The Herald and News

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Mormon Country

By BILL JENKINS

For some odd and unknown reason, the country from Salt Lake City clear on out to the desert again reminds me strongly of the Willamette Valley. I don't know why unless it be that the vegetation seems to be much the same, and almost all the homes are banked with flowers and surrounded with green lawns.

Of course the day that we happened to make that drive, low hanging clouds had all but obscured the jagged peaks which loom up over the valley. We caught only occasional glimpses of the feet of these raw giants. The country is built up practically solid all the way from Salt Lake as you go on out through Murray, which may or may not be the end of State Street, Midvale, Riverton, Lehi, American Fork, Orem and on to Provo.

Lush fields where they grow a sprinkling of everything lie on both sides of the wide, well-constructed, well-lighted highway. I cannot speak as flatteringly of Utah drivers. They are apparently a race of born lane changers, horn honkers and hurriers. If our experience is any guide, you take your life in your hands once you venture out on the highways and byways.

Provo is a miniature Pittsburgh, a thundering big steel mill there along with other assorted heavy industries oddly enough plumped down in the middle of this agricultural community. The towns, both large and small, show the solid influence of good building. A large proportion of the houses are of brick construction and give the impression of being built to last indefinitely. Again they have an almost Dutchlike look of neatness and cleanliness.

One thing that we noticed in particular was the absence of "for sale" signs. I don't remember seeing a single one on a residence, and only one or two on businesses.

After leaving Mapleton and Spanish Fork, you head for Thistle, clear out on the desert on Highway 50. The transformation from the carefully nurtured valley to the desert is made through a cleft in the hills down which ripples Diamond Creek. This seems to have been a day's journey of many impressions, but in the Diamond Creek Canyon you get a strong flavor of New England.

Here the hills had been painted with fall's brush into flaming colors against the stark purple background of climbing canyon walls, leafless trees and flaming brush which reminds you of the sumac and hardwood hills of Maine. The fact that we were in the desert was made increasingly plain by the fact that it was bright and clear despite a driving rain for some 20 miles.

From Thistle, still on Highway 50, you climb to Soldier Summit better than 6,000 feet up, and then drop down through a long, winding canyon that sees you clinging precariously to the side of the starkly carved cliffs with below you the smoke from coal mines, of all things. The little towns along the way all have the huddled look of faraway waypoints. As they say in all the travel books, the natives were friendly.

First major town on this southeasterly trek was Price, which is really an up and coming town. Price enjoys, like Klamath Falls, the distinction of being a trade center for a large area. In our case, Southeastern Oregon and Northern California, in the case of Price, both central and southeastern Utah.

The town is obviously growing, the business section filled with new buildings or structures in the process of going up, wide, wide streets jammed with late model cars and a general air of prosperity. This may become even more pronounced due to the fact that uranium and natural gas deposits have been uncovered recently in the area.

Anyone who is wont to consider Utah as a barren wasteland inhabited by only a few struggling citizens had better take the drive from Price to Moab that we did. It must have been well after 5 o'clock in the afternoon when we got away from Price with better than 125 miles to go.

Darkness caught us on the desert long before we got to Greenriver. From there on in it was a long, dull, pounding, eye-blinding journey into a stream of oncoming ore trucks, buses, oil tankers and automobiles. A strange road full of dips precluded any possibility of passing, so we loafed along, protecting our vision as well as we could.

It may be a slight exaggeration, but it seemed to me that the traffic in this supposedly remote section of a faraway state was far heavier than that on the Baldock Freeway. But at last Moab, our destination, loomed up, the lights glittering brightly out beyond the eerie security lights of the big uranium reduction plant situated on the banks of the Colorado River.

Tax Talk

By JOSEPHINE KITTREDGE

I have just returned to Klamath County after a 10-day trip around the counties of Oregon. The same anxiousness and frustration in regard to the confused and politically embroiled Oregon tax situation exists in every town, organization and county I have visited. Each individual, no matter what his occupation, taxi driver, businessman, mill worker, the maids in my hotel . . . all talk about "taxes."

The hope of all of them is that the special session of the Oregon Legislature called for October 28 will have one thought in mind, "T-R Day." That, is something I have named "Tax Reduction Day."

The floor maids, in the Portland hotel came to me a couple of days ago. The hotel housekeeper was the spokesman, and they asked me to take their names and addresses and told me that they wanted to be among the first to help with any effort toward a "fair tax program for Oregon." movement. They hoped this session of the Legislature would reduce their taxes and especially, cut the withholding tax they are now paying; if the special session proved to be a piecemeal attempt to rectify past wrongs . . . they would be among the first to help put an initiative measure on the November 1958 ballot that would be an overall review of the Oregon tax system.

