

STATE NEWS

- Labor Disputes
- Expense Accounts
- \$3,000,000 for Fair

By A. L. LINDBECK

SALEM.—Labor disputes which continue to hold the entire west coast in a state of industrial stagnation will unquestionably come in for considerable attention at the hands of the Oregon legislature when it convenes next month. Producer groups whose pocketbooks have been hard hit by their inability to ship their products as well as by the decline in purchasing power on the part of the strikers, are loudly demanding action to bring about speedy restoration of peace in the industrial world. With the Growers Club of Hood River taking the lead, the wool growers, wheat growers, apple growers and other agricultural groups are demanding compulsory arbitration of all strikes in which the public welfare becomes involved.

Senator Best of Umatilla county has publicly announced his intention of sponsoring a compulsory arbitration measure in the forthcoming session. Senator Stringer of Linn county, an active Granger himself, has announced his sympathy with the proposal. Other legislators from the agricultural districts can be depended on to support the idea, especially under the urge of their interested constituents. These include Duncan of Harney, Wheeler of Lane, Stedman of Wasco, Spaulding of Marion, Dunn of Jackson, and many others. The senate, overwhelmingly conservative in its attitude toward business and industrial problems, would appear, from this distance, to be fertile ground for the sowing of seed looking to governmental interference in arguments between employers and employees. The attitude of the House is more difficult to predict. Fifty percent of its membership is entirely new to the legislative field. Among the House members, however, there are known to be at least two aggressive labor leaders—Bull of Union and Brady of Multnomah—and a number of other labor sympathizers who can be depended on to follow their lead in a fight to the finish against any legislation that might in any way clip the wings of organized labor.

Most interesting angle in the pending battle over labor legislation, however, is to be found in its possible effect upon the Damon-Pythias relations which have existed between leaders of the farmer-labor group at legislative sessions for many years with Ray Gill of the grange and Ben Osborne of the labor unions, and their satellites fighting shoulder to shoulder for or against—as the case might be—any proposal affecting the interests of either group. Already Gill, as master of the State Grange, has warned against any attempt to interfere with the rights of labor unions to strike. This can be interpreted as a warning against the proposed compulsory arbitration program. The warning has started rumblings of discontent among Grangers in many parts of the state, especially those who belong to the wheat league or the wool or apple growers who do not propose to let Gill or any other leader stand in the way of a program that promises any relief from the present situation with its threat to the financial stability of thousands of innocent bystanders.

Of course any legislation the Oregon lawmakers may enact to require compulsory arbitration of labor disputes would only apply to the local strikes, such as that in the woolen mills at Portland or strikes by teamsters, truck drivers or other purely local groups. It would have little, if any effect on the maritime strike which is, after all, the one which is pinching the producers right now. That involves a national issue and will require federal legislation if it is to be reached. All the Oregon legislators can do in that connection will be to memorialize Congress and even such action can be expected to meet with serious opposition on the part of organized labor.

Hereafter state officials and employees who tour the country at

public expense attending conventions and conferences must limit their expense claims to \$7 a day. This amount is expected to cover Pullman charges, meals, hotel rooms, taxis, tips and incidentals. If they cannot live within this allowance, the board of control ruled this week, they can make up the balance out of their own pocketbooks. If they can get by on less the saving is theirs. The state will allow them a flat \$7 a day while out of the state on public business. Action to this effect was taken by the board as a protection against "chiselers," a few of whom persist in padding their expense claims for in excess of this approved allowance. "Deadbeats" also came in for a share of attention at the hands of the board when it was voted to summarily dismiss any state employee who attempted to crawl out from under a soldiers bonus loan or to unload on to the bonus commission or land board a piece of property which he had purchased with a state loan on which he had allowed the interest and taxes to accumulate without making any effort to discharge his rightful obligations.

Dellmore Lessard, state senator from Multnomah county, has filed suit in the circuit court to test out his right to a seat in the forthcoming session. Lessard is an attorney for the World War Veterans State Aid commission. Attorney General Van Winkle in a recent opinion to Thomas Graham, Jr., senator-elect, also an attorney for this same commission, ruled that this position constituted a bar to membership in the legislature. Lessard in his petition for a declaratory judgment upholding his right to the senate seat contends that he is only an employee and not an "officer" as contemplated by the constitutional provision under which the attorney general would rule him out as a legislator. Furthermore Lessard contends he was not appointed to his post but was "employed." With less than three weeks remaining until the legislature convenes the court is expected to advance the case for early determination.

With five percent of the motorists responsible for 90 percent of the traffic accidents R. H. Baldock, state highway engineer, advocates permanent revocation of the operators' licenses of accident-repeaters as the only solution to the traffic accident problem. Oregon already has plenty of safety laws to protect the motoring public if they were more rigidly enforced, in Baldock's opinion.

