

THE SCIO TRIBUNE

ISSUED EVERY THURSDAY BY
T. L. DUGGER, EDITOR AND PROP.

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the Republic for which it stands, one
Nation, indivisible, with liberty and
justice for all.*

USURPATION OF POWER

When the people of Oregon added the referendum to our constitution it was their purpose to reserve unto themselves the power to veto legislative enactment whenever it was deemed wise to do so. The referendum law was evolved simply as a measure of self protection to the taxpayer against the greed and piracy of the tax eater.

Unfortunately, what is known as the "emergency clause" was provided at the same time, so that when a real emergency occurred, such as fire, flood, invasion, etc., which required quick action in the appropriation of public money, the legislature or the emergency officials would have authority to so use the public funds. But most evidently the people intended that this power should be used only in case of actual emergency. It was not intended that the legislature should have power to declare an emergency whenever it wished to prevent the people from using the veto power.

While The Tribune is not opposed to the issue of bonds for road building, it is opposed to the high handed action of the legislature in attaching the emergency clause to the road measures. While we do not think the people would have invoked the referendum upon the \$10,000,000 bond measure, they should not have been denied the privilege.

The principle involved is this: If the legislature has power to declare an emergency on the road measures, where, manifestly there is no emergency, a dangerous precedent is established. Any measure may be enacted by our lawmakers and if they so desire, attach the emergency clause, and there you are. It places our lawmakers in the attitude of plain violation of fundamental law by subterfuge.

Certainly, if the legislature can, because it believes the people will submit, attach the emergency clause to the road measures when such emergency is mere balderdash, it can attach the clause to any other measure which is doubtful of the people's support. The emergency clause could have been attached to the salary grab bills with as much propriety as to the road bills. There is no doubt but what the emergency exists in the minds of the officials who are lobbying for the increase. They evidently think they need the money.

Where The Tribune sees the wrong is, in men elected to enact law being willing to connive in violating or circumventing a law enacted by the

people which the legislature cannot repeal. The governor and legislature do not like the six percent limitation of appropriations law no better than they like the emergency clause law. It is a handicap upon extravagance which galls.

It is extremely fortunate for the taxpayers of Oregon that these checks upon extravagance are a part of our fundamental law. Men we elect to make laws for us and who occupy high positions, need to be handicapped. They need a power over them which they are compelled to respect.

The using of the emergency clause to boost a law through quickly is a danger to the peace and prosperity of Oregon. It is a menace which must be met promptly and efficiently. Every member who supported attaching the emergency clause to the road bills should be retired to private life as men unsafe to be trusted as lawmakers.

The spirit of anarchy is growing throughout the world. When men, elected to make laws, show a disposition to ignore laws enacted by a power superior to themselves, we can conclude that the disregard for law cannot all be laid at the door of the I. W. W.

PRESIDENT WILSON.

President Wilson is again at his desk in the White House in Washington, D. C. He has returned from the most momentous journey ever made by a president of the United States; he has returned from France where he went some two months ago to endeavor to accomplish the most noble purpose which has ever actuated the heart of man.

No nobler purpose in the interest of humanity can be conceived than a plan to prevent wars between nations in the future. War simply means death and destruction. It is a block to financial prosperity of peoples to say nothing of the killed and maimed. Look at war from any viewpoint you will and nothing but evil results.

Belgium, northern France, Serbia, Armenia, all know the devastating and heart rending results war leaves behind. Two generations will hardly see the homes of these countries restored to the prosperous conditions of the first half of 1914; and time will not, cannot repair the damage to the home circle.

President Wilson has been trying to bring about such an understanding among nations that disputes or misunderstandings between them will be settled by peaceful arbitration rather than by that of the sword. How successful he has been and what will be the outgrowth of the tentative league of nations remains yet to be seen. The action of the formative committee of Paris is yet to be ratified by the respective nations.

When a union between states or nations is formed it must be on a basis of concession; that is to say, each nation must be willing to concede some of what had hitherto been considered their respective national rights or privileges for the good of all. To illustrate: When our federal union was formed and the constitution adopted, the individual states or colonies made concessions. They were willing to surrender certain rights and powers to the national union. This same spirit seems to have been manifest with the delegates representing the various nations at Paris. All were willing to concede something if an end to war between nations could be brought about.

Strange to say, we have some little Americans, in and out of congress, who for partisan gain are trying to create a sentiment which would balk the president's purpose. Such are men without any real patriotic blood in their veins.

Simply because President Woodrow Wilson, a democrat, is looked upon as leader in the formation of the league of nations, they will have none of it. Such men would rather have our nation involved in wars in the future than to have the credit of forming the league given to President Wilson. Ex-President Taft, however, is not in the little American class. He is big enough and broad enough to drop partisanship and assist the man who defeated him for the presidency to bring about this greatest of blessings to the civilized world.

THE AGONY IS OVER.

