

EDITORIAL



Why Not A Town Hall Meeting?

Numerous citizens appear to be getting exercised over governmental affairs relative to details of operating the city's business. Criticism is being heard about the hiring of employees, the salaries paid, and what the city is getting in return for all the considerable outlay of cash that has been spent in the past two years.

The Gazette Times has tendered its columns to those who have something to offer and for the first time a communication may be found elsewhere on this page. It was not written for the paper but the author has requested that it be published, and we think it is a good idea, whether we agree with the contents in full, in part, or not at all. The point is that our democratic way of life—such as is left of it—permits a free expression of the people and if the newspaper can promote the welfare of the public by opening its columns to people who have something constructive to offer it is merely extending its usefulness to its readers and to the community it serves.

Since the newspaper's offer of its columns has not been accepted, and since there are many problems of community life that need discussion and, we might say, airing, why not organize a town hall meeting and meet regularly to study and discuss these problems? Much good could come from such a meeting. A lot of help could be given both our city officials and the county court. But we can't help feeling a bit pessimistic about the attendance because when things begin to crop out in the open they frequently lose their importance. There are enough important projects and enough flaws in our governmental set-up to command the attention of all of our townfolk, and if a representative group of citizens of all walks of life could be induced to get together at stated intervals and thresh out their problems there would be fewer grievances, less backbiting, and consequently more constructive and progressive work done.

All of us are in on the expense account. Even the mayor and councilmen are property holders. Some of them are heavily invested. They are among the heaviest taxpayers of the town. Men not acting in good faith do not usually deliberately add to their own taxes. Men of good faith do that when they believe they are acting in the interest of all the people. They may be misguided in their efforts, and that is where a town hall meeting could be of inestimable service to the community. A cross section of the thought and the needs could be given the mayor and council or any other governing or law making group.

In all fairness to the officials and in justice to "we, the people," is it not about time to call all the street and office caucuses together into one general meeting and lay all the cards on the table?

Keep Oregon Clean

The Oregon Roadside Council is making an appeal to highway users throughout the state in what is termed an S. O. S.—Save Oregon Scenery. The Legislative Interim Committee on Highways is proposing a tremendous program of highway

construction and modernization with which the Council is in accord and urges its support by the people, even if it means raising the gas tax and registration fee. But the Council contends that the highway job be well done, so that tourists will be inclined to come and linger in Oregon and that travel may be safe, speedy and attractive. And here is what the Council suggests be done to "Keep Oregon Clean."

Forty percent of the passenger car mileage is for pleasure and social purposes. The tourist trade is a \$100,000,000 business, and could be made to be more. The highway engineers should provide picnic areas, forest corridors, scenic outlooks, parks, landscaping, and access to streams and beaches.

But aside from what the highway engineer can do, we the people must see to it that Oregon's great resource, the scenery of mountains, ocean, desert and farm, is not spoiled and our highways made dangerous, by inappropriate and unnecessary advertising signs. Many stretches of rural roads are already marred by large and small billboards, which are distracting to the driver and boring, if not actually offensive, to the tourist.

Commercial signs, of course, have their place. There must be signs to tell of things for sale on the property. Most of the outdoor advertising signs are now within cities and towns, where they belong. They do not belong on rural roads of high speed driving and where the passengers want to relax and see farm and forest scenes and not be importuned by billboards.

Though the owner of highway frontage may get a small revenue from billboards, most farmers do not want to have their home places devoted to that purpose, nor do they want to look out their windows at billboards on their neighbor's land. The presence of advertising signs changes the character of a property and is likely to depreciate it for high class uses.

Supreme Court decisions have said that the owner of highway frontage has no inherent rights to erect billboards for the advertising of things not for sale on the property, and that for the public welfare he can be prohibited from doing so.

That the public spirited citizens of Oregon may do their part in Saving Oregon's Scenery the Oregon Roadside Council suggests—

1. If you have rural highway frontage do not lease it for billboards; keep the property high class.
2. Purchase goods that are NOT advertised on rural roads.
3. Promote rural zoning that will limit billboards (and other structures) to places where they belong.
4. Make some study in group meetings of the roadside problem, particularly what other states are doing to keep their highways safe and attractive for tourists—Massachusetts, Vermont and Maine, for example.
5. Keep in mind that advertising on rural scenic highways of goods not for sale on the property is not essential for anybody's prosperity; the practice only began recently. The hazards to driving and the unfavorable effect on recreation seekers far outweigh any claimed monetary advantage.
6. Back up the State Highway Commission in what it is doing to "Keep Oregon Clean."

