

# EDITORIAL . . . . .

## A Worthwhile Effort

As the year 1945 draws to a close so comes to an end the greatest period of government financing in which the people have taken a direct part since the founding of the United States of America. December 31 will mark the close of the great Victory loan which is the eighth and final of the colossal bond selling drives organized three years

In all this campaigning for money Morrow county has come to the fore with a generosity that ago to finance are war effort.

has marked it as a substantial commonwealth whose people have a just and abiding faith in the principles of democracy and who realize that we are an integral part of a great government. There is but one demerit mark on our record—failure to meet the E bond quota in the Mighty 7th war loan—and that has been more than made up in the current Victory loan.

Aside from the investment in bonds the people of the county have been notably generous with their subscriptions to the numerous charitable and war activities demands. Not one instance can be recalled when a quota was not reached, and to make the story better, oversubscribed. Calls for scrapiron and clothing were met with like response, Morrow placing first among counties of the state in poundage per capita on the former. On top of all the material substance provided for the war has been an indomitable will to carry on—to win the war and see that conditions created by it are corrected or peacetime conditions restored. It is that spirit here and elsewhere throughout the land that makes ours a great nation and

maintains it as the "cradle of liberty."

## A Bright Future Ahead, If-----

A new year is close at hand and it is time to take stock of what it can and may bring. It can bring to this vicinity a number of good things if we but put our minds and wills to work early. Minds have been working for some time, it may be stated, but there seems to have been a lack of will to start things moving.

First and foremost is the perennial housing shortage. There will be no attempt herewith to say what should be done; rather the object is to call to mind what can be done. Likewise there will be no effort to convince our readers of the necessity for housing. That fact is too obvious to call for discussion. How to remedy it so that newcomers will find places to live and to establish businesses is the thought in mind, yet it is not the purpose of the newspaper to do more than recite some of the conditions that stand as obstacles to progress and urge that recognition be given by those in position to do something about it.

In the first place there are desirable lots now occupied by buildings that at the best can bring but a small rental. Some of these shacks are in the very center of town and lend anything but a favorable impression to newcomers and visitors. Just what the object is of holding onto these lots or not improving them is something we have not been informed about by the owners. It is quite obvious that so long as they are not improved or the owners will not sell them, valuations in that particular neighborhood will not increase. Prospective builders will not buy adjoining property

and invest in residence or business buildings with ugly old huts for neighbors, shacks that also carry a distinct fire hazard.

Then there is the question of city-owned lots. Just why should the city hold property that has not drawn taxes for years, placing a valuation on such property on a par with privately owned lots? Is it not the duty of the city government to dispose of property

acquired by tax foreclosure at a fair price to get it back on the taxroll and at the same time induce building and betterment of the community? It is the belief of the writer that neither city nor county governments should engage in the real estate business and that in both cases disposal should be made, provided the purchaser desires and will improve the property, at a reasonable return not based upon real estate values in the immediate vicinity. If the city would take the lead by offering an inducement to someone interested in putting up a building, private lot owners might follow suit. Donating the property is not herewith advocated, but it is not unreasonable to urge a fair price on city-owned lots to encourage construction of buildings and otherwise improving the appearance of the town. The same practice could well be followed by private lot owners who are asking more than the average person is able

to pay.

It must be remembered that the war is over and that the big problem now at hand is reconstruction. People are looking for new locations. A large number of war workers from the middle west and east have remained on the coast to make their homes. If we are awake to the situation we can claim some of this new population. Cities are overcrowded and surplus population must move to the hinterland. This includes the small town as well as the smaller cities. Heppner will get its share of new people in proportion to the effort put forth to attract them. It is time to put into practice some of the postwar planning indulged in when peace was a remote possibility.

Are you reading your newspaper, your neighbor's newspaper, or ours?

W. V. Parker is in Spokane attending to business matters. Mr. Parker went to the Washington metropolis Wednesday.

The O. Wendell Herbison family are spending the holidays with relatives in Marshfield. They departed after church Sunday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Jasper Crawford and Jim and Dick went to Portland Sunday to have Christmas with relatives down there. Mr. Crawford returned to his desk in the county agent's office Wednesday but the family remained until New Year's.

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