By the time this issue of The Tribune reaches its readers, the 30th biennial session of the Oregon legislature will be a matter of past history. No one will feel sorry that this source of extravagance and danger to Oregon taxpayers is no more. Not a tear was shed when Speaker Jones and President Vinton brought their gavels down for the last time, after declaring the sessions closed sine die. In fact everyone, including the members, drew a deep breath of relief when they knew the agony was over.

It would be wrong to say there was no meritorious legislation enacted at this session, for there were a few measures passed which will be generally endorsed by the people. But the evil things done far outnumber the good.

Every cent of money available, which the law allows, was appropriated. About every official who wanted his salary raised was accommodated. But the consolidations of offices and commissions, of which there was so much eclat before the session, faded away like fog from a warm sun.

Most people of Oregon will endorse the road bills though they differ in opinion as to how the money shall be expended. While many were opposed to paving the highways because of the heavy expense, the growing use of the motor truck has shown that paved roads only will stand up under them.

One of the very best acts of the session was the severing of the tentacles of the Warren Construction company from the grip it was endeavoring to fasten on state road building.

Another pleasing feature is there can be no more bonding measures enacted by future legislatures for the reason that the state will have been bonded about to the limit when the \$10,000,000 bonds are sold.

It is a certainty that the session just closed has not given the people reason to hope for better things from an Oregon legislature in the future. Our legislature will never retrench; will never abolish needless offices, nor never reduce salaries. But it does increase salaries at every session. For this reason Oregon taxpayers have listed the legislators they elect as tax eaters and not as taxpayers.

Hold your war stamps! Don't cash them unless it is a great necessity that demands your doing so. It isn't a matter of life or death; or the loss of an arm, a leg, or an eye. That is what it meant to many to hold the Argonne Wood, as well as many other places. Can you do any less by holding your war stamps and thus stand behind the man behind the gun?

The Tax Liberator is the name of a weekly newspaper published in Eugene, Ore., by R. E. Smith. This editor enjoys reading the Liberator because it usually contains original matter. But what is strange about the paper is that it contains no Eugene advertisements but plenty from Portland banks and hotels. One can draw his own conclusions.

The New Fox of Democracy.

The attempt to assassinate Premier Clemenceau is a result of that terrorist mania which has been let loose by the revolution in Russia, then by the revolutions in Germany and Austria. It is the appeal to force of those who take their lessons from monarchist preachers of the theory that might is right. With minds inflamed to the belief that existing governments wrong their class, they readily reach the conclusion that their duty is to kill the ministers who are responsible, scorn the approved methods of democracy as too slow and as a device of the "bourgeois" to perpetuate the wrongs of the "proletariat."

Emile Cottin is a type of a large class, the numbers of which have been enormously increased by the triumph of bolshevism in Russia and by its spread to other countries. Bolshevism has propagated a mental disease, of which the seeds were sown by laws favoring certain classes in Europe and by distortion of government to serve certain interests in America and by the general reaction from that condition. The pendulum has now swung so far in the new direction that the class which was formerly oppressed, or considered itself so, takes or attempts to take the privileged position and to oppress the other classes. It is not confident enough in the justice of its own contentions to seek its ends by the gradual process of convincing the majority. It takes the short cut of wholesale massacre, as in Russia; of local insurrection, as in Germany; of assassination, as in France, or of a veiled attempt to seize the power of government under cover of a strike, as at Seattle and Butte. All of these things are manifestations of the same political disease.

The free nations have been fighting to "make the world safe for democracy," and they believe the war was won last November. They defeated one enemy—autocracy—but they have now to fight another, which is more difficult to identify, for it does not appear in the form of organized, uniformed armies. It is an idea in men's minds—usually the ignorant or at best the half-educated, the vicious, incompetent and disappointed, led by a sprinkling of abler, more intelligent men who use these men as tools. That idea is propagated in a more or less covert manner, often only hinted or suggested, but the effect is always the same—to inspire hatred of a class or of established institutions and to incite murder, destruction and all forms of lawlessness.

This evil can be combated successfully in several ways. The law can do much by punishing the men who are the instruments of its propagation, and should carry the fight into its chief breeding place—bolshevik Russia. But we need to cultivate positive devotion to the principles of democracy, just as we stirred patriotism from a passive to an active state for the war on autocracy, and to fortify democracy by removing the last vestige of injustice and inequality from our application of those principles.

The system which gives every man a vote, freely cast and honestly counted, and binds the minority to accept the decision of the majority, is the only one which insures real equality or which insures a nation domestic peace. It is the rule of the "good sport" who does not crow when he wins and does not squeal when he loses. There is no nearer approach to equality or peace or safety under the rule of a soviet than under that of an emperor. Democracy is the most nearly perfect system of human liberty yet devised and the men who assassinate a premier of France, or start a reign of terror in Russia, or practice sabotage in America, are simply men who have failed and who squeal on democracy's decisions.—Oregonian.

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