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Snip and Patch Won't Do

The Oregon legislature, now in its 87th day, is getting to the point where, in the old and slightly vulgar saying, the hair is short. Or, rather more elegantly, the "moment of truth" is approaching rapidly.

The first three months of the session have been devoted to organizational matters, followed by the introduction of bills, and their consideration by committees. Relatively little floor action has taken place.

From now until adjournment, we can expect to see more solid results—although Monday's action, when the house defeated the proposed cigarette tax, and Tuesday's, when it voted reconsideration and sent the bill back to committee, give one to wonder.

WHAT this is going to do to the overall tax program still to be developed by the legislature remains to be seen. Surely the cigarette tax indecision shoots a major hole in the fiscal program proposed by the governor and by various responsible members of both houses.

The cigarette measure was designed to raise some \$18 million during the coming two years—a not inconsiderable sum, even in a budget of some \$400 million or so.

The "one-shot" withholding measure approved by the house Monday would bring in some extra money, but only for this biennium. It is, in effect, borrowing money from the ensuing biennium. And, as such, it is in line with the legislature's tendency to avoid facing the fiscal facts of life right up to the last painful moment.

THIS legislature, then, has still to decide where the money is coming from, and how much will be needed.

And the only two major tax actions, mentioned above, do little to help—unless they force the tax committee members into doing something they do not at all want to do, which is to consider writing a major new tax proposal, such as a sales tax, instead of tinkering with relatively minor adjustments to the existing tax structure.

If they do this they may be worth while after all. For, up to this point, the legislature has given absolutely no indication of any tendency to do more than pass still another stop-gap tax patch-up job, and leave any major renovations to the 1965 session.

PARTLY because of this hesitancy, this "make-do" attitude, and partly because of the very real needs of the state for additional income, we are hearing the horrid little words, "sales tax," with increasing frequency.

The Pendleton East Oregonian has called for a vote on a sales tax. So has the Corvallis Gazette-Times, which, while a most conservative paper fiscally, because of its concern for the welfare of Oregon State University, also sees the sales tax as a probable necessity if higher education is to receive what it needs.

State Sen. Walter Pearson (not one of our favorite legislators, incidentally) is one of the few who have had the courage to say, right out loud, that a sales tax for educational purposes is needed.

PERHAPS the house's reluctance to pass a cigarette tax (which is nothing but a sales tax limited to one commodity), and the realization that the withholding measure is not a permanent solution to anything (and in addition imposes substantial additional burden of bookkeeping on many employers)—perhaps these will shock members of the legislature into the realization that the time has come to fish or cut bait in the state's fiscal angling program.

The Corvallis Gazette-Times says:

"What are the legislators doing about the state tax situation? Well, instead of facing up to the problem the state must have more money and a big chunk of it if the functions of government are to be carried out properly, they are going around hunting up two-bits from this group and four-bits from that group and coming up with a patch work which will raise money, all right, but not in the quantity needed and not by the simplest means. They won't let the people of the state decide if they want a sales tax because big labor opposes it, but the people can vote on such things as capital punishment which is an emotional and moral issue."

WE ARE not saying that the sales tax is the answer to Oregon's fiscal program. We are not even saying that the people would necessarily approve it if given a chance to vote.

What we are saying is that the legislature is showing an appalling tendency to follow the lead to prior sessions, and to postpone any meaningful decision on finances until later.

Earlier sessions have gotten away with it because, in large part, they have surpluses to tide the state over. But no more. The fat's all gone.

And, if our understanding of the situation is correct, no snip and patch job is going to be adequate to the needs of a growing Oregon. Perhaps the backing and filling over the cigarette tax finally will convince the legislators this is so.—E.A.

Phenomenon

A UPI story recently said:

"People who think television and radio commercials are too loud are experiencing a 'subjective and psychological phenomenon' that can't be proved, according to the National Association of Broadcasters."

Maybe so. But it is the loudest and noisiest subjective and psychological phenomenon we've ever experienced.—E.A.



"Anyone visiting our shores for the first time could easily get the impression that 'Easter Week' was some sort of student fertility ritual!"

... Communications ...

Letters to the Editor must bear the name and address of the writer, although under certain circumstances the use of a pen name or initial for publication is permissible. The Mail Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters with a view to clarification and condensation. Letters submitted for publication must not exceed 400 words. The letters printed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the paper; in fact the contrary is often the case.

Aid Needed

To the Editor: Devastating floods and tornadoes robbed thousands of people of their homes and all of their possessions in the Southern Appalachian Mountain area within the past three weeks. Save the Children Federation, which has been helping people in that area for over 31 years, responded to the emergency and immediately distributed clothing to flood victims through our 110 clothing centers.

The Honorable Frank G. Clement, Governor of Tennessee sent a message to the Federation saying:

"On behalf of the people of East Tennessee who experienced losses in the recent storm and flood disaster, may I express my appreciation to Save the Children Federation for its voluntary assistance. I wanted you to know that I am personally aware of the actions of your agency."

