

48th Legislative Assembly 'Undistinguished,' Most Observers Agree

Bills in Legislature

Salem—(U.P.)—The Joint Ways and Means committee of the Oregon legislature yesterday approved a \$7500 budget for the Battleship Oregon' commission. The Oregon Historical society biennium budget was cut from \$50,000 to \$45,000.

Salem—(U.P.)—The Senate Elections committee yesterday recommended that a legislative interim committee be formed to study the Oregon Corrupt Practices act.

Formation of the committee would delay action on several bills introduced during the current session to change campaign laws.

Salem—(U.P.)—A bill to permit formation of grasshopper control districts similar in organization to rural fire protection districts was being prepared today by an eastern Oregon legislator.

Sen. Stewart Hardie of Condon said he was introducing the bill at the request of W. W. Weatherford, Heppner rancher.

Weatherford said the grasshopper problem was serious, particularly in Morrow and Umattilla counties. He said Department of Agriculture studies show the area has an infestation of 14 to 28 grasshoppers per square yard. Eight to 11 hoppers per square yard will eat as much as a cow on a range, he said.

A bill to allow ranchers to set up their own districts and tax themselves to control grasshoppers would help the control fight, he said.

Salem—(U.P.)—A measure to increase statutory maximum pay of bar pilots was passed by the House, 33-21, yesterday and sent to the Senate.

The bill, introduced by Reps. Orval Eaton, Astoria, and Thomas R. McClellan, Notsu, would increase maximum compensation for piloting vessels over a bar from \$2.50 to \$3 per foot draft and from 2 to 2 1/4 cents per register ton.

Rep. Harvey H. DeArmond, Bend, objected to the bill, saying the Legislature was establishing maximum compensation for a private operation which he said was unconstitutional.

Salem—(U.P.)—Attorney General Robert Thornton ruled yesterday it would be constitutional for Oregon to have a special election should the Legislature's tax program be threatened with delay by referendum.

The opinion was given at the request of Rep. Loran Stewart, chairman of the House Taxation committee.

Salem—(U.P.)—The Senate has passed and sent to the House a resolution that would amend part of the constitution which calls for the governor to receive a salary of \$1500 a year.

The section, which has been ignored since 1862, was part of the original constitution written in 1857. It also provides the secretary of state shall receive \$1,500, the treasurer \$800 and Supreme Court justices \$2,000 each.

A taxpayer in 1936 sued to have the governor's salary cut back to \$1,500, but the State Supreme Court held the Legislature could fix salaries. The governor now gets \$15,000, Supreme Court justices \$12,000 and the secretary of state and state treasurer \$10,000.

Salem—(U.P.)—The Senate Highways committee didn't give the green light to a measure to prohibit ambulances from running red traffic lights Monday, pending a study of possible amendments.

Rep. George Layman of Newberg, author of the measure, told a hearing its purpose was aimed at reducing number of traffic accidents resulting from speeding ambulances colliding with other vehicles at intersections.

Irving F. Wedel, Salem Memorial hospital administrator, suggested that ambulances be made to stop for red lights and then to continue if traffic were clear. There are some cases, he said, where delay might cost the life of a patient.

Salem—(U.P.)—Two bills that would alter the state's school support fund's distribution program were argued at a hearing before the Senate Education committee Monday.

One measure would attempt to apply anticipated increases in the support fund to equalize the tax spread between different income groups. The other would change the support plan to achieve the same end.

Relative merits of the two bills were that the one would attempt to equalize the educational opportunities of school children, while the other would attempt to equalize the tax burden.

School officials from Portland and eastern Oregon were strongly opposed to the proposal to change the school support formula.

HUSKIES PUT IN BID
Seattle—(U.P.) The University of Washington will put in a bid to hold the NCAA 1956 basketball championship finals at Edmondson pavilion, Harvey Cassill, the school's athletic director, said today.

