

VERNONIA EAGLE



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RAY D. FISHER, Editor and Publisher

Concerning the Sales Tax

The communication from the Jackson County Farmers and Home Owners' association, printed in another column, deserves careful attention. So many have been the arguments deluging the state against the sales tax for relief of the schools that many of us, viewing the proposal from a distance, are apt to think it an artful scheme of wealthy tax dodgers to thrust upon farmers, laborers and the professional classes in the lower or middle brackets a greater and more unjust share of the tax burden than they already have. The members of the Jackson County association, however, are not viewing the sales tax from afar. California, where a higher rate is in effect than is required in the new Oregon law, is not for away.

A sales tax as an added tax deserves all the unpopularity it incurs, but as a tax to reduce substantially property taxes, now strained beyond the breaking point, it has distinct merit.

Such the present sales tax measure provides, the reduction in the Vernonia grade school district being estimated at 2.26 mills besides 1 mill county school fund tax. Not a heavy reduction, that, but enough to more than offset the one and a half per cent sales tax. In smaller districts, in which the \$400 per teacher unit goes far towards paying the total expenses of the school, the reduction would proportionately be much greater than in Vernonia, and all the more advantageous to the taxpayers.

Escaping from the Oregon state penitentiary is a futile pastime, says a news item from Salem. Twenty-four prisoners tried escaping in the last eight years, and none succeeded.

If only the escape of uncaught criminals were likewise futile . . .

Insurance of deposits, now effective, may not make much of a hit with the bankers, but the depositors are certainly going to like it if it works.

The mill whistle, extending its annual greeting at midnight Sunday, is evidently in good order. Here's hoping it will get some real exercise three times or so daily in 1934.

We can stand a little gentle rain, by way of contrast.

What Other Editors Say

DAIRYMEN NEED A BREAK

E. G. Harlan, administrator of the law declaring milk a public utility, gives hope to dairymen in a statement that milk prices in the larger cities of Oregon will be established within a few days by the milk commission. Harlan says: "The commission will strive to maintain adequate milk supplies at a fair price to the producer, distributor and consumer. In milk sheds, where there are already too many pro-

ducers, the commission expects to pro rate the milk production among those already established. It will prevent people entering the field where the supply is already adequate."

The Argus truly hopes this plan will do all that it is hoped to do and will be of real benefit to the dairymen of Washington county, who are certainly entitled to a break. Right thinking people do not mind paying a fair price for any commodity if they have the money and they most certainly should not begrudge money spent for milk, which is so important to the health of the public. Hundreds of dairymen in Washington county have gone to great expense to equip themselves in accord with city milk requirements and should not be compelled to operate at a loss.

—Hillsboro Argus

THE BEER GARDEN MENACE

The Salem Capital Journal rightfully calls attention to the laxity in the enforcement of the law regulating the sale of beer. Speaking of the sale of beer and whiskey by the glass to boys and girls in so-called beer gardens, it asks, "why are they permitted to conduct places in comparison to which the most bawdy and disreputable saloons of pre-prohibition days were mere tea rooms?"

Why indeed? In a village not far away on a dance night recently swarms of young boys and girls, many of them undoubtedly minors, hovered over a disreputable looking bar, gulping down drinks between dances. In the old days sons and daughters of respectable families shunned the saloons, and the lad who had the effrontery to come to a decent dance with liquor on his breath was given to understand that his presence was not desirable. In contrast to this attitude the lad who is three sheets in the wind now seems to be marked for social distinction.

Dozens of these dives have been opened since the return of beer. "Within a radius of a few miles of Salem," declares the Capital-Journal, "there are several beer gardens and road houses operating in open defiance of law and decency. In them anyone with the money can buy beer or wine, and in several hard liquor of various kinds and of questionable quality—man or woman, boy or girl, drunk or sober."

Contempt for temperance, bred, perhaps by wholesale flouting of the prohibition law, seems to have found its lodging in the youth of the land, a situation that bodes no good for coming generations. At any rate decent society must recognize the danger and insist upon the elimination of offenders referred to. —McMinnville Telephone-Register.