Reports from Portland indicate that the state will be asked to contribute \$3,000,000 toward financing of the proposed 1939 World's fair to be held in that city in celebration of the completion of the Bonneville dam. Just how the money is to be raised has not been indicated. When Governor Olcott convened the legislature in special session in 1921 to finance a proposed "Industrial Exposition" to be held in Portland in 1925, the lawmakers promptly turned thumbs down on any attempt to unload this burden onto the property owners through a tax levy. A proposal to finance the state's contribution to the fair through an increase in the gasoline tax met with approval of a large majority of the House members but failed in the senate where it was impossible to muster a constitutional majority back of the program and the proposed fair died a premature death.

Congressman Wm. A. Ekwall has offered to donate the services he performed for the state as circuit judge pro tem for Multnomah county, but not until Secretary of State Snell had turned down his claim for \$10 a day—the statutory allowance—for these same services. Snell ruled that inasmuch as Ekwall is still a member of Congress and drawing pay from the federal government he is not entitled to pay from the state.

A majority of state employees and officials enjoyed a three-day vacation this week. Several offices, including those of the governor, purchasing department and budget division, did not open at all Saturday following the Christmas holiday, while others maintained only skeleton crews sufficient to keep the office open and answer the telephone. The only departments working a full crew Saturday were the automobile



Windshield Sticker Welcomes Tourists

Additional emphasis on Oregon's welcome to tourists is embodied in a new design windshield sticker to be issued out-of-state motorists by Earl Snell, secretary of state. The plan is a part of Snell's program to promote tourist travel in Oregon and the new permit with its slogan, "Guest of Oregon," will be distributed the first of the year to all non-resident registrars.

The new sticker design was prepared by George Stephens, an employee of the secretary of state's office.

"During the past year the 51 non-resident bureau managers for this office have responded wholeheartedly to my request for their aid in making visitors to Oregon feel that they are welcome," the secretary of state reports. "Some very definite

registration department which was swamped with a deluge of applications for the new 1937 license plates, and the state library which found it necessary to take care of heavy demands for books from all sections of the state. Employees who composed the skeleton crews on duty last Saturday will be given the day off next Saturday as also will many of those who rested up from the Christmas festivities last Saturday.

A report on state building needs just released by the State Planning board emphasizes the immediate need of a state library building and another office building. Replacement of the present supreme court building and office building by new structures at some time in the future is also visioned by the planners who call attention to the need for purchasing necessary ground for building sites at this time, recommending acquisition of the four blocks immediately north of the present capital site. With federal grants available through PWA the report points out the library and office buildings could be financed at this time with state appropriations of only \$750,000 for each.

Oregon's 1937 state fair will open on Labor Day, September 6, according to announcement by Solon T. White, director of agriculture. The Labor Day opening of the fair was strenuously opposed by county fair managers who favored a later date for the state fair. White, however, insists that the Labor Day crowds are necessary to a successful fair unless the legislature can be persuaded to make a more generous contribution toward financing of the annual show.

Assessed valuations of real and personal property as returned by the various county assessors, as well as that of utility property as determined by the state tax commission for the current year show a decrease of approximately three percent below 1935 figures according to a report released by the tax commission this week. Local assessments shrunk from \$761,129,734.32 to \$736,384,750.06 due in part to foreclosures on tax delinquent property by the counties and in part to a general deflation of land values. Utility valuations dropped from \$162,941,886.52 in 1935 to \$156,423,247.58.

Reduction in local assessments are shown in every county with three exceptions. Crook, Curry and Sherman counties show slight increase in assessed valuations. Morrow county valuations dropped approximately 25 percent from 1935 levels. Clatsop county valuations are 13.72 percent lower and Marion county valuations are 6.80 percent lower than in 1935. Utility valuations in Marion and Sherman counties shrunk by 13 percent. In the case of Marion county the reduction is

and valuable results have followed from this program. It is possible to add millions of dollars to the amount spent in Oregon by motor vehicle tourists by inducing them to prolong their stay even a single day, and nothing will get more tangible results along this line than to make them feel that they are truly guests of the state while here. This is a matter of interest to every one of us and especially effective work can be done by those who contact our visitors, such as garage and service station attendants, hotels and restaurants, clerks, and business men in many other lines. My department will cooperate in every possible manner to develop this program to the fullest extent."

Oregon's greatest tourist registration in history is being recorded this year, according to records compiled by Snell, and an even larger influx of visitors is expected during the coming year.

accounted for largely by the sale of the privately owned water utility to the city of Salem, taking nearly \$1,000,000 of taxable property off the tax rolls.

