

The Evening Herald

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Saturday, February 7, 1931

Our Position Is Unchanged

OUR good friend, Charles H. DeLap, county clerk, takes us to task for criticizing the plan to change the office hours of Klamath county officials and makes the broad assertion that the writer was not acquainted with the provisions of the bill at the time the editorial was written. To substantiate his statement he points out that officers and their assistants will under the new bill, if it becomes a law, put in two more hours a week than at present.

We were as fully informed on the contents of the bill at the time criticism was made of it as Mr. DeLap. We knew then, and we know now, that the prime object of the bill is to provide a half holiday 52 Saturdays in the year for Mr. DeLap, his assistants in the office of county clerk, and for those in other county offices.

It is true that offices will remain open during the noon hour under the new bill, but does Mr. DeLap think that the taxpayers of Klamath county are so gullible as to believe that he, or any of his assistants, will go to work at the stated time in the morning and labor straight through noon until closing time in the evening without taking time off for their noon lunch?

County offices will remain open during the noon hour under the provisions of the new bill, but there is not a county officer or an assistant who will not take his noon as he has always done in the past. No reasonable individual would expect them to do otherwise.

The contention of the Evening Herald is that if the bill passes the senate, receives the governor's signature, and becomes a law, county officers will enjoy their Saturday half-holiday and put in no more hours than they are under the present law.

It appears useless to again call attention to the fact that this is not a time to reduce working hours or increase wages. If ever there was a time in the history of the country when it is imperative that everyone, employes as well as employers, sit tight, that time is now.

Taxpayers who are struggling with all their might to meet their obligations and protect their holdings will have no patience with public officials who demand shorter hours, or more pay.

Men in the mills and logging camps and other industries common to Klamath county who are returning to their labors under a lower wage than when they quit work last fall and winter, or who face the prospects of wage reductions during the coming spring, will look with disfavor any movement designed to reduce the output of county and other public offices.

Right now we are faced with the possibility of a "taxpaying strike" on the part of owners of real property in Oregon. Farmers of Willamette valley have been and are now signing agreements not to pay taxes this year on real property. Why? For the good and sufficient reason that they have been taxed to the limit and can no longer meet the obligation.

Any suggestion of shorter hours or higher wages for office holders whose wages remain unaffected by hard times will meet with nothing other than a cool reception, and deserves to.

The Evening Herald is taking the position of a taxpayer in its criticism of the bill at issue. Mr. DeLap is taking that of the office holder who is assured that he will not suffer a reduction in salary for at least another two years, and as a result is far more secure as to a living wage and security from want than thousands of wage earners who must suffer a wage reduction if industries are to resume and continue operation.

Text Books For All

THERE is a mistaken idea in the statement, "free text books," for nothing is free. Someone pays, and whether it be text books or hams and bacon the word "free" is a misnomer and entirely incorrect.

With this point settled let us go on to the issue now before the state on the text book question.

No doubt exists in the minds of fair thinking people that every child should have text books. Certainly we should not spend the amount of money we are spending for school buildings, busses and teachers and then let the entire effort drag for lack of books for the pupils. And pupils should have books regardless of who pays for them. By this we mean the school district should buy the books, but in doing so let us not make the mistake our sister state of California has made, namely: attempt a false economy by printing our own text books. In California where such a condition exists instructors find they cannot obtain the standard books for the children. And the reason they cannot obtain them is because all of the standard books are copyrighted and publishers owning the copyrights will not lease their plates to the state which is in direct competition with the publishers.

In Oregon today a statement from a parent or guardian that he is not financially able to buy books for his children makes it mandatory upon the school board to furnish books, but that is more or less humiliating and

in many instances the child suffers because of the parent or guardian refusing to "take a pauper's oath" in order to procure books for the little ones.

Yes, we can well afford to jump that hurdle and have the district buy books for all, but in doing so there should be lessons in book preservation started at once so that children will not wreck every book entrusted to their care.

