

## STATE CAPITAL NEWS

- Debt-Free Counties
- Extravagance
- Retirement

By A. L. LINDBECK

Salem.—Three more Oregon counties managed to shake off their burden of debt during the past year. Washington county paid off \$39,843.67 in outstanding warrants to qualify for a place on the honor roll. Sherman county paid \$58,927.37 in outstanding bonds and Tillamook county cleared its books of \$47,000 in bonded debt which was outstanding a year ago.

Seven other counties which were reported as debt free in the survey by State Treasurer Walter E. Pearson a year ago continue to maintain that position today. They include Clatsop, Columbia, Douglas, Lane, Linn, Marion and Umatilla.

Only two of the state's 36 counties show an increase in their debt load during the year. They are Malheur whose indebtedness has grown \$12,352.50 since July 1, 1938, presumably through an increase in outstanding warrants, and Union county whose net debt is \$6,543.81 larger than it was last year.

All told the counties whittled \$2,279,534.07 off their net debt during the year, reducing the total from \$20,030,167.21 as of July 1, 1938, to \$17,750,633.14 as of July 1, 1939.

The present indebtedness of the Oregon counties includes \$17,040,180 in outstanding bonds, \$532,474.78 in road warrants, and \$1,432,951.22 in general fund warrants, against which total there are assets in the form of sinking funds aggregating \$1,254,972.86.

A summary prepared by State Treasurer Pearson shows that none of the counties approach the six per cent constitutional debt limitation. In fact, only three counties—Coos, Grant and Wheeler—have a net debt in excess of four per cent of their assessed valuations.

Approximately two-thirds of the debt load of the several counties is carried by Multnomah county whose total net debt amounts to \$11,904,410.23. Next largest debt item is that of Coos county, totalling \$1,125,351.82, with Clackamas county's \$922,980 ranking third.

Polk with a net debt of only \$26,735.92, and Jackson county with a net debt of \$69,426.81, have the lowest debt ratio of the several counties still in the "red" column.

The "Ham & Egg with \$30 per week" for Oregon's needy aged launched its campaign for bigger pensions this week when articles of incorporation were filed with the state corporation department. Headquarters of the organization, capitalized at \$5000, will be maintained in Salem.

With more than \$1,000,000 in income taxes reported but unpaid the state tax commission is preparing to send out notices calling attention to the fact that second half tax payments are due before October 1. Earl Fisher, head of the income tax division, estimates that taxes on 1938 incomes will total more than \$4,600,000 when all the payments are in.

Models for the two granite statues guarding the entrance to Oregon's new capitol will be turned over to the University of Oregon for preservation if the sculptor approves.

Oregon motorists, including tourists within the state, set a new record for gasoline consumption during July when sales of this commodity totalling 25,264,032 gallons were reported to Secretary of State Earl Snell.

The state emergency board meeting here this week at the request of the Board of Control went on record as emphatically opposed to extravagance in the expenditure of public funds.

Requests totalling \$18,500 presented by the Board of Control were pared down to a mere \$666 by the Emergency Board which refused to be tempted by offers of free federal funds in order to approve expenditures for items not of an emergency nature.

Most of the items requested by the

Board of Control were for completion of the capitol program—shrubs for the sunken garden, sidewalks across the capitol lawns, bronze cuspidors and jardiniere and marble benches for the capitol corridors, and bronze flagpoles. The emergency board held that the need for all of these items should have been apparent six months ago when the legislature was in session and should have been presented at that time.

An item of \$6000 for two bronze flagpoles on the capitol site was trimmed by the Emergency Board to \$500 with a suggestion that a fir pole typifying Oregon's lumber industry be provided for display of the flag rather than the two bronze poles recommended by the capitol architects.

Addressing the public employee pension committee at its initial meeting here this week Governor Sprague called attention to the need for some plan under which public employees might be retired from service on an adequate annuity but urged the committee to be conservative in its recommendations "because units of government operate conservatively in this state." Declaring the subject of general pensions to be one for national rather than state consideration the governor explained that he had in mind "not a pension system whose full cost is borne by the units of government which are the employers, but an annuity system based on contributions made by the employees either in full or in part."

Approximately one-half of Oregon's population are qualified automobile drivers according to Secretary of State Snell who expects the number of operators' licenses now being issued by his department to pass the 500,000 mark.

Decentralization of the federal government was advocated by State Treasurer Walter E. Pearson at a luncheon this week attended by state, county and city officials. Carl E. Chatters, Chicago, director of the Municipal Finance Officers' association, told the assembled officials that county and city governmental units are suffering from over-regulation by federal and state bureaus.

Benefit payments to jobless workers in Oregon have now passed the \$9,000,000 mark according to a report by the Oregon Unemployment Compensation commission.

Governor Charles A. Sprague and Mrs. Sprague are vacationing at an Oregon beach resort this week. The governor came in to Salem Wednesday to preside over the regular weekly session of the Board of Control but otherwise he has put aside all official cares for the week.

### Dean Dubach Lists Tips for Freshmen

Oregon State College—Dr. U. G. Dubach, dean of men, who has completed 26 years on the staff here, is sending a little folder, "Tips to Freshmen," to every man accepted to enroll this fall. These tips, college men say, apply almost equally well to prospective co-eds. Following are a few excerpts from the folder.

"Purpose—In college you will need the best possible physical body, a right attitude, clean moral outlook, and a definite objective—even tho you may not know the specific thing you will do all your life.

"Money—Make sure you are buying something worth while before you spend. Investigate first.

"Self-support—There are many opportunities to work one's way, but you should have money enough for a term at least, when you enter.