The director of our clothing program reported from the scene, "Never in the 31-year history of the Federation have we encountered a situation so acute. We have used our reserves to meet this emergency and now need all possible additional clothing to alleviate the situation." And still the reports come in from the flood areas of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia telling of children without shoes or clothing, and the rising rate of sickness.

We are hopeful that individuals, schools, business firms and clubs will respond to this plea for help from the Southern Appalachians and send clothing packages freight prepaid to Save the Children Federation, Knoxville, Tennessee. Contributions of money to aid the flood victims can be sent to Save the Children Federation, Norwalk, Connecticut.

When the emergency is over and the needs for immediate relief have been met, the Federation will remain on the scene indefinitely to help the Southern Mountain people to help themselves to a better future.

Glen Leet, Executive Director, Save the Children Federation, Inc., Boston Post Road, Norwalk, Conn.

Industrial Democracy

To the Editor: I wish to make some comment on the letter of Mr. Robert A. Freeman, "On More Democracy," on his bearings on our proposed constitutional amendments, most of which deserves our hearty congratulations. But I would take issue with him to some extent that "more democracy" would not be the solution of evils he mentions. It is not necessarily the question of democracy; but the right kind of democracy. What we need most now is to supplement our political democracy with industrial democracy, together with the production and distribution and ownership in the means of life, publicly owned and democratically managed, especially those means of or on a large and a social scale.

This plan could be introduced without profit, and for the benefit of all the people. After all, one cannot control what he does not own, but if the public owned these means it would and could be produced at cost, and the cost would be governed by law democratically managed from top to bottom. But so long as we allow the unlimited private ownership of the means of production, by the good or

the smartest, so long will the most ambitious ones acquire the ascendancy and run the industries and regulate the prices, and the strongest would smother the weakest, so there you have it. And so long as we allow this private enterprise, you don't need to be surprised that crooks and their henchmen will also control the government, even though we elect them through our political method of democracy.

And if the proposed constitution doesn't contain the initiative and the recall, and industrial democracy, I don't see much use to change our old one for a worse one.

John P. Wirth, 3022 Butte St., Klamath Falls, Ore.

Minors and Drinking

To the Editor: I was amused by the 50 year's ago notice in the paper of March 28 relative to minors visiting saloons ("City agitated by report that saloons of city were visited by minors.") Times have changed very little in 50 years except that there are no longer "saloons," just night clubs.

I am sure that if you make an unannounced visit at any number of the night spots in the area about 1:30 or 2 a.m., you will find that the places are packed with teenagers, a good number of them 18 or under. Two particularly apparent cater to "kids." I have been at both places in recent weeks, and at one we were unable to get a table or even a stool at the bar because of the "kids" who were there. They were not all drinking cokes or Pepsi, either. In fact, we did not see any soft drinks being served.

I do not know the solution to the problem, nor exactly whose problem it is, but I do know that if I had a teenager I would make sure where he or she was at that hour of the morning. This situation cannot be swept under the rug as being a situation involving the lesser element of Medford and Rogue Valley, nor can it be shrugged off with the "greasing of palms" in the proper areas.

(Name on file) Medford

Fact and Opinion

To the Editor: Dear George Bell, your editorial of April 8, on the Jackson County Democratic Central Committee, was an amazing piece of work. I've been wondering how it is possible to sit in an ivory tower, look down upon the throngs of active people, be able to distinguish between the elite and the rabble, and by using pure hearsay, pass judgment and castigate a group of hard working people.

One thing is conspicuously absent in your editorial. That thing is "FACT." One gets the impression that you give his fifty or sixty thousand readers an OPINION of what happened, without due regard for the facts.

The picture you have painted has too much angry red in it. The strokes are bold and strong but the perspective is terrible. In fact, this is not a work of art at all but belongs in the school for beginners.

What is the central committee? It is the majority, even if it is only a majority of one. In the meeting of last Tuesday night, on important matters the voting was roughly two to one. This is a change from the nearly even voting of the past few meetings, which indicates that quite a number of members are changing their thinking on these matters. That puts you in the position of

Conviction Is Growing That Khrushchev Seeking To Ease Burdens of His Office

By K. C. Thaler United Press International Paris - (UPI) - Despite claims from Moscow that all is well in the Kremlin, there is growing conviction that Premier Nikita Khrushchev's leadership role is under review.

The belief in some of Western Europe's best informed diplomatic circles is he is seriously considering giving up some of his control, perhaps by surrendering the premiership while retaining the office of first secretary of the Communist party - the office that really counts in the Soviet Union and wields the most power.

As party secretary, Khrushchev still could direct foreign affairs as well as continue running the internal Communist scene. Stalin did it in his time.

There is nothing in this thinking that denies Khrushchev's hold on the Kremlin leadership. It is his hand-

picked team that is running things and the repeated expressions of loyalty from its top-most members must be taken at face value.

