

STATE CAPITAL NEWS

- No Property Tax
- Larger Trucks
- Fags in Court

By A. L. LINDBECK

Salem.—As per previous predictions the state tax levy, promulgated this week, contains no levy against property. The entire \$4,332,200 to be raised for state needs during the six month period ending June 30, next, will come from income taxes and miscellaneous sources. This will be the first time in Oregon's history that it has been possible to eliminate the entire state levy including that for support of

elementary schools. This was made possible by the existence of a surplus of \$1,821,058 in income tax revenues to apply toward expenditures of the next six months.

While the levy is the maximum permitted under the constitutional limitation it lacks \$807,838 of covering the needs of the state for the six month period, estimated at \$5,140,168.95. This apparent deficit, however, will be more than offset by unrecipitated payments, including inheritance taxes, to the credit of the general fund.

Pointing out that approximately three-fourths of all income taxes are paid during the first half of the calendar year, the state tax commission predicts "a sizeable surplus" on June 30, next, to apply on the next levy which will be made in July covering an entire year.

Truck combinations up to 60 feet in length and of a gross weight up

to 68,000 pounds are now permitted on Oregon highways if at least 50 percent of the load, either by weight or volume consists of defense goods consigned to an army or navy depot. This policy was adopted by the highway commission in an effort to expedite the shipment of defense materials. Under this ruling it will now be possible for the larger trucks operating in both Washington and California to enter Oregon without stopping at the state line to unload and reload when the cargoes are made up principally of defense materials. The order was issued under authority of a statute covering emergency operations and is not regarded as in violation of the policy enunciated by the legislature which turned down by a large majority a request for the operation of the larger trucks in this state.

Complying with a request of President Roosevelt the state is turning all of 25 local employment agencies over to the federal government. Personnel of the agencies will be retained on the federal payroll. Approximately 250 employees are affected by the change. The state will retain control over the central employment agency which will be under the direction of L. C. Stoll and which will cooperate with the federalized local agencies. The change in status of the employment agencies does not in any way affect the operations of the Unemployment Compensation commission which has exercised jurisdiction over the employment service.

A large delegation of dairymen appeared before the state board of agriculture, meeting here last week, to protest against the new ruling which requires the use of a sanitary cap which covers the pouring lip of milk bottles. The regulation becomes effective January 1. J. D. Mickle, state director of agriculture, promised the dairymen that the problem would be given further consideration and that the regulation would be administered to the best interests of the producers as well as he consumers.

Inmates of the state prison want a chance to fight the Japs. More than 400 of them signed a petition offering their services in any capacity the government might see fit to place them.

The fate of the cigarette tax bill enacted by the last legislature is now up to the courts.

Attorney General Van Winkle has held that sponsors of the referendum attacking this measure failed to comply with the requirements of the law in filing their expense statement and has advised Secretary of State Snell that by reason of this failure the referendum measure is not entitled to a place on the ballot.

Secretary of State Snell has announced that, acting upon the advice of the attorney general, he will not place the measure on the ballot next fall.

Now the Retail Merchants association, sponsors of the referendum, has turned to the courts in an effort to compel the secretary of state who last spring accepted and filed their petitions, to place the measure before the voters in spite of the weakness in their attack as exposed by the attorney general's investigation.

The investigation of the attorney general, incidentally, is understood to have been prompted by demands of the old age pension group anxious to save the cigarette tax bill, the revenue from which, estimated at from \$1,200,000 to \$2,000,000 annually, will go to augment present funds for the payment of pensions to the needy aged.

Budget Director David Eccles has launched a campaign to conserve the state's motorized equipment. To begin with he has notified all department heads that no more automobiles will be purchased except with the approval of the budget department and upon a showing of absolute necessity. He has urged department heads to arrange for consolidation of automobile trips so that in the future one car will serve where heretofore three or four have been used. As a further conservation measure he has suggested that wherever possible established carriers be used, even at sacrifice of personal convenience. Eccles is now at work on a plan for pooling all state-owned automobiles as a further step in his program of conser-

vation which has been forced on the state by the curtailment in the manufacture of cars and the shortage in the nation's supply of rubber for tires and tubes.

Secretary of State Snell has just completed the allocation of \$1,200,000 in highway funds to the several counties. The allocation, based on motor vehicle population, ranged from a low of \$2,341 to Jefferson county, with an automobile registration of 782, to a high of \$371,453.87 to Multnomah county with a total of 124,082 cars in 1941. A previous allocation of \$800,000 was made last June and a final allocation will be made in January.

Ben, Titus, acting director of the state highway department's travel bureau, estimates that visiting tourists spent \$51,000,000 in Oregon this year. Titus said that surveys conducted by the bureau indicated that tourist business in Oregon this year was 15 per cent above that of 1940. Peak of the tourist travel in Oregon this year came during August when surveys conducted by the highway department showed 55,000 out-of-state cars visited this state. Titus, however, was not at all optimistic over tourist travel prospects for 1942 with the prospect of tire and gasoline rationing threatening to cut heavily into automobile travel for the duration of the emergency.

Press Conference Set Jan. 9-10 at U. of O.

University of Oregon, Eugene, Dec. 24. — (Special) — The winter meeting of the Oregon press conference will be held on January 9-10 on the University of Oregon campus, it was announced here by George S. Turnbull, secretary of the conference and professor of journalism at the university.

Every editor and publisher in the state has been invited to attend the meetings, the twenty-fourth annual gathering of the group, Mr. Turnbull said.

The program of meetings which are scheduled to begin on Friday morning, January 9, will include a discussion of priorities and their effect upon newspaper production, wages and hours, circulation and subscription rates, the tax situation and how to make the proper tax returns, and the effect of present conditions on advertising lineage.

One of the features of the conference will be a panel discussion of the effect of women readers on the editorial and production policies of a newspaper. Five women from Eugene have been secured who will tell the editors what they like in the news columns and what fields they think a newspaper should cover from a woman's point of view.

Palmer Hoyt, publisher of the Portland Oregonian, is president of the conference and will preside at the meetings.

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