It Could Only Happen in a Public Office

We publish below a dispatch by the United Press from Salem without comment:

The state treasury yesterday mailed to the Lane county treasurer one of the smallest checks ever issued in Oregon: for 1 cent.

Lane county yesterday paid the state \$6,000 completing the first-half property taxes due, although the amount owed was only \$5,999.99, making a refund voucher necessary.

In making the refund, the treasury used a 3-cent postage stamp and 2-cents worth of labor and stationery. An additional 2-cent tax must be paid when and if the check is cashed.—Rainier Review.

Regulations are peculiar things. Commercial steelhead fishing in Washington is forbidden yet the Chinook Observer carries a letter from the department, charged with enforcement, saying that Washington fishermen can catch steelheads in the Washington waters of the Columbia as long as they will see they are not delivered for consumption and processing in Washington, but are taken to Oregon.—Astorian-Budget.

What Squeals Louder than a Pig Caught Under a Gate?



Talburt in St. Louis Globe-Democrat

The Open Forum - -

TO FARMERS, HOME OWNERS AND ALL PROPERTY TAX PAYERS:

We are addressing this to you as a home owner, farmer, property tax payer, or representative of such a group, asking that you your best efforts to delay the passing of any final judgment or the taking of any action against the present sales and utility tax bill, which is now threatened with a referendum, until a full opportunity has been had to give the bill and its effect on our property taxes a thorough analysis.

While it is of the greatest importance to protect our common schools from having to close their doors, it is of no less importance that we relieve our home owners, farmers, and other property tax payers from a complete collapse. If our present property tax system, which is more than 40 per cent delinquent now, does collapse not only the schools but all other functions of government are sunk.

As the matter now stands we home owners, farmers, and all property tax payers bear more than 97 per cent of the whole cost of the elementary and high schools. More than half of the people who send their children to our schools own no taxable property and consequently pay nothing at all toward the support of the schools. From 40 per cent to 45 per cent of our total taxes are for schools only. We do not ask that property owners be excused from supporting schools. We are quite willing that they should still bear by far the bigger end of the burden, but in these times when property is almost a liability and when we are sinking under the road; when we are 40 per cent delinquent on our taxes and cannot even borrow the money with which to pay them, we think it is no more than fair that the present big group of non tax payers should contribute a little something to school support. This sales tax bill offers us, we think, the first opportunity we have had for shifting a little of our tax burden to other shoulders. It will relieve the property tax we now pay for schools at least one third.

Living near the California line as we do, we are watching a similar sales tax operate in that

state. Last summer when it was first put on it was quite unpopular, but when tax paying time came this fall and people saw that their tax statements had actually been cut from 30 per cent to 40 per cent almost a complete reversal of sentiment toward it came about in a few weeks. The California rate is 2½ per cent while Oregon's proposed rate is 1½ per cent, but even 1½ per cent will help considerably.

Our plea to you is simply this: Do not permit any hasty conclusions to be formed relative to this bill, or any hasty action to be taken until you have had full opportunity to study the bill and how it will apply to the relief of real property and also the relief of the schools. This bill is not at all the same thing that was voted down last July, either in its application or its purpose.

Respectfully yours,
Jackson County Farmers and Home Owners Association.
By A. C. Hubbard, chairman
C. C. Hoover, secretary

Among Our Neighbors . .

Stockholders of the old St. Helens creamery will take back control of the St. Helens branch of the Lower Columbia Cooperative Dairy association. Because of the lack of interest in the part of the dairymen the association had decided either to close the plant or return it to the original stockholders.

Columbia county is one of the worst breeding areas in the state for mosquitoes, declared Joe Roberts of Portland, assistant state director for mosquito control, at a meeting of the St. Helens chamber of commerce last week. He stated that the government has appropriated \$100,000 to be used on the Oregon side of the Columbia in fighting mosquitoes.

The McCormick Lumber Co.'s St. Helens plant resumed Tuesday on a 30 hour a week basis. Although the allotment of lumber to be manufactured was increased for January mills have been not been advised as to a change in working hours.

The state highway commission has let to Lindsrom and Seigerson the contract for constructing a new bridge over the Clatskanie river at Clatskanie. The amount was \$21,404.50.