

Duncan Urges Constituents To Write Giving Views on Upcoming Legislation

(Editor's note: This is another in a series of reports on the 49th session of the Oregon state legislature, written by members of Jackson county's delegation.)

By REP. ROBERT DUNCAN

Salem—The pace in Salem has quickened considerably. Meeting follows meeting from early morning till late at night. The newspapers must be read, correspondence read and answered, and many people consulted each day. Every bill which is up for consideration must be studied carefully so that one's vote represents as nearly as possible a judgment based upon consideration of all sides of a question.



Rep. Robert Duncan

When bills come up about which no one has written, I must make a definite effort to secure opinions from interested people. I urge that you follow the introduction of legislations and write Mr. Lowry, Mr. Littrell, and myself concerning it and giving us the reasons for your opinions. It is difficult to persuade or to be persuaded by opinions unsubstantiated by facts or examples.

Three controversial issues have reached the floor of the House. The first was a memorial requesting the Congress to enact some sort of federal aid to education. I believe that the principle of equalization of educational opportunity for all youngsters is a valid one, whether on a county, state, or national level, and therefore supported this memorial.

Dam Memorials
Next came memorials urging federal construction of John Day dam and a high dam at Hells Canyon. The John Day Memorial passed without a dissenting vote, Republican or Democrat.

The Hells Canyon question disturbed me greatly, and I studied evidence assembled by the F.P.C. Hearing Examiner far into the night. I feel that it is unfortunate that river development has become an emotional and political issue. Neither public nor private power are ends in themselves. Both are a means to an end, which is the maximum development of our national resources. I became convinced

that the high dam at Hells Canyon would provide maximum benefits, even taking into consideration the economic waste involved in flooding out the works already constructed by Idaho Power company. This waste (and it is waste, regardless of where the loss falls) bothered me most. I regret exceedingly that Idaho Power elected to commence construction when the fate of its projects had not been finally determined, either judicially or congressionally.

Sales Tax
Finally, the Sales Tax bill came to the floor with a recommendation from the Taxation Committee that it "do not pass," which was adopted after a prolonged debate. As I said many times during the recent campaign, I am opposed to the principle of a sales tax but am aware that the alternatives may be even more objectionable. I preferred to keep the Sales Tax bill before the committee until we had an idea of the amount of money which we must raise and until an alternative program based upon the principle of ability to pay had been worked out. Therefore, I supported the motions to re-refer and to delay consideration of the bill for a period of time.

I was one of four Democrats to vote in favor of referring, and the only Democrat voting to postpone consideration. Being

both hopeful and confident that a sales tax will be unnecessary, I voted to support the committee's report when all means of keeping the measure before the House had failed.

Seeks To Pare Budget

I am interested in paring the budget of the State to the barest minimum consistent with intelligent, progressive government. I am on three Ways and Means sub-committees which will review the budgets of many of our state agencies in detail. As a member of the Joint Ways and Means Committee, I will consider all the rest in lesser detail.

It has been my experience thus far that demands for state expenditures know no political party, but reflect, rather, our business, social, and avocational interests. I am trying to save a few thousand here, and a few thousand there. It is most difficult, because those who most want to spend are working hard for their appropriation; while those who most want to save are seldom heard from, and then, only in generalities. Write and tell me what specific governmental services you think we can cut or dispense with entirely.

We cannot afford not to spend for some things: schools and mental health are counted here. Some pay increases for state employees are long overdue. Many other proposals are, in my opinion,

for things which would be desirable but things which we just cannot afford. I should like to have your ideas on such things as the State Mental Hospital, Basic School Support, 4-H Club dormitory at the state fair grounds, the Board of Health's home safety program, child guidance clinics, meat inspection (which promises to cost half a million dollars for the next biennium) and many others.

I am pleased to announce that one of the smaller budgets which Ways and Means has reported out was cut by approximately \$7,000, below the level for the past biennium. This isn't much compared with the total expenditures of the State, but every little bit will help.

One other item on which I would appreciate hearing from citizens of Jackson county is the tree tax problem about which you have read so much over the past few years. This will be a legislative problem, and I ask that you advise me whether you think the value of orchard trees and other domestic perennial plants should be taken into consideration in arriving at the true cash value of the land on which they grow.

The work is hard, but it is stimulating. My youngsters would prefer to be with their friends in Medford but are nevertheless enjoying the change and being with their grandmother.

Congressmen Flooded With Mail Urging Cut in Federal Spending

Washington—(U.P.)—Congress was getting a bagful of mail today and it wasn't all valentines. More and more of the folks back home have been writing in saying "Let's reduce government spending."

Rep. Clarence Cannon (D-Mo.), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and on the receiving end of more than his share of the letters, said he thinks this time people mean it, and that maybe Congress will listen.

Some other members weren't so sure. "It's the trees in somebody else's yard that everybody wants to cut," said Rep. Gordon Canfield (R-N.J.), "not those in their own yard."

By this Canfield meant what

members of Congress discovered long ago: That many people who favor economy in general aren't so sure when you get real specific. To oversimplify the matter somewhat, nobody from Louisiana, as far as it is known, has yet written in suggesting that government-maintained levees be abandoned on the Mississippi river.

Sudden Start
What set off the current letter-writing boom was President Eisenhower's plan to spend in the new fiscal year \$71.8 billion, a record high budget for a non-war year. Or possibly it was the fact that a number of people in high places, including Cannon and Treasury Secretary George M. Humphrey, announced in

loud voices that this was more money than ought to be spent.

Cannon, in his first comment on the matter, said mournfully that it began to look as though nobody much cared. Right away he got a round of letters from every state in the union straightening out this misconception. And the mail hasn't quit yet.