'Agreeable, Incompetent' Tag Put on Legislature by Veteran; Governor Concur

(Editor's note: Mrs. Bren (Olive) Starcher, society editor of the Mail Tribune, last week end attended a meeting of the Oregon Presswomen in Salem, and stayed over to visit the legislature for two days before returning home. Following is her report on impressions she received during her legislative visit.)

By OLIVE STARCHER
Mail Tribune Society Editor

The 48th legislative assembly of Oregon, 80 days old today, will probably be written down as an undistinguished one. This is what is being said in the halls, in the press room, in the offices of state officials and at the numerous gatherings which go on in Salem during a session.

One competent observer, a veteran of many legislative sessions, said "this is the most agreeable and the most incompetent legislature I can remember for a long time." Newsmen listening agreed. A tax expert who has attended several sessions said Monday morning "practically nothing useful has been accomplished so far."

Many In First Terms

One reason given for the inability of the two bodies "to get going" is the high percentage of members serving their first terms. It takes time to learn procedures and routine, and the absence of experienced men to guide the newcomers is being felt in both House and Senate. This session has also seen more than the usual number of "garbage" bills, which prevents the legislators from putting their minds to the really important problems.

Even Gov. Paul Patterson feels that things are not going too well. During an interview Tuesday with three members of the Medford League of Women Voters, the governor remarked wearily, "This is a peculiar legislature," and then added, "But they have had some peculiar problems to solve."

The league committee discussed with the governor his stand on HB99, which would provide state inspection of meat. The governor sympathized with the women but pointed out that he was struggling to put through even the most important points of his program. He declared that appropriations for a new mental hospital in Portland are "in danger," and added, "I am not even sure I can get through a little appropriation of \$48,000

to put an educational TV program in operation."

Governor Weary

Governor Patterson looked gaunt and weary, and it is being said that Republican party leaders are worried that he is working too hard. His staff is too small, some say, and he is too conscientious about his duties. Party leaders don't want Governor Patterson to use up too much of his strength now, for many of them are counting on him to oppose Senator Morse in the next election, and they keep telling one another that whoever campaigns against Morse will be in for a rugged time and must be in top physical condition and in good spirits.

Mrs. Frank Fairweather and Mrs. Harlan P. Bosworth Jr., official members of the league delegation, were undiscouraged by the governor's refusal to make an issue of the meat legislation (they did not really expect that he could) and returned to Medford last night feeling that the battle on HB99 is not lost by any means.

Attend Committee

Monday night they attended a meeting of the meat marketing and livestock committee during which a resolution was passed pledging representatives of meat packing firms to double their license fees as a means of financing a state meat inspection program, providing the House ways and means committee would appropriate a minimum of \$100,000 this term. The figure of 400,000 first set as necessary was said to be "unrealistic."

Tuesday the two women talked to some 30 people, including Jackson county legislators, Rep. V. T. Jackson, who kept the bill from being killed by the ways and means committee and Rep. Robert J. Stewart. Labor has supported the meat bill with the statement that it is needed health legislation.

Governor Patterson also told the league members that many Jackson county voters are taking a firm stand for a sales tax as a means of solving the state's pressing financial problems. Rep. E. H. Mann from Jackson county also said he had had several letters urging him to support a general sales tax, and Mrs. Phillip Lowry reported that letters to her husband on tax matters heavily favor such a tax. (Senator Lowry is being praised as the most outstanding of the freshmen legislators).

See Cigarette Tax

Many around the State House are saying that the cigarette tax bill will pass, and that possibly the general sales tax will become the subject of an initiative from the people after this session is closed.

Monday morning the House passed four tax bills, HB238, the "skyscraper" exemption repeal and utility exemption repeal; 495, a corporation income tax to catch interstate firms; 495 which is an insurance premium tax and 520, a withholding tax increase to include farm workers.