I had not solicited the help of these fine women, it was volunteered. A group of Hillsboro citizens met with me to begin the organization of a Nonpartisan Tax League such as Klamath County now has. The citizens' taxpayer association plan is taking hold in many of the counties of this state. It is a sort of "do-it-yourself" kit for taxpayers, and as such will provide the basic information and understandable material so informed people can make decisions based on what they know, rather than "what they fear," as has been done in the past. The recommendations by resolution of the Klamath County Nonpartisan Tax League, on various state tax problems and their possible solutions, have been adopted and commented on favorably by organizations and newspapers in other areas of Oregon. The Umatilla County Development Commission has asked Gov. Robert D. Holmes to have a study made of the tax structure of Oregon by an "independent, nonpartisan, professional research organization"; and that such a study not be made by "a state department, or the recently created Oregon Planning and Development Commission or any legislative committee."

The Clatskanie Chief, in an editorial on September 13, also asked for the same type of objective study. The purpose of such a study would be to make a determination as to Oregon's competitive place for jobs, markets, and industries with the other 10 Western states.

The recommendation of the Klamath County Nonpartisan Tax League that the special session was first of all, "unwise and unnecessary," and second that the surplus be retained intact until further study could be given the proper method of tax reduction, withholding tax reduction, the problem of basic school support, has also met with a great deal of editorial and popular support. This recommendation was made by the board of directors of the league, which is composed of nine basic economic groups or categories. The use of the term "tax reduction," or "cash for Christmas," in connection with the special session makes for wishful thinking on the part of all of us, particularly those who are out of work and have contributed to this so-called surplus in income tax or withholding tax earnings. However, the first thing to realize is that the emergency clause (which can be attached to any bill, but one involving taxation, and which permits such legislation to become law the minute it is signed by the governor), will not apply on any tax measure and it will be a minimum of 90 days after the governor's signature is on any tax bill before such a bill becomes law in Oregon. This means that if a tax reduction bill is passed, it will be at least the first of February before it can become effective. So . . . budget just the same for Christmas.

Tax Struggle

By PAUL W. HARVEY JR.

SALEM, (AP) — The inter-party struggle in the legislative special session, which opens a week from Monday, involves 42 million dollars.

With an estimated general fund surplus of $69,605,650 as of next June 30, Gov. Holmes and his fellow Democrats want to reduce taxes about 17 million dollars in the current biennium.

The Republicans want to cut taxes by 59 millions.

Republicans argue that most of the surplus—which is the biggest in the state's history — should be given back to the taxpayers in order to keep the Democrats from spending it.

Gov. Holmes contends that to return anything like 59 millions to the taxpayers would cripple the 1959 Legislature and make it impossible to provide such things as new state institutions and college buildings. He says that if the Republican program is approved, the 1959 session would be forced to increase taxes in order to provide essential state services.

The illness of Sen. R. F. Chapman, Coos County Democrat, injects an uncertain note. If the heart attack which struck Chapman Friday prevents his attendance, it will leave the Republicans in control of the Senate by a 15-14 margin. The only apparent course open to the Democrats would be for Chapman to resign, followed by appointment of another Democrat in his place.

The governor's more modest tax reduction program probably will be approved by the House, where the Democrats have 36 to 24 control.

But in the Senate—split 15-15 between the two parties—it might be impossible for either plan to be passed. Consequently, it looks like the tax reduction may be somewhere between the two plans.

The Republicans also want to repeal the law under which the state, whenever other revenues fall short, could levy a 6-mill state property tax. Most Democrats, including the governor, want this law retained in case of emergency.

Oregon hasn't had to levy a state property tax since 1940.

Part of the governor's plan is to reduce property taxes by increasing basic school aid to local districts to $105 per school census child per year. The 1957 Legislature increased it from $80 to $95.

But the school people are sticking to their guns in demanding a $120 basic school fund apportionment, and they will demand that the legislators approve it at the special session.

The effect of the governor's plan would be to cut property taxes about 3 per cent, and to reduce income taxes about 6 per cent.

Neither party has come forth yet with detailed proposals on how to achieve income tax reduction. That is, they haven't decided which classes of taxpayers would get the most relief.

Gov. Holmes, when he announced August 23 that the special session would be called, said the session would be limited to tax relief. He has stuck by his guns, even informing state departments that they must not introduce bills on other subjects.

Both parties have gone along with this single-purpose idea in the hopes that the session might be finished in a couple of weeks. The lawmakers feel they already have donated enough time to the state this year in their 128-day regular session which was the longest in history.