"I've never seen the time when congressional correspondence—from businessmen, labor, every segment of the population—was so uniformly demanding a reduction in spending," said Cannon. "I think the Appropriations Committee is more disposed to cut this year than ever before."

Hands Off on Mail

Humphrey's office said he had received heavy mail on the budget, but reporters weren't allowed to see it—even if they agreed not to use the letter writers' names. Hence there was no way of telling whether the mail was favorable or unfavorable to the treasury secretary's economy views.

Most of the letters apparently were going to members of the House, where appropriations bills originate. Of half a dozen senators checked who usually take moderate stands on spending, only one reported any unusual increase in letters about the budget.

This was Sen. Irving M. Ives—(R-N.Y.), who said he had received "a lot of mail" on the budget. He said, however, that it has "not been as heavy as that produced by the Truman budgets between World War II and the Korean war, although it is the heaviest of any year of the Eisenhower administration."

High Court Reverses Tax Refund Verdict
Salem—(U.P.)—The Oregon Supreme Court yesterday reversed a decree by which Jennie D. Keyes of Bend recovered a refund of \$9,344 in state income taxes.

These taxes were assessed by the State Tax Commission on the basis of the gross amount of dividends declared on certain shares of stock in a Canadian corporation held by Mrs. Keyes.

Under Canadian law the corporation was required to withhold a Canadian income tax of 15 per cent and Mrs. Keyes contended that she was entitled to credit the amount of the Canadian tax against her Oregon taxes.

The Tax Commission asserted that under the tax law such credit could be allowed only with respect to taxes of the foreign jurisdiction upon net income.

The court reviewed the Canadian tax statutes and held that the Canadian tax was in fact a gross income tax and accordingly the taxpayers was not entitled to the benefit of the Oregon tax credit statute.

Army Limits Alcohol Consumption on Posts
Washington—(U.P.)—The Army has banned the sale of alcoholic beverages on military posts to deserters and military guardsmen under 18½ years of age who are taking six months' active duty training.

The prohibition, effective immediately, also applies to 3.2 beer sold at post exchanges.

It was ordered after Rep. Walter Norblad (R-Ore.) complained at a House Armed Services Committee hearing that youths were drinking on Army posts.

Decree Directed for Mrs. Cornelia Pierce

Salem—(U.P.)—The Oregon Supreme Court yesterday held that Mrs. Cornelia Marvin Pierce, widow of the late Gov. Walter M. Pierce, was not a trustee in a half interest of a sum of money and a ranch in Union county.

The high court order reversed a Union County Circuit Court decree in favor of Pierce's four daughters by a prior marriage and a decree for Mrs. Pierce was directed.

The plaintiffs had claimed that their father and Mrs. Pierce had entered into a mutual agreement to pool their earnings and other income, and that Mrs. Pierce had agreed to hold all of such properties in her name.

Mrs. Pierce, who had been ill for some time, died in a Salem hospital Tuesday.

Washington Fishing Charges Rejected

Portland—(U.P.)—The chairman of the Oregon Fish Commission said today that "the claim of Washington sportsmen that their state department of game is propagating substantial number of winter steelhead for the benefit of commercial fishing in the Columbia river is not supported by facts."

John C. Veatch made public a letter he had written earlier to the Oregon Wildlife Federation in which he made the statement.

The statement by Veatch was the latest development in the controversy following the joint conference of the Oregon Fish Commission and the Washington director of fisheries last month. That meeting resulted in refusal to prohibit commercial fishing for steelhead in the Columbia during February.

McDonald Unofficial Union Vote Winner
Pittsburgh—(U.P.)—David J. McDonald was in line for his second four-year term today as president of the 1.2 million-member United Steelworkers Union.

An unofficial tally of the union's first contested presidential election Tuesday showed McDonald won handily, but he was presented with a surprisingly strong protest vote.

His only opponent, Donald C. Rarick, a rank and file steelworker who campaigned in a limited area for only four months with hardly any organization and with funds donated by men from the ranks, received an unexpectedly good sized vote.

The latest United Press tabulation of unofficial returns from about 750 of the union's 2,700 locals gave McDonald 148,515 votes and Rarick 63,330.

Jack Benny Signs Las Vegas Contract
Hollywood—(U.P.)—Jack Benny, the miser of television, today joined a list of performers lured to the glittering desert resort of Las Vegas by big money offers that even the famed comedian couldn't pass up.

Benny Wednesday inked his name to a contract calling for him to make his night club debut at the Flamingo Hotel at an estimated \$50,000 a week in June.

Thus opened a new chapter in the veteran comedian's life. Benny launched his career in radio, and tried his hand briefly at the movies but enjoyed his greatest success before the television cameras.

Benny was a strong advocate of the dwindling group of entertainers opposed to appearing in bistros.

Breach of Promise Charges Come Late
Ujiie, Japan—(U.P.)—Toichiro Fukushima, 72, was in jail today, charged with threatening Mrs. Musu Kuroda, 75, with a Samurai sword for "breach of promise."

Fukushima accused the widow of breaking their engagement and sloping with another man—50 years ago.

Search Party Works Way To Plane Wreck
Hot Sulphur Springs, Colo.—(U.P.)—A search party worked up through heavy snow drifts today to reach the wreckage of a private plane which crashed into the side of a 9,500-foot peak last Friday with four persons aboard.

The plane, carrying employees of Mountain States Construction Co., left Ogden en route to Denver shortly before noon Friday. It was not heard from again.

A Civil Air Patrol plane spotted the wreckage of the twin-engine aircraft on a mountain-side 19 miles south of Hot Sulphur Springs Wednesday.

The plane carried the pilot, Howard Nelson, 47; Harvey Kite, 40; A. J. Parker, 35 and Paul Keen. All resided in the Denver area.

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