Talk of a Kremlin "minority" and "majority" tussling for control is discounted in most confidential diplomatic circles from Moscow.

Nevertheless there are new and heavy pressures on Khrushchev, not the least of them the Sino-Soviet ideological conflict. The differences between the Chinese "hard line" of international communism and Khrushchev's peaceful coexistence policy have continued to worsen.

It is only a few weeks ago that Red China was disclosed

to have called for the ouster of the present Kremlin leaders, presumably including Khrushchev. Since then Peking has fostered the idea that Khrushchev's days in power are numbered.

Without necessarily accepting that Peking will succeed in its drive to get the new leadership in the Kremlin, Western diplomatic reports do say that Khrushchev is more fully preoccupied and more deeply concerned by the pressures from Peking than is conceded by Moscow.

It is for this reason credence is given to the possibility he may want to free himself of some of his burdens of state to give more attention to the dispute with Mao Tze-tung without abandoning his major powers at home.

Diplomats who have seen Khrushchev recently have reported to their governments that he is looking weary. He is 69 years old. Even some Communist diplomats think Khrushchev may be looking for some succor from his present load. They say in fact he already has begun to delegate work much more than ever before to younger aides.

Today & Tomorrow

By Walter Lippmann (c) 1963, The Washington Post

REFORM AND REVOLUTION

As we look at the revolutions in Argentina, Peru and Guatemala, the elections in Chile, the tension in Venezuela and the enormous problems of Brazil, we come face to face with a very disturbing question. Can orderly and reasonably progressive governments endure through the long period of time which must elapse before the promises of the Alliance for Progress bear fruit?

The alliance is committed to a radical reform in the social order of Latin America. We must not underestimate how difficult and how unusual is such a commitment.

If they improve the standard of living too slowly, they are threatened from the left; if they proceed rapidly, they are threatened from the right. If the radical reform is to succeed, it means that in each country there must be a government which holds the confidence of the masses on the left and does not arouse the irreconcilable opposition of the upper classes on the right.

THE CRUX of the problem is in its very nature a long and slow process, a matter of long years with meager results to show in the beginning. The main talking point of the revolutionists of the Castro type is the disappointing and uninspiring gradualism of reform. And at the same time, the main talking point of the big landlords, the rich conservatives and the military dictators of the rebellious right is that the reformers will be captured by the revolutionists. To many of the most benighted among them, all reformers are revolutionists.

While it is possible to speed up reform somewhat, it is unavoidably a slow and prosaic business. It takes more than 10 years to educate and train a professional and managerial class. It takes a good many years to reform agriculture so as to liberate the country from dependence on one or two crops. Industrialization requires a capital investment not only in particular plants, but in the communications system of the country and its power facilities.

Furthermore, the development of Latin America will require the negotiation of complex world-wide commodity agreements and trading opportunities. It will require, also, big measures to relieve the pressure upon the world's monetary reserves and so to overcome the deflationary lack of liquidity which is today so big a cause of instability in the non-Communist world.

It is a false assumption to hold that the demand creates the supply; in the arts and entertainment, it is the supply that creates the demand. There was, for instance, no "affective demand" for off-Broadway theater; but the supply continued until the habits of theater-goers were changed, and today off-Broadway theater is the most vital and fruitful aspect in American drama.

There is never a demand for anything that is good until it comes along and takes hold of people. This it cannot do unless it is given a chance, unless time and care and money and energy and patience are expended upon it. Advertisers well know this - there is no demand for a new product, generally speaking, until repetition and exposure over a wide area and for a considerable time generate such a demand.

It is nothing less than a downright lie to suggest that the TV producers are giving the people what they want - and the frantic activity in changing program formats every few months exposes this lie. And it is equally mendacious to suggest - as one recent book does - that the viewers on the whole are "satisfied" with their TV fare. If they were, television would not be the programmatic lunatic asylum it has become.

Everett Acklin, Ashland, Ore.

Both these propositions are demonstrably false. As a glaring example of their falsity, I cite a recent syndicated television column out of Hollywood with the headline: "40 Nightingale Shows Destined for TV Ax."

The story said: "At least 40 of the network TV's current crop of weekly nightingale shows will be dropped by summer. About half of this number were series which made their debuts last fall."

If the hucksters know what the people want, and are giving it to them, how does it happen that the majority of TV programs lead so brief a life and undergo so suddenly tragic a death?

Why is programming in such a constant state of chaos and confusion? Why is the search so desperate for "new" material - which usually turns out to be as ghastly and unimaginative as the old material?

I submit - on the overwhelming evidence itself - that not only do the producers and networks not know what the public wants, but the public itself does not know until it gets it.

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Strictly Personal

By Sydney J. Harris (c) Field Enterprises, Inc.

THE constant theme of the hucksters in the field of entertainment - which today means mostly television - is they are "giving the people what they want." Those of us who deplore the morose offerings in mass entertainment are sneered at as eggheads who are out of touch with reality. The hucksters insist that not only are they giving the public what it wants, but the public loves it.

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