The legislative leaders are setting up the machinery so that nothing can be considered except tax relief.

However, there are demands for consideration of other subjects. For instance, U.S. Sen. Richard L. Neuberger and some other Democrats want a state power commission created.

Secretary of State Mark Hatfield wants authorization to build a state motor vehicle building on the capitol mall. And the Oregon Farmers Union wants a new law to prevent double taxation in some rural school districts.

The special session will be another chapter of a tax dispute that started in 1955, when the Republican-controlled Legislature passed a 45 per cent surtax on top of the regular income tax.

When the Democrats won control of the state government in 1956, many political observers felt that the surtax was a major factor in the Republican defeat.

The Democratic 1957 Legislature slightly increased the income tax. In effect, it increased the surtax to 51 per cent.

But it incorporated the surtax into the regular rate structure, and made nearly all of the tax payable by withholding.

But, after the session ended, the tax commission came up with new estimates that showed that the 1957 Legislature increased taxes more than was necessary. These figures showed the $69,605,650 surplus for next year.

The governor and his advisers promptly decided that some of it should be returned.

Then the Republicans, complaining that Holmes didn't go far enough came out for a whopping reduction.

Both parties hope to be able to convince the voters next year that they are the ones who favor tax reduction and economy.

When the session begins, the skid will be greased for rapid action. Sam R. Haley, legislative counsel, the man who drafts the bills, says he has received 40 requests for bills to be drawn up. All of them will be ready on the opening day, he says.

Of these 40 requests, almost all of them are for tax relief. The remaining few, he said, are minor corrective bills.

Apparently, the same officers will be running the show as during the regular session.

The Senate president will be Boyd R. Overhulse (D), Madras. He was a compromise candidate for the Senate leadership, and is the only top Democrat who opposed the idea of having a special session.

As far as can be determined, Pat Dooley (D), Portland, will be the speaker again.

Both Overhulse and Dooley are lawyers.

The Senate membership will be the same. But in the House, there will be five new faces, while one member has changed his registration from Democratic to Republican.

The man who changed is Rep. Joe Rogers, Independence farmer. He was chairman of the House Education Committee in the regular session, but often found himself voting with the Republicans.

The new members are:

Mrs. Herman H. Chindgren, Molalla, who succeeds her late husband, who was dean of the Legislature. She is the only Republican among the newcomers.

Joseph S. Crepeau, Cottage Grove. He replaces Richard Eymann, Mohawk, who resigned to become executive secretary of the tax commission.

Wayne Turner, St. Helens. He succeeds Robert R. Klemsen, St. Helens, who had to quit because he moved out of his district.

Beulah Hand, Milwaukie, was journal clerk at the regular session. She replaces Tom Monaghan, Milwaukie, who was forced out when the Supreme Court said that school teachers can't serve in the Legislature.

Clington P. Haight Jr., Baker. He is the successor to Robert J. Steward, Keating, who resigned to become state director of Agriculture.

Quotes

By UNITED PRESS

NEW YORK— Queen Elizabeth, preparing to leave for home after visiting America's largest city, "At the end of a wonderful journey I am very glad that I have been able this time to see New York."

MAEBASHI, Japan— Army Specialist William S. Girard, when asked by Judge Yuzo Kawachi if he didn't feel sorry for shooting and killing metal scavenger Mrs. Naka Sakai on an Army firing range last January: "I feel very sorry, sir."

ABOARD THE USS BON HOMME RICHARD — Vice Adm. Wallace M. Beakley, on the readiness of his U.S. Pacific Seventh Fleet in the event of a war between Syria and Turkey: "We haven't been sitting on our dittybox. Readiness is our mission out here."

ATLANTA — Dekalb County Solicitor Richard Bell, on why he obtained a court injunction against the showing of the movie "Island In the Sun," which features interracial romance and which was picketed by segregationists Sunday night: "Because it is a controversial movie we thought it best to act before riots result."

WASHINGTON—Sen. A. S. Mike Monroney, in calling for cancellation of a Defense Department order trimming 10 per cent from military research and development funds: "It must be hard for an astrophysicist to penetrate the mysteries of the universe when he's trying to figure out how his student assistants can feed their families if their small research grants are eliminated."

Pogo

They'll Do It Every Time

By Jimmy Hatlo

Texas Storm Damage High

AUSTIN, Tex. (AP) — September storms caused $6,572,700 damage in Texas, the state defense and disaster relief headquarters said yesterday.

Heavy rains in the southeast Gulf coast area caused some two million dollars damage, including loss of much of the region's rice crop.

One tornado touched ground during the month, the report said, causing $7,000 damage. Most of the other storm damage occurred in west Texas.

