

Heppner Gazette Times

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Official Paper for Morrow County

Land Use Plans Told In Report Of County Committee

Post War Effects Considered; Timber Value Emphasized

The Gazette Times presents here-with the report of the land use committee at the recent farm economic conference. Reports of the three other major committees will be given in later issues.

1. All indications are that following the present war stimulation period, as has been the case after every other war, agricultural products will be the first to feel the effect. Our committee feels that one of the best ways for the farmer to meet the repercussions of the present war is for him to avoid over expansion and attempt to liquidate his present indebtedness as far as possible while relatively favorable prices prevail.

2. The standing timber in Morrow county is one of its valuable assets. One third of the national annual timber cut comes from Oregon and Washington. Seventeen billion feet is being cut annually in these two states while only three billion feet are being produced. One half of the timber land is in private ownership and this 50 percent of the timber is furnishing over 80 percent of this annual cut. Recognizing the value of this timber and the rapidity with which we are losing this asset, we recommend the cutting of privately owned timber on a sustained yield basis.

3. In order to compensate the

counties for taxable assets lost when privately-owned cut-over land is turned over to the Forest Service, we recommend the passage of the Pierce Bill (H.R. 615) with amendment to include all publicly owned land, public domain as well as National Forest.

4. Recognizing the need for continued erosion control work in the county, this committee approves the formation of the proposed Heppner Soil Conservation District.

5. We recommend longer term farm leases throughout the county with three years being the minimum.

6. The establishment of the Government's Ammunition Depot and practice bombing range in North Morrow county has reduced the annual revenue in taxes to this county by approximately \$8,000. Any new industry which may be located in the county will compensate for this tax base loss and will benefit everyone in the county, therefore we recommend that immediate steps be taken by all organizations in the county to encourage the establishment of the proposed new ammunition factory in Morrow county where water, rail and highway transportation is already available and where there is large areas of low value land, an inexhaustible supply of water and a potential supply of hydro-electric power available.

7. Because of the sandy conditions on the Taylor Grazing District No. 7 and the tendency for that land to blow when it is loosened, and recognizing the problem of land use which may develop not only within the district but on adjacent lands on the east, this committee recommends to the War Department that steps be taken to tie down with oil, brush or other practical means the bombed areas on the proposed bombing field as soon as practice bombing begins. We further recommend that a brief of existing conditions and a copy of this recommendation be prepared and submitted to the War Department for their consideration.

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'Must' Bills Keep Legislators Overtime

By GILES L. FRENCH

Well, folks, prophecy is one of those things that schools of journalism always warn against to students of news writing and even editors are not much given to it. Now comes the time when your deponent must agree with this time-honored philosophy for his prophecy as to the date for the final gavel in the 41st legislative assembly of the good state of Oregon Unless there is a fire or some other public catastrophe of greater magnitude than this session of the legislature the session will go on and on after Marc 8, which seemed like a good time to quit.

This is that time in a legislature in which bills that have been reposing in the pocket of the chairmen of committees suddenly become "must" legislation in the minds of some legislators and these bills are dragged ceremoniously on to the floor and oft times passed. A large part of these are not very good bills, and because of the approaching end of the session they are seldom amended as carefully amended as are the important bills at the first of the session, this is when poor legislation is passed.

As an example, the sales tax bill is lying in the house committee on taxation and revenue. It has been there about a month. It will very likely come out during the last week of the session. People are right in wondering why this is necessary. There is reason for not bringing out important measures for the first month, but not for such dilatory procedure.

Some one may do the public a favor by analyzing the bills that have passed this legislature. He may find that a goodly part of them have given a small group additional

power over the public. Maybe it is always that way—and maybe it is not.

Just what is the motivating influence in this legislature is hard to tell. Many committees have done a good job with the bills sent to them, many members study the bills carefully. However, these do not seem sufficiently in a majority to prevent much legislation that will be no source of pride to members when newspapers and individuals take time to analyze the new laws.

The tax law passed that puts a millage of 5.9 on all property is not a good measure and will not bear analysis from those who are able to make a study of its effect within individual counties.

The involved bill to divide \$6,000,000 between schools and taxes tak-

ing it from the income tax fund has little merit and will result in higher taxes. The same is true of the firemen's pension bill.

There is some remedial legislation of value, of course, and it may be of sufficient worth to redeem the many mistakes of the house on more important measures.

STATE TAX HELP DUE 7TH

An auditor from the office of the Oregon State Tax commission will be at the court house in Heppner on March 7. He will be pleased to help taxpayers in preparing their Oregon income tax returns, announces the commission.

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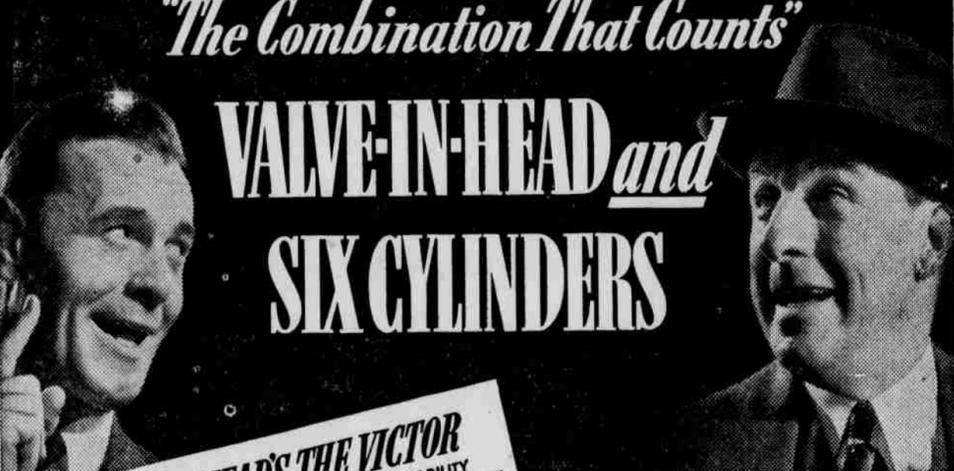
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