Paternalism is taking hold in much more violent form in other things so why hang back on purchasing books to educate the youngsters. However, do not get it in your head that there is such a thing as "free text books" for there is not. The old faithful taxpayer pays the bill, but it is a bill he can afford to pay to complete the great educational machine which he has built up. Most assuredly the tightest taxpayer would not be willing to have the big educational machine fail to function for the additional sum needed to buy school books.

EDITORIALS

From Over The Nation

Figures

New York Sun: Senator Vandenberg's calculation of how representation in the house would be distributed among the several states if it were based on voting population rather than on the "whole number of persons" is of chief value as a counter-irritant.

It rests on an unrealistic and unconstitutional basis as the proposal to exclude aliens from the count, but it serves the purpose of throwing light on the folly of this recurring suggestion. If "the final and most convincing test of a state's citizenship is found in its percentage of actual voters," then the very states which have proportionally the largest number of aliens have also the largest measure of citizenship. Reapportionment on the basis of voting population would give New York ten more members of the house than it has at present. New Jersey six more, Ohio seven more, Indiana four more, Illinois twelve more, Michigan three more and California twenty more. There would be heavy losses in the delegations from the traditionally democratic states of the south: Virginia's delegation would be reduced from ten to four, North Carolina's from ten to seven, South Carolina's from seven to one, Georgia's from twelve to three, Tennessee's from ten to four, Alabama's from eight to three, Mississippi's from eight to two, Kansas's from seven to two, Louisiana's from eight to three and Texas's from eighteen to eight. The total representation from these nine states would shrink from ninety members to thirty-four.

There are moments when works of pure imagination are of great value. Senator Vandenberg's fiction may bring other members of congress back to reality.

A Model American

Worcester Evening Gazette: It must have happened to a good many American visitors in Paris to journey out to Versailles and, arriving late, find the palace and its grounds closed for the day. One American had this experience recently and, after he had quietly gone away as any self-respecting gentleman would, the French officials were surprised to learn that they had turned down John D. Rockefeller Jr., who had given more than a million and half for the preservation of this beauty spot.

The incident has called forth from the French press admiring tributes to Mr. Rockefeller's modesty in withdrawing without the slightest protest.

Yet the French newspapers could hardly have been impressed by the occurrence if it had revealed the customary behavior of some wealthy Americans traveling abroad.

These boundaries, by all reports have made themselves offensive and have made the name of America odious in every capital.

Geographic Questions

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HORIZONTAL

1 Which is the 37th grade of the world's smallest? 28 Pertaining to land ownership.

VERTICAL

8 New star. 9 Clique. 10 U. S. immigrant island.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

ROME HAD FELD IDEAL AREA PENS FEL IRON

LAW PAL REGAL ENAMEL PERATE ADDER SAC PIET DYNASTY

HEED ELK ABET AVAL AVE ROLE SERIE RET DALE

DAILY WASHINGTON LETTER

Union Officials Protest That Wages of Workers on Federal Projects Have Been Cut in Spite of President's Announcement That They Would Be Kept at Pre-Depression Levels.

BY RODNEY DUTCHER
NEA Service Writer

WASHINGTON—It was officially announced a while ago that the government had required contractors on federal work to maintain wage scales at pre-depression levels, but now there are union labor officials bitterly asserting that this assurance was the same sort of thing as the familiar story about there being no unemployment and the other one about how the Red Cross was adequately handling the drought relief.

Probably some subordinate government official will have to be severely reprimanded—or perhaps not. Anyway, someone appears to have been fooling President Hoover. It was Mr. Hoover, in fact, who made that official announcement. He said, just before Christmas: "The federal government has necessarily required contractors to maintain wage scales at their pre-depression levels. . . . There have been some difficulties with contractors, but these have been adjusted. . . . The president has informed the various executive departments that the policy of the federal government is that wages on contracts let by the government shall be held up to the standards existing in the districts where the work is done."

