

THE GATE CITY JOURNAL

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The Shoe Changed and the Foot Pinched

Remember when all automobiles were shipped to local dealers in railroad boxcars? We remember going to see them unloaded when we were much younger.

Then came good state and federal highways across the nation and the trucking industry got the business away from the railroads. They devised carriers capable of hauling as many as four ordinary passenger cars. They offered the advantage of being able to load at the manufacturer's door and deliver to the door of the dealer. Thus the railroads lost the business to the trucking industry.

This condition lasted until the last year or so. But the railroads took a page from the truckers book and devised a plan to carry as many as 12 cars on triple decked flat cars and began getting the business back. This operation is called "piggybacking" and is also used to haul truck trailers which can be delivered rapidly to any point where the railroads run and the trailers can be hitched onto and moved to points off the railroad, at less cost than the trucks can do the same job.

That's where the "shoe began to pinch" and that's where the trucking industry began to scream (led by the International Teamsters Union who furnish the drivers). They blithely ignore the welfare of the public and talk only of the truck drivers it will put out of business unless the national congress will pass a law curbing the power of the Interstate Commerce commission in letting the rails set these lower rates.

They have also started hunting relief in the state legislatures by asking that the amounts paid to the states be lowered. Both houses of the Oregon legislature have listened to their plea and passed a bill to reduce their taxes an estimated \$1 million. It is now in the hands of the governor for his action.

No one seems to know what is a fair amount for these highway boxcars to pay. It has been assumed in the past that about one-third of the cost of construction and maintenance should fall on the heavy trucks, and Oregon was collecting about this amount. However, extensive tests are being carried on in Illinois at this time, by National Bureau of Standards and American Association of State Highway Officials, to determine what is a fair amount to be paid by light, medium, and heavy trucks, as well as passenger cars.

The state highway commission wanted to wait until these tests were completed before having any change made in the present law but the legislature decided otherwise. President Kennedy has proposed higher taxes for the mammoth trucks, saying they are not paying their proportionate costs. He proposes this in preference to raising federal taxes to 4½ cents per gallon to be paid by all vehicles. He based his statement on a Bureau of Public Roads report to congress last Jan. 16 which showed that trucks with gross weight of 55,000 pounds and over were not paying their fair share of the costs.

In the April issue of Teamster, the monthly magazine of the ITU, a spokesman for the union, Signey Zagri, warned that "Congress is being asked to hurry into a program of taxing the trucking industry before crucial reports and road tests, now under preparation, are completed." (They didn't appear before the Oregon legislature and ask them to wait until the tests had been completed.)

Quoting further from Zagri (same magazine, page 11) he says, "According to the Bureau of Public Roads, passenger cars represented 83 percent of the vehicles and performed 82 percent of the travel in 1959; trucks and truck combinations accounted for 16 percent of the vehicles and 17 percent of the travel; similar figures for buses were less than 1 percent.

"On that simple principle of use, the trucks should absorb not over 17 percent of the increased costs at a maximum. However, the trucks are already absorbing more than this by paying over one-third of all highway costs today."

He would have us believe it is so SIMPLE that we should charge only on a basis of miles traveled.

A Wall Street Journal editorial said, "This enormously expensive road system is required not for the pleasure driver but industry; the highway is a roadbed for truck transportation exactly as a rail line is for the railroads. But the railroads have not only to build and maintain their own roadbeds, but in addition are taxed by every county, town and hamlet for the 'privilege' of bringing freight and passengers into the community."

Let us hope Governor Hatfield vetoes this bill and no change is made up or down in Oregon's charge of weight-mile taxes until it is determined what is fair for the heavy truck owners to pay.

Yturri Sees Important Legislative Programs Incomplete for April 22 Adjournment; 1516 Bills Introduced

By Sen. Anthony Yturri
 Spring has finally arrived in Salem. The sun is shining brightly and this portends an earlier adjournment of the legislature. A resolution fixing April 22 as the final adjournment day has been prepared. I continue to predict April 29 as the final day.

The legislature has yet to complete action on important programs. No final action has been taken upon taxation—reorganization—basic school support—or reapportionment. However, some significant measures have been considered.

After the house of representatives had squeaked through a bill to prohibit the transfer of the State Welfare commission to Salem, the senate, by a vote of 17 to 12, also approved the measure. It will no doubt be vetoed by the governor. Political motives inspired the bill. Actually, it involved transfer of only the commission, which is the policy making staff. The county unit would remain in Portland and not a single recipient would have been affected.

The intention to transfer the policy making body to Salem would have meant greater and more direct control upon the commission. Since millions of dollars of our state budget are devoted to welfare, it seemed logical to me that they subject their operations to closer scrutiny. I voted against the bill. Fifty-eight bills have been introduced at this session concerning welfare, which indicates the importance of that area of government service.

1,516 Bills Set Record

While speaking as we have been above, of the end of the 51st legislative session, and the number of bills introduced in a given field, it may interest you to know of the large number of bills which have been introduced. But in many instances, because we are approaching the closing days, many will not become law.