Valuations on tillable lands alone show a shrinkage of nearly \$20,000,000, while valuations on town and city property dropped nearly \$14,000,000. The boom in the lumber business is reflected in an increase of more than \$4,000,000 in the assessed valuation on timber lands. Valuations on horses, mules, cattle and swine are also higher than a year ago.

Wealth would become the yardstick by which votes would be doled out if the Wittwer Federation should succeed with its program. The federation has incorporated in Oregon under the leadership of a group of Portland citizens, including John Schroeder, veteran chief clerk of the legislative ways and means committee. Under the proposal of the federation all taxpayers would be rewarded with an extra vote. Persons paying more than \$50 a year in taxes would have two extra votes and those paying more than \$100 a year in taxes would be given three extra votes. It is understood that an attempt will be made to refer the program to the voters through a proposed constitutional amendment.

While the Democratic state central committee spent only \$13,692.35 in carrying Oregon for Roosevelt and Garner, records in the secretary of state's office reveal that the Republican state central committee spent more than \$57,000 in their losing fight for Landon and Knox.

The semi-annual apportionment of highway funds among the 36 counties of the state was completed by Secretary of State Snell this week. Under this apportionment \$800,000 is distributed among the counties every six months on a basis established in 1931. County courts are expected to make a fight for an increase of this amount at the forthcoming legislative session.

Seven hundred automobile drivers were convicted on various traffic counts in Oregon courts during September, according to reports filed with Secretary of State Snell. The list includes 78 drunken drivers who suffered revocation of their drivers' licenses in addition to fines and jail sentences. Twenty-five reckless drivers had their licenses suspended during the month.

Martin V. King arrived Sunday for a five-day visit with relatives and friends in Heppner, being a guest at the home of his mother, Mrs. Truman Babb. Mr. King plays trombone in the Paramount studio orchestra in Hollywood. He spent part of his boyhood days in Heppner and has been enjoying greeting many old time friends.

'37 AAA Plan Believed Improvement for State

With detailed dockets on the new 1937 AAA program now being prepared in Washington, farmers of Oregon will have full information on which to base their crop plans for the next spring three months earlier than last year, says Wm. L. Teutsch, assistant county agent leader at Oregon State college. Teutsch and N. R. Dodd of Baker, chairman of the state committee, recently returned from Washington where they represented this state in the conference which determined the general outlines of the new program.

While Oregon and other northwestern states failed to put over their recommendations for a simplified program based entirely on soil building practices, they did succeed in preventing the development of a program based almost entirely on the other extreme of diversion and crop control, the Oregon delegation reports. Dodd headed a committee of western grower representatives which was an important factor in bringing the compromise agreement which embodies a larger proportion of soil building payments, although it contains certain crop control factors for corn which were deemed essential by the middle western leaders.

The general idea is that the new program is the beginning of a more permanent long-time development which will continue in some such form throughout the next four years at least. More emphasis on practice payments is an improvement under Oregon conditions.

Those who were advocates of a more stringent control plan pointed to the disturbing prospects of 77 million acre wheat planting for 1937, which under normal conditions would produce more than 900 million bushels; to prospects of adding additional surplus to the 7½ million bales of cotton now on hand, and to a possible 103 million acres of corn when from 93 to 94 million acres is the limit that can be handled profitably under average conditions.

Under the new program farms in Oregon which are already devoted largely to soil conserving crops will have more opportunity to cooperate in improving these farms. Hereafter farmers will be divided into diversion and non-diversion types. Pasture farms like those in Tillamook county, for example, will be considered non-diversion types and will have more soil building practices available.

PCA Annual Meeting Set for January 9th

The third annual meeting of the Pendleton Production Credit association will be held at the Elks building, Pendleton, on January 1 at 1 p. m., it is announced by Secretary-Treasurer W. E. Moore.

To make the occasion a real "get-together" combining both good fellowship and an interesting business program, plans include short and snappy talks and a clear, concise report of the association's operations during the past year.

All stockholding farmer-members are urged by Mr. Moore to be present and take an active part in the meeting, exercising their privileges and duties as part owners of the organization.

"A well informed and active membership is vital to every cooperative organization," Mr. Moore points out, "and for this reason we are making special efforts to get a good turnout."

The association has made good progress during the past year as more farmers have learned the advantage of financing their operations cooperatively through their own institution.

With one vote each, stockholders will elect to fill two places on the board of directors which has the responsibility of conducting the association's business in a sound way. Present board members are: James Hill, Pendleton; A. R. Coppock, Adams; R. A. Thompson, Heppner; H. H. Weatherspoon, Elgin; E. T. Jaco, Enterprise.

Claude Huston, in from Eight Mile Monday, reported a fair fall of snow in his section.