To the voter attending the legislature for the first time, committee hearings are often more interesting than the actual sessions of the House and Senate. One of the liveliest of the hearings Monday was on SB333 and SB323, both of which would change the formula under which state school support money is allocated. Of the 14 or 15 speakers this reporter heard, well over half were opposed to both bills. It is understood that Jackson county would profit from the new formula.

Many Appear

Appearing in favor was Cecil Posey, executive secretary of Oregon Education association, a retired professor, a PTA representative and one or two other citizens. Included in the opposition were school board superintendents from Klamath Falls, Oak Ridge and Pendleton, and former Senator Giles French of Sherman county, as well as representatives of the Oregon Grange, labor, a citizen's committee of 400 Portlanders, Portland American Association of University Women.

Those favoring the bills brought up the usual arguments of the inability of poor districts to provide standard education for their children, while those opposed said the new formula "doesn't provide equality of education but only equality of

Peter Lawfords Become Parents of 7-Lb. Boy

Hollywood—(U.P.)—Actor Peter Lawford and his wife, Patricia, today were the parents of a seven-pound boy.

Mrs. Lawford, the daughter of Joseph Kennedy, former U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain, gave birth to her first child in St. John's hospital at Santa Monica yesterday.

taxes, and if we are going to equalize school taxes, why not other types of taxes," that the new formula is contrary to the principles laid down in the first state school support law, that state support is promoting inefficiency among districts and has brought consolidation, strongly proposed by the Holy report, almost to a standstill.

Educators, school board members and parents were also out in force Tuesday morning for a hearing on a bill which would repeal the law which makes physical education compulsory in Oregon schools. The PTA favors retention of the law. Although agreeing that it may not be perfect, some said school districts were not obeying it anyway, and others said repeal or wouldn't matter, that school districts will keep their physical education programs regardless.

The director of health from the state department of education appeared upon request of the committee and said that he believed the department would still require pre-school examinations and continue its immunization programs, regardless of what happened to this bill.

Tuesday afternoon the House of Representatives was struggling with Oregon's milk problem again. Since the voters abolished the milk control law last election, a bill setting up certain regulations on producers and dairies has been introduced in the house, and caused lively debate.

Representatives Maurine Neuberger and Elmer "Gallon Jug" Deetz both spoke in opposition to the bill which will probably come up for final vote today or tomorrow.

Peak of Steel Demand Seen Arriving Early Next Month

New York—(U.P.)—Iron Age magazine predicted today steel production to near-record levels before the downturn comes.

It noted "the terrific demand from automotive companies in the critical production period just ahead."

"The car makers underestimated strength of the new car market and are trying to make up for lost time," said the national metal-working weekly. "Meanwhile, the market build-up is spurred by pressure from virtually every industry."

Steel operations this week are scheduled at 94.5 per cent of capacity, up one-half point from last week.

"A leveling off can be expected this summer," Iron Age stated. "But on a seasonally-adjusted basis it probably will indicate an improvement and continuation of the recovery movement."

"There will be another upturn following the summer breathing spell. Strength of the steel market rests on such a broad base that another surge is almost certain in the last half of 1955."

Steel and automotive labor are having an influence on the market," Iron Age pointed out. "Outcome of labor negotiations remains uncertain."

Odds Favor Settlement
"But in steel the odds favor peaceful settlement of forthcoming talks between the industry and the United Steel Workers."

"Chances are that negotiations in the steel industry will wind up with a moderate wage increase, followed by a compensating price boost."

"Meanwhile, automotive pressure has created tense feeling among steel consumers," Iron Age said. "Everyone is clamoring to get his requirements on the books and from the mills as fast as producers can handle them."

"This factor will pitch steel

Woman Sues Husband In 11th Divorce Case

Memphis, Tenn.—(U.P.)—The odds favored marriage today as Mrs. Garnett Lee Pearson sued her husband for divorce for the 11th time of their five years of marriage.

Only once has she gone through with one of the divorces and then she remarried.

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