A LEADER SPEAKS

A red-headed young fireball stood in the marble halls of Oregon's capitol Friday and mapped a moral route for government.

His audience was Governor Douglas McKay, state officials and the august joint assembled legislators memorializing Abraham Lincoln.

All were deeply impressed with

solved. Some work was done, but the project never materialized. This is still a question to be settled. The feasibility of the route is not questioned; in fact, that is settled. There is but one thing left to do: complete the road. Talk is good in its place, but here is a case where less talk and more action is required. We can well remember how this same thing was talked about some twenty-five years ago, and while the Heppner people were talking, Pendleton put a road through to that section and copped the trade. Can't we just DO something once, and then talk about what we have done, rather than just what we want to do?

The generosity of the members of St. Patrick's parish of Heppner prompted this week to buy an automobile for the use of Father O'Rourke.

Thos. A. Lowe, merchant and postmaster of Cecil, was in Heppner over Sunday night last.

Dr. McMurdo reports the arrival at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Noah Pettyjohn of Butter creek of a ten-oupled son on Friday, Feb. 14th—a real Valentine.

A nine-pound girl arrived at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Anderson of Eight Mile on Sunday, Feb. 16th.

W. P. Prophet, Hardman merchant, was down to Heppner on Saturday. He had business at the courthouse.

We are informed that plans are being made for the organization of a hospital association in Heppner, in which all the people of the county will be asked to participate.

The rehabilitation of the Heppner library is at hand, and that very useful institution will be given new lease of life immediately. The following ladies have been chosen as directors of the library association: Mrs. S. E. Van Vactor, Mrs. Ada M. Ayers and Mrs. D. E. Gilman. Miss Margaret Crawford is librarian, and a committee consisting of Martina H. Thiele, Mrs. C. L. Sweek and Mrs. S. E. Notson has been appointed to select books and these ladies will serve for one year.

the address by the young man, Paul C. Smith, editor and general manager of the San Francisco Chronicle. He is rated as one of the great editors of the day.

It was not his first visit to the capitol. On that first visit 20 years ago he slept in the park under a rhododendron bush, as he lacked cash for lodging.

He said in speaking of the state of humanity, "man now can eliminate himself from the globe, but at the same time stands on the threshold of the greatest civilization ever conceived." The bomb, he declared, "is the least important aspect of atomic power. The dangerous thing is the detonator, which is explosive human behaviorism." Typical of behavior, he listed promotion of class war, attempts to punish political enemies and refusal to yield even at a traffic intersection.

In the evening at a Lincoln Day dinner he admonished sad-eyed republicans to put more time to evaluating practical principles and less time in manipulation of personal interests.

GOVERNOR IREKED

Everyone attending a legislative session eventually arrives at that all-time-low of mental demerch to question, "When will the legislature end?"

This season's problem baby, says Governor Douglas McKay, is "When will the session start?"

The governor is of the opinion that the more important state problems should have the green light and be considered first. He has a special message prepared which he will deliver to the legislature if the house taxation committee does not show some action this week. This committee is the only one that can pass on tax-creating measures. Such bills must originate in the house. The governor had expressed a desire to keep out of the legislature's business, but he said, "Now is the time something has to be done."

On the 36th day of this session there had been 690 bills, resolutions and memorials introduced, with 64 passed by both houses and 36 of them signed by the governor. Nearly all of the legislation passed so far has been of comparatively minor importance.

The 1947 session had 1060 bills and other measures, with the session lasting for a record of 83 days.

TAX DOCTORS STYMIED

Besides many huge problems of finance the house taxation committee has 26 bills including those providing for repeal of the withholding tax, eliminating withholding tax on wages of agricultural and domestic workers earning less than \$50 a month; a 3 per cent tax on businesses operating in Oregon and also in other states; a 10 per cent tax on theaters, races and athletic contests; timber lands to be assessed by state tax commission instead of county assessors; a 1/2 of 1 per cent gross receipts upon business; placing tax on pinball machines etc.; that federal income taxes shall not be deducted from state income tax payments;

Congressman Asks Overtime Exemption Rule Be Retained

Congressman Lowell Stockman of the Second district of Oregon urges that the Fair Labor Standards Act retain the exemptions from overtime in the handling of agricultural commodities.

