

### Proper Understanding of Fire Department Problems Said Bond Issue Vote Need

"If the fire department financing bonds are defeated at the primary election, I feel certain it will be because the voters of Medford have not been given a proper understanding of the problems of fire prevention here."

This was the gist of Acting Fire Chief Leo Weidner's remarks Friday when he discussed the proposed bond issue for a group of property owners meeting at the Girls' Community club.

**Class 5 Department**  
"The longer we let it go, the more it will cost eventually," Weidner said referring to the improvement of the department. "The fire department has been pretty much forgotten since the last fire insurance rating in 1933," he added. "We now have a department which was Class 5 for a population of about 11,000 people. At the time this rating was given, Medford had a property valuation of \$7,600,000. Today the population is near 20,000, with a valuation of more than \$20,000,000. But the fire department is the same," Weidner said.

The chief, who is on loan to

the city from Portland where he is a senior fire captain, explained the insurance rating bureau's system of demerits for fire departments. An arbitrary 5,000 points are given each city, and then each deficiency in fire preparedness is given "demerit points" to indicate the rating, he said. In 1933, Medford had 2,133 demerit points taken from a possible 5,000, placing it in Class 5. **Would Raise Rates**  
"I don't know what the rating bureau will do," Weidner said, "but on the basis of the situation here at present, it couldn't do anything but raise insurance rates."

In 1933, Medford was given 310 demerits for its water supply, he said, and at that time there were two sources of supply, the present system, and a stand-by auxiliary line from Fish Lake. The department proper was given 816 demerits from 1,500 points; the fire alarm system was given 398 demerits from 550 points; police cooperation got 35 demerits from 50 points, and other phases were comparable on the basis of demerits, he explained.

Weidner went on to explain the plans for improvement and modernization contemplated under the proposed bond issue. These include the purchase of a new aerial ladder truck, an alarm system, two new substations, added manpower, and new hose.

**One of Few Cities**  
Medford is the only city over 10,000 population in Oregon which does not have such equipment, he said, and one of the few cities in the nation of nearly 20,000 population without one. The truck's chief purpose is to save lives, he said, but in addition it would be a potent weapon in fighting fires in tall buildings, packing houses and lumber mills and yards.

Weidner covered other phases of the proposal, and supported his arguments with facts and figures. He said that the alarm system, in the high-value portion of town and at schools, would be a great safety factor, and a protection from the "excited caller." The new sub-stations, he said, would give much more efficient protection to the east and west sections of town, and would supplement the protection now available from the central station. The congested traffic in the downtown area, and the railroad tracks west of the main station, provide a serious problem in furnishing protection, he pointed out.

**Man Power Needed**  
He also cited the need for additional manpower, and the penalties, in the form of higher insurance premiums, which the rating bureau provides for the lack of sufficient men.

He pointed out that the hose on hand at the department now is only enough to equip present vehicles. If hose repairs, or drying, are needed, it means taking equipment out of service, he said.

The next insurance rating is due sometime this year, he said. One has not been made since 1933, but they are ordinarily made each 10 years.

"Fire protection will cost money," he said, "but whether we pay for it in terms of insurance premiums to New York companies, or keep the money at home in the form of an improved department, is up to the voters."

### Antiquated Method of Plowing Found Better for Egypt

Cairo (U.P.)—A Canadian, Dr. James B. Harrington, who is adviser to the Egyptian government on agricultural matters, believes that the antiquated method of plowing in Egypt may be superior to modern methods.

In an interview, Dr. Harrington said:

"The plow used by the Egyptians is far less destructive to the soil than the modern mould-board plow. This view, expressed in one of the best sellers of modern years, 'Ploughman's Folly,' is clearly borne out here."

"The Egyptians have been using these plows for a great number of centuries, and they still get from the soil some of the highest yields in the world."

**Unchanged by Time**  
Describing the plow, Dr. Harrington said:

"The plows used in Egypt are almost universally the type used thousands of years ago. A flat-tish, rounded piece of iron is fastened to the forward part of a wooden share. This in turn is fastened at an angle to a long beam of wood."

"The forward part of this goes between the two oxen, while the rear part curves upward to be held as a control by the plowman."

"The angle of the plow can be adjusted for different plowing depths by means of wooden pegs and holes where the plow is fastened to the beam. The job done resembles that done by one above of a duckfoot cultivator."

**On Loan to Egypt**  
Dr. Harrington is on loan for 16 months to the Egyptian government from Saskatchewan University.

For the past 25 years the Egyptian government has been conducting scientific investigation into the breeding of grain.



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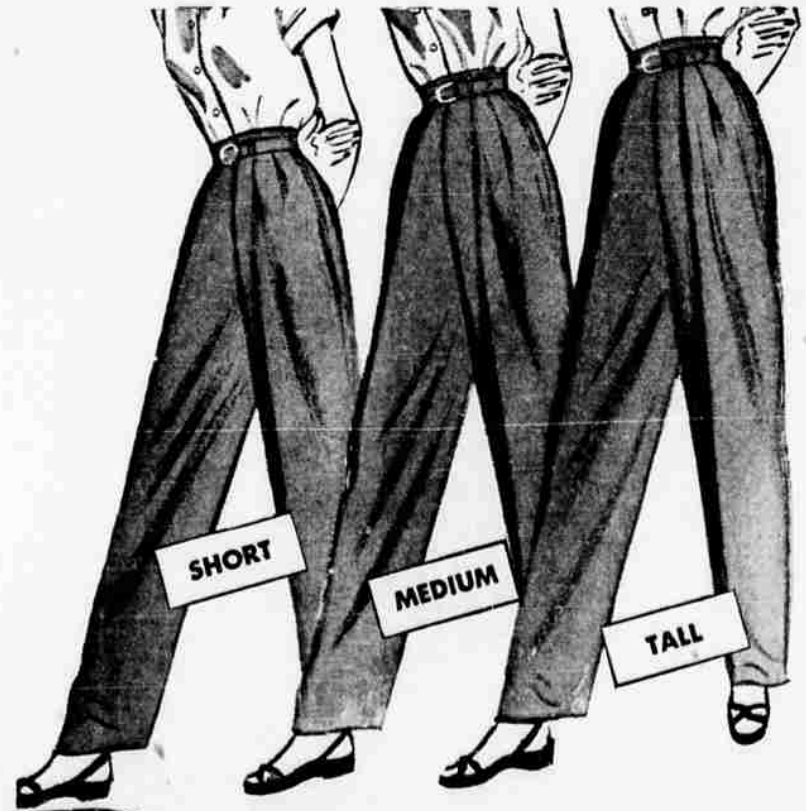
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