A brief statistical study of what has been taking place will bear this out. Nine hundred and nine bills have to date been dropped into the so-called "house hopper," while we in the senate have introduced 603, making a grand total of 1,516, which outstrips the old record of 1,336 in 1957. Up to this point, only 172 have been signed into law by Governor Hatfield.

Figures from our Legislative Counsel committee, of which I am a member, show that in 1959 of the 1,474 bills introduced, 700 became a part of our Oregon law—in 1957, of 1,336 bills introduced, 726 became law. Further sta-

istics indicate that 45 bills have been introduced on the subject of agriculture; 100 have to do with criminals and criminal law; some 118 affect election procedures; and over 200 have to do with education.

After the legislature ends its work, Governor Hatfield has by law 20 days in which to sign or veto the measures which are passed in the closing days. It will be a busy time for serious deliberation on his part.

House Bill 1722 has passed out of the House Committee on Education and will soon be on the floor enroute to the senate. I had this bill introduced in order to eliminate the "double taxation" that is now present in the Arock area where those living in Non-High School District 81A and also in Union High School District No. 3 are required to pay taxes in both districts for high schools.

This is caused by an overlapping of districts and imposes an inequitable hardship on those taxpayers. There are a few other districts in the state wherein the same situation exists. I appeared before the house committee this week and the bill received a "do pass" recommendation by unanimous vote.

Senate Bill 427 would transfer the tax collecting functions from the sheriffs to the county treasurers. We heard testimony on this bill in the Senate Taxation committee which prompted the committee to table the bill. Testimony disclosed that turnovers from the sheriff to the treasurer and the taxing units was sufficiently rapid. In fact, the turnover is daily and at least several times a week in most cases.

Passage of the bill would require many counties to rebuild or remodel facilities and add staff, all at additional cost. It was pointed out that passage would conflict with the county home rule principle; that sheriffs would still have to be used for collection of taxes on warrants; treasurers' salaries would have to be increased; present collection percentages in every county are over 90 percent; it would interfere with the present "check and balance system;" sheriffs' field men are now important in preventing removal of property to escape taxes; independent audits show that the present procedures are efficient and accurate; and existing relationships between the two offices are satisfactory.

The nurses are active in the legislature! Their bill, House Bill 1360, would give them collective bargaining rights which they claim would improve their posi-

Farewell Service For J. Peterson Scheduled Sunday



Elder John Kay Peterson

A farewell testimonial for Elder John Kay Peterson will be held Sunday evening at 7:30 at Nyssa LDS Second ward.

Elder Peterson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Glen W. Peterson of route 2, Nyssa, will leave soon on a north central states mission for the LDS church.

Program will include prelude and postlude by Karen Bybee, congregational hymns, invocation by Dale Peterson, talks by Bishop D. Hubert Christensen and Farrell Peterson. Also on the program will be remarks by the honoree's parents and by Bishop Howard R. Bair, vocal solo by Margery Peterson, response by the missionary and benediction by Delbert Peterson.

Friends of the honoree and his family are invited to attend this farewell service.

in bargaining for wages, hours and working conditions. There is much controversy over the bill. Nurses support it, while the hospitals oppose it. It has passed the house and now rests in the Senate State and Federal Affairs committee. While this is a "tough" committee, it is probable that it will come to the floor, but the outcome is still in doubt.

Emil Stunz and I were delighted to learn that our efforts had succeeded in inducing the highway department to offer \$70,000 to Malheur county for improving the Lake Owyhee road. With the cooperation of the road district, the county and the people, we are hopeful that this may prove adequate.

Needless to say, we are both anxious to return to Eastern Oregon!

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Various Activities Discussed by Ladies At WSCS April Meet

Methodist Woman's Society of Christian Service met recently in the church parlor for April general meeting.

Mrs. Clifford Fox, promotion secretary, asked that members of the executive committee be prepared to fill out reports at the next meeting of the group. She also reported that 13 members of the society were in attendance at the western district meeting last month in Emmett.

Slate of officers for the coming year was read and accepted. Installation will be at the May general meeting at which time members will divide into circles. Wesleyan service guild officer list for the year was also read.

Mrs. Russell Gressley was in charge of the men's dinner held Monday evening. Mrs. Orland Cheldelin is chairman of the senior banquet for those belonging to the church or expressing Meth-

LUTHERAN LADIES MEET AT D. L. BENEDICT HOME

Mrs. D. L. Benedict was hostess Monday evening to 15 ladies of Faith Lutheran church at their regular meeting.

Mrs. Ronald Schoen led devotions. Following the business session, lunch was served by Mrs. Max Long and Mrs. U. H. Neiger.

odist preference. Celia Cowan circle will be in charge of the Nydia luncheon.

Mmes. Kinsey Keveren, Paul Ludlow and W. W. Foster plan to attend the annual society meeting April 25-26 at Gooding, Idaho. Mrs. Rolland Laurance will attend as elected delegate.

A four-day rummage sale is planned for the last part of April. Mrs. Orland Cheldelin led devotions and Mrs. D. L. Hurst told of "Women in the Changing World."

Hostesses were Mmes. Bill Willson and Duane Holcomb, assisted by Mrs. Richard Pounds.

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☆ ☆ ☆

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☆ ☆ ☆

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