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Man Loses Fight For Life

ABILENE, Tex. (AP)—A gallant struggle for life ended quietly last night for Tommy Cooper, 24. He died of nephritis, last of many serious ailments he suffered.

A diabetic from childhood and later victim of a heart attack, Cooper went blind in 1951. Despite this handicap he managed to graduate from high school in 1952 and became an Eagle Scout a year later. His father, B. O. Cooper, is chief of police at Stamford, Tex.

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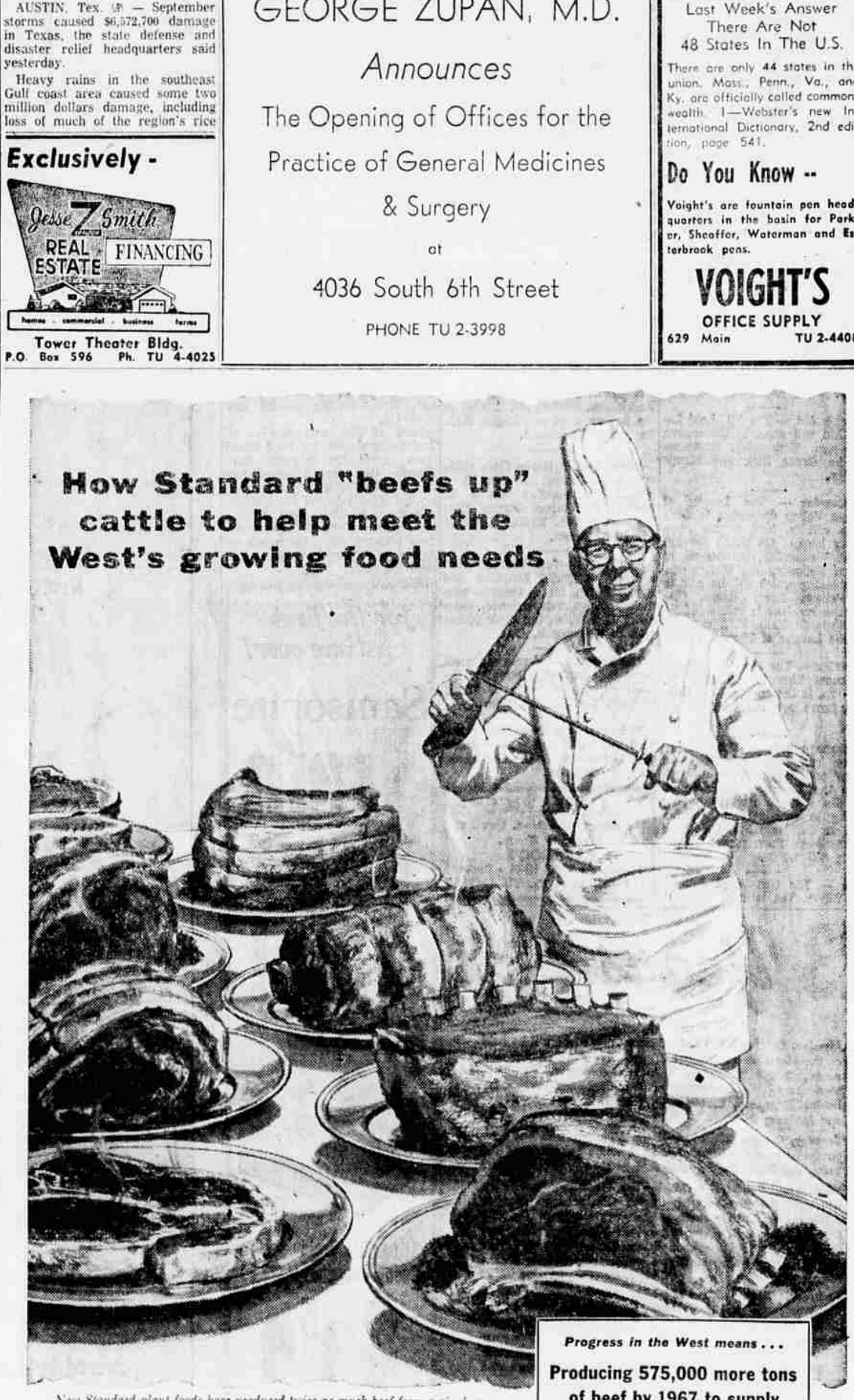
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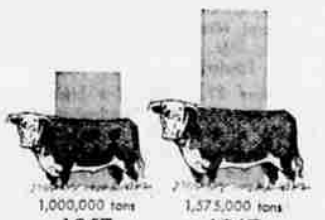

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