeth in to this end. A proper measure to cure this evil would be adopted by a large majority, if submitted at the next election.

At the same time a measure to restrict the number of legislative clerks should be submitted. A clerk

or stenographer for each five members, with the necessary committee clerks, should be ample and then the work would not be overburdening.

The tax limitation law demonstrated that the legislature will heed a mandate of the people when it has to do so. Send a mandate to abolish the lobby and limit the amount of clerk hire up to the next session and two sources of evil will be removed. The legislative horizon will be clarified and the members will work instead of hobnobbing with lady clerks. There will then be no need to continue the session overtime, for the work will have been done.

THE OUTLOOK FOR WAR

There is just a bare possibility that Germany may not commit the overt act which President Wilson says will be the tocsin for a call to war. There is some small sign that our Teutonic friends prefer to remain on a friendly basis or, at least, place no greater strain on the strand of friendship which has heretofore existed between the two countries, than now exists.

On the other hand the continued indiscriminate activities of the U-boats, the injury done to German merchant ships interned in our harbors and the German influence being used on Mexican factions and in Cuba, to give occupation to American troops at home, would indicate that Germany rather courts adding America to her already large list of enemies, than not. At all events, President Wilson expects the overt act to be committed and is going forward with preparations for war at a high speed. Germany's delay in committing the expected overt act, is giving the United States very welcome time to prepare our warships for active duty.

Should war occur, it may not be necessary to send American troops across the sea. The use of our warships to protect our coasts and commerce on the sea from the activities of German U-boats is probably all that will be necessary on our part.

There may be another reason for Germany's action. In commencing her ruthless submarine war in the barred zone, which she knew would drive away all neutral friendly feeling she, evidently, was playing her last card, at least on the sea. It was a case of desperation. If she could not succeed in starving England within a few weeks, she knew that starvation at home would give her trouble and force her to ask for peace. Also, if she had to sue for peace, the adding of America's 100,000,000 people to her enemies, would make the defeat less inglorious.

The outlook now is that the war will come to an end during the present year. Indeed, the great cost of carrying on a war of such great magnitude, is rapidly driving all of the nations engaged into bankruptcy. A nation, like the individual, can only pay a certain portion of earnings in interest. It must have something on which to live and her citizens must earn the money. As there is a limit to the people's earning power, so is there a limit to the power of a nation to spend money. Therefore, all nations engaged expect the final battle to be fought during the present year. For this reason, our navy is the only branch of our military power which is likely to see active service, even if there is a declaration of war.

It is a fact that the people of all the nations engaged in war, are ready to clamor for peace whenever there is the least sign that peace may be effected and the clamor will be aided by the neutrals as well. This is the leading reason why America will not become very deeply involved.

AFRAID TO TRUST THE PEOPLE

The frequent use of the "emergency clause" by the late legislature is evidence that these legislators are afraid to trust the people. Afraid, why?

Our lawmakers know that they have enacted several measures into law which were approved by Governor Withycombe, which the people would not ratify.

The question here arises, are these legislators our servants or are they our masters? Admit that they are wiser than the common herd, it does not follow that they were born to the purple nor that they know what the people want better than the people themselves do.

While the emergency clause as attached to a piece of legislation may be necessary under certain condition, it should never be used to slip over onto the people a law which they do not desire nor one which favors a special interest at the expense of the taxpayers. When a member attaches the emergency clause to a measure, when no emergency exists, he assumes to be the master instead of the servant. He assumes to know what is good for the people; that is to say some of the people, when he knows a majority of the people would reject it. Years ago a big railroad man, when the interests of the people were being considered said "the people be damned." Legislators who attach the emergency clause to a proposed law in order to override the people's wishes, are of the same class with this railroad man. Such men should never be elected to any office, much less that of lawmaker. It is this class of lawmakers which forced the people to adopt the Initiative and the referendum.

The legislature as a lawmaking body, is discredited by the people and the session just closed, has not improved the character of that body in the least. In the end the people are sure to rebel against the disgusting and disgraceful conduct which foists upon the people laws they do not want.

Senator Garland introduced a measure during the present session to make the legislative quadrennial instead of biennial as now. Had he made the period every ten years instead of four years and the same be submitted to the people, they would ratify it by a big majority. What little prospect there seemed to be during the first days of the session that the old objectionable features would be displaced by a decent attempt to do the people's will, was soon deeply obliterated. And when the notorious "third house" began its usual activities, the oldtime disgraceful and probably corrupt proceedings was on, just the same as when House bill "104" was in its glory. When we size up the accomplishments of the session just closed, we are sure to conclude that more harm than good has resulted.

HIGH COST OF LIVING

It is a difficult matter to select anything which one eats or wears which does not cost from 25 to 100 per cent more than it did one year ago, and we thought prices at the top notch then. We are now paying 30 to 40 per cent more for flour, 25 to 30 per cent more for meat, 150 per cent more for potatoes, 25 per cent more for butter and so on clear down the line.

We pay \$20 now for the suit of clothes we bought a year ago for \$15, \$1 to \$1.25 more for shoes and corresponding increases for everything we wear. Just a few days ago the price of matches was increased 50 per cent.

All kinds of paper have doubled

(Continued on page 4)

Dr. T. K. Sanderson

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SCIO

OREGON

Blossom Time in the Golden State

A friend just back from Southern California says: "The weather was fine, in fact too warm for heavy clothes. Many were bathing at the beaches. Oranges were ripe in the valleys, while the mountains nearby were covered with snow."

With warm sunny weather it will not be long before the blossoms on the trees will be everywhere announcing spring is here

Take a vacation trip now where life is different; where climate surroundings and amusements are out of the ordinary. Spend a different February.

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