

STATE CAPITAL NEWS

- No Special Session
- Much Stationery
- Hot Politics

By A. L. LINDBECK

(Editor's Note—Due to enforced absence of Mr. Lindbeck from the state capital, his weekly newsletter is being discontinued for a few weeks.)

Salem, Ore.—Suggestions that the state legislature be called into special session to amend the assessment laws met with an emphatic "no" on the part of Governor Charles A. Sprague. The suggestion has been made by Portlanders, aroused over the prospect of increased taxes on residence properties as a result of the recent opinion of the state tax commission condemning the use of the "varied ratio" system of assessments in Multnomah county.

The governor declared that except for a highly vocal minority there has been no demand for a special session. Furthermore there is little assurance that the legislature could or would do anything to correct the situation in Multnomah county even if convened in extraordinary session.

Unless and until some one can convince him that a real emergency exists he has no intention of calling a special session, the governor declared.

It required 178,200 envelopes and 167,350 letterheads costing a total of \$2,204.65 to fill requisitions filed by members of the state legislature during the recent session. Stamps totalling \$6,309.14 were also requisitioned by the lawmakers and the several committees. One member of the House is charged with 6150 envelopes and 5850 letterheads, as well as miscellaneous stationery items to a total cost of \$98.37 in addition to \$69.50 worth of stamps to supplement his meager per diem. On the other hand another representative managed to get along with only 300 envelopes and 200 letterheads, at a total cost of \$4.58 while the postage bill of this modest member totalled only \$7.75.

With industry working at high gear and unemployment at a minimum indications now are that the unemployment compensation fund may reach the "ceiling" of \$14,373,512 set by the recent legislative session, before the end of the current year. Employers with unfavorable employment records during the past few years are particularly interested in this situation inasmuch as when this "ceiling" is reached penalties otherwise applied to this group of employers will be waived and the maximum pay roll tax fixed at 2.7 per cent. The unemployment compensation fund hit a new high at \$12,170,124 last week with receipts for the first four months of this year totalling \$3,130,902 compared to \$2,846,950 for the same period last year. At the same time benefit payments were shown to have dropped off by 32.5 per cent with payments for the first four months totalling only \$1,444,067 compared to \$2,141,004 for the same period in 1940.

Compliance with the law requiring uniformity in assessments will not work a hardship on the taxpayers as a whole but will only tend to equalize taxation, Chas. V. Galloway, member of the state tax commission told a group of county assessors at a conference here last week. While taxes on some properties will necessarily be increased where past assessments have been too low, other properties in the same classification will be reduced in assessed values or at least benefit through a reduction in the tax rate, Galloway pointed out.

Meeting the demands of hospitals half way the state industrial accident commission this week adopted a new schedule of hospital rates providing for an increase of \$1 per day over the rates now paid for the care of hospitalized accident cases under the workmen's compensation act. The Portland Hospital association recently demanded an increase

of \$2 a day for these services. The \$1 per day increase will cost the accident fund approximately \$75,000 a year, members of the accident commission said.

In spite of the fact that the elections of 1942 are still months in the future the political pot is beginning to simmer right merrily here in Oregon.

Howard Latourette, former speaker of the House of Representatives was definitely "drafted" as a candidate for governor at a "coming out" party staged by a group of his supporters in Portland a couple of weeks ago, thus assuring the Democrats of at least one entry in the race for that number one spot.

While he has made no formal announcement of his intentions it is generally taken for granted that Robert S. Farrell, Jr., of Portland, Speaker of the House in the recent legislative session, is definitely in the race for Secretary of State. This suspicion is strengthened by young Farrell's frequent appearance in the public print. The youthful Speaker overlooking no opportunities to get his name before the reading public no matter how far he has to stretch a point in order to manufacture an interview.

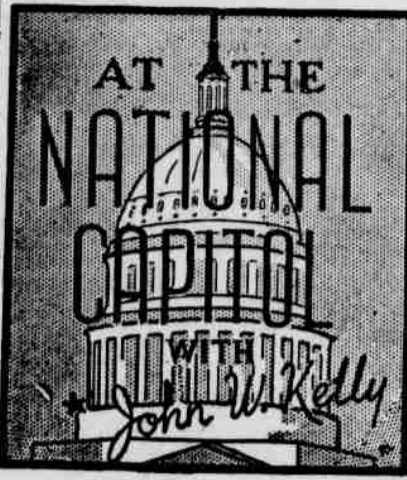
But the big question mark in Oregon's political arena is Earl Snell. Serving now in his second term as secretary of state Snell is barred by the constitution from a third consecutive term in that office. Having had a taste of political life it is believed that he very much desires to continue in the public service. But just which way will he turn? That is the question most often asked whenever two or more politically minded persons get together. Will he choose to become a candidate for governor and thus oppose Charles A. Sprague for the republican nomination, for it is generally conceded that Sprague will seek a second term. Or will he seek to wrest the senatorial toga from the veteran Chas. L. McNary who has let it be known that he has no intention of retiring upon the expiration of his present term. Most logical suggestion appears to be that Snell will enter the race for Congress from the big second district where the Republicans have been waiting a good many years for the right man to come along to defeat the veteran New Deal Democrat, Walter M. Pierce of LaGrande. As to that Snell himself is not saying and since he appears to be the only one who knows what he has in mind his future course will probably remain a matter of speculation until he finally decides to take the public into his confidence, some six or eight months hence.

