

Interim Committees Have Become Important Part Of Oregon's Legislative Process

By PAUL W. HARVEY JR.

SALEM (AP)—Only a few years ago, legislative interim committees did very little. And when they did anything, the Legislature usually paid little attention.

These committees often were created to dispose of problems that the Legislature did not want to face. It used to be said jokingly that interim committees sometimes were created just to bury legislation.

The committees used to meet only one or twice between sessions. They couldn't do much, anyway, because they had no technical staffs to help them.

Now, interim committees have become a very important part of the legislative process. In fact, they introduce a big share of the major new laws which they draft as the result of long hours of study and hearings.

More than half the legislators serve on these committees. They have executive secretaries and stenographers, as well as research experts. The members spend many days between sessions in committee work.

One committee secretary figured recently that all recommendations made by interim committees in the 1959 Legislature have until Oct. 15 to file their reports.

Some have not yet decided what they will recommend. But they will provide some of the most important, far-reaching legislation to be introduced.

For instance, the Interim Committee on Taxation will recommend lower income taxes, a 3-cent cigarette tax, and a new timber-tax system that would encourage sustained yield programs.

The Criminal Law Committee would control obscene literature, require judges to hold presentence investigations, and provide parole supervision for all men released from prison.

And the Committee on Education favors a long-range plan to provide 50 per cent state support for schools, compared with 36 per cent now.

The Agriculture Committee wants more farm research, and the Labor-Management Committee will sponsor highly controversial legislation that would have the state hold elections to determine union representation.

The Natural Resources Committee would consolidate the Fish and Game Commissions. The Highway Committee wants reflectorized license plates, and possibly reduced weight-mile taxes on big trucks.

The Public Welfare Committee has many suggested changes in

the laws. And the Legislative Fiscal Committee wants the state university and colleges to make better use of their space.

Important changes probably will be suggested by the Legislative

Counsel Committee in the way of removing conflicts and lack of clarity in many laws. These are only a few of the

proposed bills that committees are considering. It is getting so you can tell just about what a Legislature will consider by reading the reports of its interim committees.

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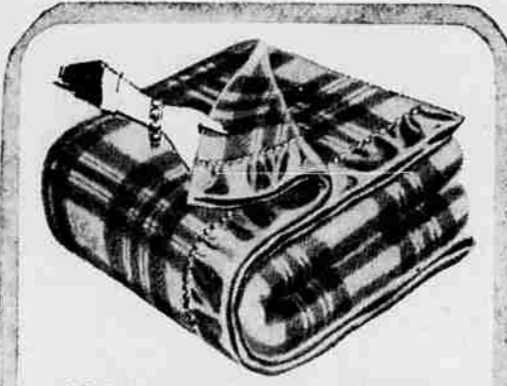


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SALEM (AP)—The Oregon Supreme Court today reversed the second degree murder conviction of Lee Parker, who was sentenced to life for killing Robert Holloway with a blunt instrument. The lime-covered body was found in a well near Vernonia.

In overturning the verdict of the Multnomah County Circuit Court of Judge Frank J. Lonergan, the high court said there was insufficient evidence, and that improper evidence was introduced at the trial.

The slaying occurred three years ago. The body was found near the property of Harold Keith, who also was indicted. He is serving 15 years on conviction of manslaughter.

The decision, by Justice Gordon Sloan, frees Parker from the charge.



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