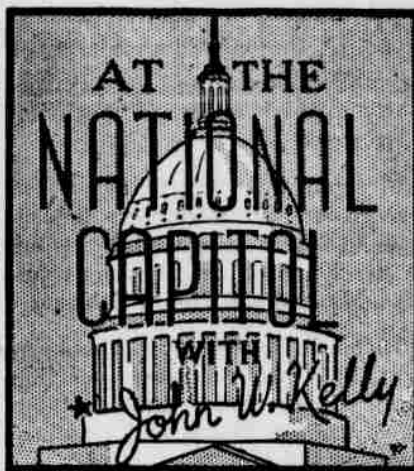
"Time—You have all the time there is. Have the courage to spend it according to a prearranged program.

"Faculty—Faculty members are your friends. Meet them personally.

"Obligations—Do not forget your obligations to your high school and your parents to make good.

"Fraternalities—If you are interested, see the house and let the men see you several times. Observe seniors—the product—and freshmen, your possible associates for four years."

Let G. T. Want Ads help you dispose of surplus stock.



Washington, D. C., Aug. 31—Like a mirror, the countenance of President Roosevelt reflects his feelings. No poker face is his and the gravity with which he regarded the European situation was expressed by the absence of his customary smile. In this national capitol the top-bracket officials have been under severe tension, not knowing what the next hour would bring forth; but perfecting plans to meet any emergency in a given 24 hours. Mr. Roosevelt has displayed less concern over the manhandling of some of his pet legislation at the hands of congress than the whirling events abroad. He has not sought relaxation with his stamp collection, as is his custom.

After the Munich scare the administration decided to blueprint a program in the event a climax was reached. For practically a year the problem was studied theoretically from every angle; how to bring home Americans caught in the war zone; what to do with the stock exchange and stabilize the market; the steps necessary to prevent sabotage to industrial plants; counter-espionage; the matter of surplus food supplies; revision of the agricultural policy. The purpose of this planning was not for war with the United States as a belligerent, but to deal with conditions naturally resulting when there is a conflict in Europe.

In its position as a neutral the United States must be alert. Chief danger is from foreign agents attempting to sabotage industrial plants where war supplies (which includes almost everything), are being manufactured, in particular establishments making airplanes and airplane engines. Long before the United States entered the world war, saboteurs were busy; they blew up a barge of explosives in Puget Sound; destroyed "Black Tom" terminal in New Jersey; handicapped wherever possible sources of supply and means of transportation.

At strategic points in the United States and its distant possessions, FBI and its associated agencies are conducting counter-espionage; they are on the watch for saboteurs and not for spies, for the damage is done not by purloining "the papers" for a new armory, but by clogging a feed line in a plane, leaving a tool where it will ruin gears, starting a fire in a forest or sawmill, damaging a power plant—things of that sort which are more vital than stealing plans of new aircraft equipment.

Cached away in a steel file, ready on a moment's notice, are the drafts of a series of bills to be offered to congress for enactment whenever this country reaches the verge of war. Through this chain of measures the life and habits of American citizens would be changed overnight, and the president would be invested with the same dictatorial powers as have been delegated to Prime Minister Chamberlain, the umbrella man, and Deladier, the Frenchman.

How much would it be worth to the nations of the world to know what the weather would be two weeks in advance? Dr. C. C. Abbott of Smithsonian Institution asserts that the forecast can be made if ten properly equipped observatory stations can be scattered at certain places on the globe. Three stations are now operating, but it would cost several million dollars to establish the others and this would have to be borne by foreign countries in which the stations are required for the network. Incidentally the scientist predicts the "dust bowl" of the mid-west will not occur again until some time in the years after 2000.

Pacific coast isolationist senators are as determined as ever to main-

tain the mandatory embargo on munitions. It is not a matter of politics with them, but conviction that their plan is a better insurance against the United States being involved in foreign war than the proposal of the president. These senators are Idaho's Borah, California's Hiram Johnson, Washington's Bone (now hospitalized with a broken hip), Utah's King and North Dakota's Nye. With them are Wisconsin's LaFollette, Kansas's Capper and Missouri's Clark. They are ready to take up the fight where it was dropped when congress adjourned August 5.

Some of the insiders are proposing that the government follow the precedent laid by TVA and apply it to Bonneville and later to Grand Coulee. This precedent is purchase by the government of private utilities and thus acquire a distributing system and a market for government-generated power. Such proceeding would require action by congress which, in its present frame of mind against further intrusion of government in business, is not likely. However, the inner-circle is considering making a try anyway.

Communists who were quick to picket the German and Italian embassies during the Munich conference are not carrying placards denouncing nazism and fascism since Stalin signed an agreement with Hitler. But police are keeping an eye on the British and Polish embassies.

Fifty million dollars worth of building construction (mostly government) is halted in the national capitol because plumbers, now receiving \$12 a day, want \$13, and laborers in the one sand and gravel supply company are striking for more pay and shorter hours.

### Spotted Fever Hits Nation's Capital

Washington, D. C., Aug. 29—Spotted fever ticks are playing havoc in Washington with a higher percentage of cases than are reported in the Pacific northwest. This summer 12 residents of the national capital have been bitten by the ticks, resulting in four deaths to date. Last summer there were 15 cases and five deaths.

The disease-carrying ticks, once confined to the Rocky mountain region, have been widening their zone of activity principally through the ranging of sheep from which the ticks drop and then climb on sagebrush and other shrubs to transfer to a passing human. While this is well known in the far west, where precautions are taken with serum, physicians in Washington cannot account for the presence of the ticks in the District of Columbia, except on the theory that they have been brought to the capital by dogs. Newspapers are publishing warnings to picnic parties and hikers to examine themselves twice a day for evidence of ticks.

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