Only 28 per cent of automobile owners carry liability and property damage insurance according to estimates by the state insurance department. That means that of the 400,000 automobiles registered in Oregon approximately 285,000 are not insured. Many, if not most of these, are operated by owners who, being without insurance protection, are not in position to pay any substantial claim for damages resulting from a traffic accident for which they might be responsible. This presumption appears to be borne out by the fact that in the less than six years experience under Oregon's safety responsibility act 452 motorists have had their licenses suspended for inability to pay judgments and of this number 356 are still barred from the highways, never having been able to qualify for reinstatement of their driving permits.

Science Collections at Ore. State Are Large

Oregon State College—The herbarium of the school of science here has the largest collection in America of subterranean fungi, according to a report made by Dr. Helen Gilkey, curator. The herbarium, which includes specimens of thousands of different kinds of plants, is of economic value in providing a means of identifying both weeds and crop plants, and it also provides working material for students in botany.

The collection of insects in the entomology department has recently been increased by gifts until now it ranks as the second most complete collection west of the Mississippi river.



Washington, D. C., May 15.—Isolationists to the contrary, millions of people to the contrary, the United States will shortly be a belligerent. The United States will guard merchant ships across the Atlantic—call it convoy or patrol—and soon President Roosevelt will act, for the demand for convoys increases by leaps and bounds. The industries are moving into their stride; the president has called for a 24-hour day seven days a week. William Knudsen denounced the "Friday to Monday" blackout months ago but it required many months for the administration to recognize that "Time's a-wastin'" and "It is later than you think."

Better than any other section of America, the national capital is aware of the gravity of the situation; of the plight of the British. Here centers news of the world war, which the eyes and ears of the state department are constantly reporting.

From Washington has been conducted the educational campaign which will make America brothers-in-arms with the British. America is pledged to aid England; congress has voted seven billion dollars for the lend-lease-give program. Material is beginning to move across the continent to the Atlantic seaboard. This material consists of the weapons of war and of food. There is mighty controversy raging over these cargoes whether they should paddle their own canoe or have hovering over, ever near, American bombers and destroyers until they reach the "other side."

Leading in the campaign to show reasons for convoy are members of the president's cabinet. Five of his cabinet members have openly insisted on guarding these cargoes from being sent to Davy Jones' locker. Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones, Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Secretary of Navy Frank Knox, and Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard of the president's official family have made the plea. Senator Guffey and Senator Pepper, both new dealers who frequently send up trial balloons, have urged the convoy system; called upon the president in their speeches on the senate floor to act. Admiral Emery S. Land, appointed chairman of the maritime commission by the president; several active admirals and rear-admirals have spoken for a convoy. Secretary Wickard has instructed his subordinates to put the great agricultural machine—extension agents, AAA, soil conservation committees, an aggregate of officials personally contacting farmers—into action and insist upon convoys.

All of these speakers could be silenced by one word from the president, but there is no reprimand, because guarding those supplies of food and munitions is what the president intends doing. Those are his sentiments, and that is why there is no rebuke. There is no doubt about a large section of the American people being opposed to convoys, for they are writing and wiring to members of congress; also to the president. Senators who are voicing this opposition are wasting their breath, but they show courage in carrying on a losing fight, in battling for a cause already lost. Of course, when the die is cast those senators and those Americans who are protesting convoys will abide loyally by the decision, as becomes good citizens.

Fears that convoys would be eventually used were expressed by members of the house and senate when the lend-lease bill was under debate, but administration spokesmen gave solemn assurance that there was no danger of such action; there would be no convoying by American warships, they said; the bill was just to lend or lease the articles

needed by the British which the British could not produce but which could be readily furnished by America.

Until quite recently few industrialists or labor leaders believed that there was any haste in production. Industrialists declined to expand plants until an arrangement was made that these plants would be amortized in five years and would not be a tax burden thereafter. A perfect epidemic of strikes broke out, jurisdictional, for the closed shop, for higher wages. The workers lost payment of millions of dollars while they tied up industries. These difficulties are being straightened out. In the past two weeks the first of the tanks, light and medium, have made their appearance—samples, but excellent samples, and soon there will be thousands of these machines of death. Production of powder, long delayed; of the Garand rifle, of machine guns, of large and small ordnance and equipment are all being speeded up.

America is in the process of building one of the largest, if not the largest, air forces in the world. Army and private training schools are preparing to educate another 30,000 fliers; to instruct several hundred thousand in ground work. More airports are to be constructed for army and civilian use; plane makers, now operating at capacity, must again expand their plants.

And while all this activity is in progress, while the United States is being geared for its biggest job, costs are piling high; costs which must be paid by the American people, beginning next year. Taxes will probably take 25 percent of this year's income—two bits out of every dollar.

NAMED SORORITY HEAD

University of Oregon, Eugene.—Lucille Reed, Hardman, has been elected vice president of Sigma Kappa sorority at the University of Oregon. Miss Reed, a graduate of Lewis and Clark high school, is a junior majoring in business administration at the University. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred E. Reed.

HARDMAN GIRL HONORED

Oregon State College, Corvallis.—Ann McIntyre of Hardman, freshman in education at Oregon State college, was one of 60 freshman in education pledged to Alpha Lambda Delta, national scholastic honor society for sophomore women, which gives recognition to those girls who make a high scholastic record during their freshman year.

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