

Record Number of Measures Handled By Legislature in Longest Session

BY DICK HUMPHREY
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Salem—It took the 49th Oregon Legislature an unprecedented 10 days and more than 200 ballots to get its Senate organized.

Then it took an equally unprecedented 128 days to enact some vital and far-reaching legislation in fields of taxation, education, workmen's compensation, unemployment compensation and pay raises for state employees.

Gov. Robert D. Holmes, the first Democratic governor in more than 20 years, appeared satisfied that the lawmakers had made healthy progress with his program while ex-Gov. Elmo Smith, a Republican, called the session "the worst in history."

The 49th did things in a big way.

Record Number of Bills
It set records in the number of bills handled, number of interim committee's appointed and number of issues referred to the people.

It passed a whopping \$272 million budget, up \$50 million from the current biennium.

To pay for expanding state services the Democratic House devised a tax program which repeals the 45 per cent surtax on personal income, sets new higher income tax rates, raises exemptions from \$500 to \$600 and calls for complete withholding.

Corporation excise taxes were amended in the Senate so that manufacturing companies will pay about what they do now, 4 per cent. Other businesses go from 5.4 to 6 per cent, utilities from 4 to 7 per cent and banks from 8 to 9 per cent.

The Democratic tax program got through the Legislature with surprisingly little trouble when Senate Republicans decided their equal number of Democratic colleagues should not accuse them of obstructionist tactics, but take the consequences of their tax program.

Two relatively minor tax bills hiking inheritance and gift taxes died quietly in the Senate Taxation Committee, while a bill to prohibit the state from levying a state property tax passed the Senate but died in the House Taxation committee after a wrangle on the floor.

School Budget Upped

Most dramatic educational progress was the \$15 million increase in basic school support from \$80 to \$95 per census child.

It had to wait until almost the last minute to see how the Democratic tax program fared in the Senate and how much money would be available. Gov. Holmes hoped from the start for a \$120 increase and made a last-minute pitch for \$100.

A far-reaching school district re-organization plan that could reduce Oregon's 700 school districts to 200 new administrative districts in five years also won approval. Only skirmish was over whether re-organization should be made compulsory and the bill allows a present district to keep out of the new district by a 60 per cent negative vote at the re-organization election.

After a hard fight and much amendment, the controversial "key district" bill providing a new formula for distributing basic school funds passed both Houses in compromise from that calls for 20 per cent of the money to be spent for equalizing taxes and 80 per cent on the basis of where school children are. Earlier versions of the bill would have caused substantial losses to Portland and some eastern Oregon districts and generated heat among educators and lawmakers. But the final bill cuts few districts more than five per cent at \$95 and gives substantial tax relief to poorer districts.

Tabled by Committee
A \$5 million fund to aid building in distressed school districts was tabled by the Joint Ways and Means Committee for lack of funds, but \$90,000 was provided to set up a state-wide community college program.

Most vital to labor was a package of bills raising benefits under industrial accident compensation laws by 20 per cent. Affected would be workers with permanent partial injuries, temporary total injuries, permanent total injuries and widows and orphans of killed workers.

Maximum benefits under unemployment compensations also were raised from \$35 to \$40 a week and the rate structure revised to eliminate the continuing downward trend in the unemployment compensation fund.

General across-the-board pay raises for state employees to the tune of \$4.5 million were approved and raises proposed for all top state elective and appointive officers, Supreme Court justices, judges and district attorneys. The people will vote in November 1958, on increasing legislators' pay from \$600 to \$1,200 a year. In all, salary in-

creases will total 10 million dollars from the general fund and other sources.

Board Control Still In

More than \$2 million was provided in the \$44 million higher education budget for increases of 20 to 25 per cent in academic salaries.

But both the higher education and Board of Control building programs fared less well. They were slashed 50 per cent by the Joint Ways and Means Committee before they got to the floor.

Higher education had asked for \$14 million and got \$7 mil-

lion while the Board of Control plumped for \$10 million and got \$4.5 million.

The governor's plans for re-organizing state government ran into some snags in the Senate where his bill to abolish the State Board of Control and center power over institutions in a new director of public institutions was left in committee. Also killed in the senate were plans for a full-time paid parole board.

However a department of planning and development to replace the Oregon Development Commission was saved at the

last minute and an interim committee will study possible elimination or consolidation of some of the state's numerous boards and commissions.

The people will vote in 1958 on the governor's suggestion to abolish the death penalty in Oregon except in cases where a person commits first degree murder while under life sentence.

Other Highlights

Highways: Bond issues of \$8 million to finance full state participation in the federal interstate highway program and \$12.6 million for a new section of

U.S. 101 between Brookings and Gold Beach were voted by the Legislature. Also money to plan with Washington a new bridge across the Columbia river at Astoria.

Compacts: The Klamath river basin compact with California, controlling use of Klamath basin waters, passed both state legislatures after several years work along with legislation in both Oregon and Washington clarifying the boundary.

Money also was appropriated for compulsory state meat inspection, educational TV and a series of interim committees to

investigate state problems. But members to reduce the backlog a plan to increase the state Supreme Court from seven to nine of cases failed in the closing hours of the session.



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The Family Council

Editor's note: The Family Council consists of a judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, a newspaper editor, a women's editor and two writers. Each article is a summary of an actual report. The Family Council does not give advice; it merely reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

Amy T.—He really wants a geisha girl.

Tom T.—What can I do about her troubles?

Amy T.—What goes on with all this new male propaganda about American women driving their husbands to an early grave? Whenever I say or do anything he doesn't like, my husband now threatens me that he'll have a heart attack.

We have been married ten years. We have four children. I do all my own work. I try to be a good wife and mother and homemaker. I don't make too many demands on my husband, but if I tell him about any troubles I've had during the day, right away he gives me that glassy stare and the hand goes to the heart.

My husband is in perfect health. He should be able to stand hearing about the things I have to live with every minute of the day. I listen to his troubles—though I must say they aren't much. What he really wants is a geisha girl to entertain him at the end of the day.

Tom T.—I sure wouldn't mind a geisha girl—almost anyone, in fact, who wouldn't greet me at the end of every single day with a long, long recital of mishaps and domestic problems. I'm willing to listen when there's something I can do to help, but what can I do if the groceries never arrived and the baby has been howling all day?

I know that Amy has a rough time of it, but I think she takes things too much to heart. I don't mind eating beans for dinner when things go wrong, only I don't want to hear what went wrong and I don't want any

apologies. She isn't satisfied unless everything is perfect.

Amy thinks it's very funny about men getting heart attacks because their wives aren't considerate enough, but I'm not kidding—I feel something in the ticker when she carries on.

The Council: It is very easy for a woman with four children to become lost in domestic detail and catastrophe. She moves from crisis to crisis in a mood of constant apprehension. She forgets there are such things as peace and pleasure.

Since our society does not offer tea-houses and geisha girls as the masculine escape from the burdening facts of domesticity, men like Tom (who feel bothered in the ticker) ought to do something about women like Amy (who have forgotten about peace and pleasure).

Amy's desire for perfection, and her apologies at producing anything short of perfection, sound like guilty cover-ups for her desire to chuck the whole business. That is exactly what she should do, once in a while. Tom should see that Amy gets a full day off every now and then. If he can't get an outsider to take over the household, he ought to do it himself for a couple of Sundays.

Much is said about the "togetherness" of today's families, but everyone needs some "aloneness." Certainly Amy does. If she complains after her holidays, Tom will have every right to have a heart attack.

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