In his appearance before the house committee on education and labor he stated: "Nature demands that crops be planted and harvested when the season is right, regardless of what the wage and hour law may be. It also demands that the perishable crops of the district I represent in Oregon be processed immediately after they are harvested, and that the work continue until the crop is properly cared for. If the work is to continue to enjoy the fine fruits of the Hood River valley in Oregon, these famous cherries, apples and pears must be handled within a period of a few hours after they reach maturity, regardless of the overtime work this requires. If the farmer and processor loses the exemption for such overtime work which he has heretofore had un-

a 2 per cent tax on cigarettes, license dealers, fix minimum sales price; placing corporate excise tax on telephone companies, public utilities, etc.

FEDERAL PRISON FOR WOMEN

More adequate conditions for rehabilitation of women prisoners of the 11 western states could be achieved if all were incarcerated in a federal prison in one of the states, is the belief of Warden George Alexander of the Oregon penitentiary. The plan was proposed at a recent meeting of the American Bar conference and was approved in principle by the western regional conference of the Council of State Governments.

A bill authorizing the state to cooperate with other western states in the plan has been introduced in the legislature.

The states have different ways of handling women prisoners. California, with about 300 women prisoners, has a prison for them exclusively at Tehachapi, and has been trying to get the government to take it over.

The plan would be effective when ratified by California and two or more of the states of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Wyoming and Washington.

der the wage and hour law, then the price of these fruits will be prohibitive and the result will be utter waste of the products and financial ruin to many of our farmers and processors."

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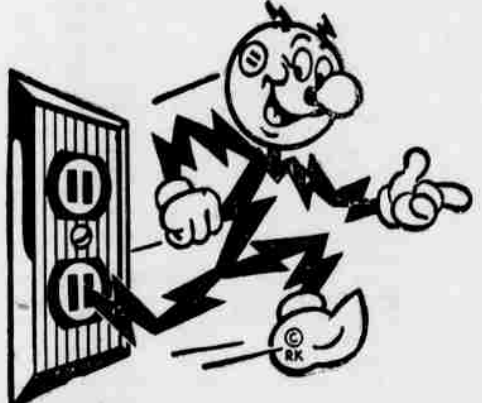
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By turning off lights and appliances you've made it possible for me to keep on serving you . . . right through the famous cold spell, when streams froze up and the power plants just couldn't give me enough strength to do all the work people normally want me to do. I certainly appreciate your cooperation.



Now I can work full time Except between 5 and 6 PM

Milder weather, longer days and improved water conditions have combined to let me work normally for you again . . . except between 5 and 6 at night. Please continue to turn off lights and appliances during that peak hour, for I still don't have enough power plant capacity to work at full strength during those 60 minutes.

Reddy Kilowatt
Your PP & L Electric Servant

P. S. Please don't waste power at any time, and please be alert for notice of any new development whether due to weather or possible breakdown of heavily loaded generators or transmission facilities.

30 YEARS AGO

Heppner Monday and is again at his desk in the First National Bank. Mr. Moore has been serving with the U. S. Army for the past year, being with the Spruce division and stationed at Vancouver and Portland.

The ladies of the Red Cross chapter are busy these days working up their allotment of refugee garments, which they wish to get ready by the first of March.

The fire company held a meeting at the council chambers on Thursday evening last and it was decided to give a dance on Saturday evening, February 22, to raise money to be applied on the purchase of rubber hats, rubber coats and rubber boots for the use of the firemen.

County Agent Brown held a squirrel poisoning demonstration at Morgan on Saturday last.

C. E. Lundell of Ione this week disposed of his Gooseberry farm to Jess Warfield. The Lundell farm consists of 800 acres and is one of the best wheat producers on the ridge between Eight Mile and Gooseberry.

(Editorial): The newly organized Heppner Commercial Club is going to get down to business on the proposition of some of the roads leading to this city from interior towns. Some four years ago there was a big road meeting in Heppner and there was a move started that had the appearance of getting the Ritter road problem

Third Anniversary DANCE

MARCH 19

Ione American Legion Hall

WATCH FOR ANNOUNCEMENT
In Next Week's Gazette Times about the music.
A Good Orchestra will be retained.