Someone has been fibbing to Mr. Hoover or outrageously disobeying him—or else workers on government construction jobs are making gross miscalculations of the contents of their pay envelopes when they get them.

Secretary John J. Gleason of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union has been making earnest protests to Mr. Hoover about it. The electrical workers' union has squawked, too, and the complaints say all the types of building trades workers have been hit by wage cuts on government jobs. In two instances the government itself is accused of cutting wages.

This international union has called attention time after time to contractors for government work in various communities where the local prevailing rate of wages has been totally disregarded. It says the monthly magazine of the bricklayers' union has been hit by wage cuts on government jobs. In two instances the government itself is accused of cutting wages.

"Contracts have been awarded to employers of non-union workers, recruited from sections where organization is almost unknown, accustomed to low living standards and low wages. But this means wage and living standards have been menaced in communities where measurably good wages have been established between workers and contractors after years of patient effort at the cost of much sacrifice."

Cite Wage Cuts
Congressman Kvale of Min-

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nesota complaints that when members call up superintendents of construction in various government departments they are informed that there has been no official notice of any administrative orders about wages.

Gleason wrote to Hoover after the presidential announcement to protest alleged wage cuts on army barracks work at Fort Riley and Langley Field, on the Federal Reserve Bank addition at Richmond and Veterans' Bureau construction at Northport, L. L. Augusta, Ga., and Knoxville, Tenn.

Some of these wage decreases amounted to 50 per cent. The construction company operating at Langley Field, for instance, asserted that to have cut masonry mechanics from \$1.50 to 75 cents an hour.

Other instances could be cited, Gleason said and contracts were continually being let for government work to contractors "notorious" for wage-cutting. He recalled that the War Department had advised Senator Capper that it couldn't do anything about the wage cuts at Fort Riley and that the War Department, Treasury and Veterans' Bureau were fully aware of what was happening.

"Powerless," Says Treasury

The complaint was turned over to the treasury, which frankly replied that it brought what pressure it could to bear on contractors but that the law required contract awards to low bidders and that contractors consequently could not be "restricted in regard to their labor."

The treasury said it wanted to notify contractors that they must conform with the government's wage policy, but that such notices had been held up pending approval of the comptroller general. Gleason replied that the question had been before the comptroller general for several months, with no action taken. He listed an additional dozen government building projects where contracts had been let to wage-cutting firms and said that the War Department and Interior Department had reduced wages on their own initiative at an experimental dam at Vicksburg, Miss., and an Indian school at Chillicothe, Okla.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

APPROVES EDITORIAL
Editor Evening Herald.

Dear Sir—I certainly approve of your Editorial appearing in the Feb. 4, Evening Herald, in regard to the half holiday for the county officials.

MADISON BROWN,
Merrill, Ore.

EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO IN KLAMATH

The income from the average farm under the Klamath project amounts to \$933 according to figures compiled by the local officials of the reclamation service in the annual report of the operation and maintenance of the department. This is based upon the average of a farm of 65 acres.

According to this report the irrigable area of farms reported is 27,939 acres. There are 430 farms in the project, and this makes the average farm area 65 acres.

It was reported on the street this afternoon that the Klamath county grand jury will adjourn this evening for 10 days. This however could not be confirmed.

R. L. "Slim" Chambers, the Fort Klamath cowboy, came in this morning from Portland, leaving shortly afterward for Fort Klamath. According to persons who saw him while in this city, he is entirely acquitted of the charge of impersonating a federal officer. Chambers was arrested on the charge a few weeks ago, and taken to Portland by the United States marshal.

Society in the Village—

A novel method of spending a social evening came to the front Wednesday night when a number of young people assembled at the Club Bowling alley and spent several hours playing the ten-pin game.

Fike and their ladies will attend a hard times masquerade ball, to be given Wednesday night at Houston's Opera House.

A Herald Classified Ad Will Sell It.

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