

Phoenix Businessmen Debate Proposed Tax

Phoenix—More than 20 business owners of Phoenix appeared Wednesday night before the city council over a proposed \$10 business tax. They protested it on the general grounds that it was unfair as a "class tax."

J. M. Cook, a fountain owner, asked the council what the extra money was to be used for, "as the business owners already pay such a high tax to other levels of government." Others said they wouldn't mind paying the proposed \$10 tax if they knew what the money was going to be spent for, and that "if the burden would be equal on all businesses."

Seek Lower Burden

Councilman Cecil Norris told those in attendance that the council was seeking to lower the general tax burden on the entire city and was considering the business tax as a method generally recognized by other municipalities for raising needed revenues. He stated that the council and citizens' budget committee had already cut about 20 mills, or one-third off the next fiscal year's taxes from the present 50.4 mills and was seeking another means of raising money.

He explained that "we are

only trying to put ourselves on a par with the other communities, and with the 49 Phoenix businesses we could raise about \$500 annually."

Tells of Needs

Mayor E. R. Claffin said the town will have to have another water tank to replace the present 60,000 gallon tank and six-inch pipe line. "At the present time our main source of revenue is from our water money and state gas tax returns," he said, adding that the additional 50-cent charge effective July 1 on the base water charge would cover the water expansion and maintenance, but that more was needed for the general fund.

"City affairs are just like any other business," Mayor Claffin pointed out, "we have to find money to meet needed improvements." Norris added that a sewage system is contemplated, along with better streets, which aren't covered from gas receipts. The latter also said he believed that in the long run the benefits from the tax would increase the property values from the associated improvements and that if the city was "going to progress it had to plan today for tomorrow."

Explains Theory

In reply to the question of why businesses should be taxed and not the general public, Attorney Frank Van Dyke, Medford, explained that the business tax was generally accepted because "it is reasoned that such property receives more benefits from police, fire and insurance reductions than the residence property owner who has a smaller investment and not as much at stake." He said this was the "theory" behind the tax as almost "universally" applied.

The mayor directed the city attorney to draft an ordinance which will be submitted at a special meeting in the near future. The council, in other business, amended a pinball machine ordinance to assess a \$3.50 tax monthly on only "reel and pinball machines which the public is permitted to play without consideration." The amendment was made after a report that the old ordinance applied to juke boxes and other amusements which didn't make enough profit to cover the tax and which will now be free from city assessments.

New Dog Law

A new dog ordinance was passed, effective from April through July of each year. It requires the confinement of dogs to owners' premises, with dogs on leash and controlled when off the owner's premises.

Fines that may be imposed include \$5 for the first conviction, \$15 for the second, and \$50 for each subsequent conviction. A resolution was adopted by the council commending the late Councilman Earl Briscoe for "untiring efforts in public service to the community."

The council unanimously approved appointment of Mrs. Earl Briscoe to the unexpired term of her late husband after they were notified that she would accept the office.

The mayor appointed Councilman Norris as president of the council, a position held by Mr. Briscoe before his death.



FORMER TAX CHIEF RETICENT—Joseph D. Nunan Jr. (right), former chief tax collector, accompanied by his attorney, Richard Burke, arrives to testify before the House ways and means subcommittee in Washington. Nunan, who pleaded illness on two previous occasions, said he was appearing against the advice of his physician and declined on constitutional grounds to answer questions regarding his financial affairs.

Eisenhower Opposes, 10 Medford-Area Men Named to Pear Group

Washington — (U.P.) — Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower said Thursday that a congressional cut of \$1,000,000,000 in foreign aid would "seriously" affect defense of Europe.

Eisenhower made his views known in a cable from Europe to Chairman Tom Connally, D-Tex., of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He said it is up to Congress to balance the risk of Communist attack against the risks of "ruinous spending."

But the \$1,000,000,000 cut voted in the \$7,900,000,000 foreign aid bill by Connally's committee "would be heavily and seriously felt," he said.

Ten residents of the Medford area were elected trustees and alternates on the board of the Oregon-Washington-California Pear bureau at a recent meeting of the organization in Portland, according to a bureau release.

Trustees include Joe Naumes, David Holmes, H. B. Murphy, Floyd Baker and Don Root. Alternates named at the meeting are Harry Holmes, J. J. Finegan, David Lowry, Martin Luther and Lyndel Newberry.

Murphy was also elected fourth vice-president of the pear bureau at the Portland meeting.

Tax Commission May Uncover Many Dollars Of Unreported Stock

By WILLIAM WARREN

Salem—(U.P.)—State Tax Commissioner Robert Maclean has revealed that the tax commission may uncover \$100,000,000 of unreported values of merchandise stocks in Oregon this year.

Maclean, who heads the commission's assessment division, said in a single case the commission discovered \$1,400,000 additional value of merchandise stocks unreported to the county assessor.

The present "honor system" of reporting personal property became effective in 1942, during World War II.

No Police Attempt

Maclean said all attention at that time was devoted to the war effort and no attempt was made by assessors to "police" the reporting of personal property, including merchandise stocks in trade. By the time the war ended, assessors had become used to accepting the taxpayers' returns as correct. Another reason some firms failed to report their entire merchandise stocks was that the assessment ratio used by county assessors on personal taxes was far higher than the ratio used in assessing real property.

Ratio Cut Recommended

Because of this, the commission has recommended a reduction of the ratio on personal property, and most of the counties have followed the recommendation.

The break-down of the "honor system" of reporting was discovered when the tax commission early this year assigned one man to "spot check" merchandise stocks in two counties. The results, said Maclean, were startling and much worse than expected. So three additional men were placed on the job and "spot checks" have been made in every one of Oregon's 36 counties.

Results of those checks are

forwarded to the county assessor with recommendation that immediate attention be given the list and other firm checks. This recommendation has been followed.

Maclean stressed that the program was not likely to bring in more money in the way of taxes but was expected to even the load. He said:

"While the program we have launched is not likely to bring in more tax dollars, because of the lowering of the assessment ratio, it will tend to equalize the tax on all merchandising stocks. Many merchants have been reporting 100 per cent value of merchandise and so have paid more than their just share of the tax load. When we get those firms up to true appraisal on stocks, all will pay their equal share. We intend to make a practice of continuing the checks on merchandise stocks."

FAMILY CARRIES ON

Proctor, Vt.—(U.P.)—One former governor has succeeded another as head of the Vermont Marble Co. The new head is Mortimer R. Proctor, who was named to succeed his grandfather, Redfield Proctor. Both are former governors.

Washington — (U.P.) — Rep. Henry M. Jackson, (D-Wash.), said Thursday he would suggest that a proposed new foot and mouth disease laboratory be located in the Caribbean or the south Pacific.

JUST A COINCIDENCE
Winston-Salem, N.C.—(U.P.)—Mrs. M. W. King and Mrs. M. W. King occupy desks side by side in the business office of the Forsyth county welfare department. They are not related.

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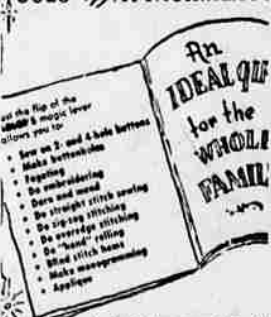


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