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Senator Yturri Advocates Sharing Of 'Windfall Funds' by All Counties

By STATE SENATOR ANTHONY YTURRI

Many weeks ago Representative Bessonette joined with me in the introduction of Senate Bill 288. Despite the numerous requests that I made for a hearing, no action was taken until this week. The Senate Education committee listened attentively to the presentation made by Representative Hanel and myself.

However, we are positive that the composition of the committee is such that little chance exists for a favorable vote. We believe that the bill would pass the floor if it were passed out of committee.

SB 288 concerns an area that is generally little understood by many citizens of Eastern Oregon. It is necessary to provide some historical background for an understanding of the problem. In 1866, Congress granted to the Oregon and California Railroad company each alternate section of land of 20 miles on each side of a railroad to be constructed from the Columbia river to San Francisco.

Lands Revert to Government

The O & C Railroad thus acquired nearly 3,000,000 acres of forest land in western Oregon. Among the conditions of the railroad grant were requirements that the land be sold to settlers for no more than \$2.50 an acre, and in acreages not to exceed 160 acres to each person. The railroad defaulted in its conditions and following a Supreme court decision, title to the lands was re-vested in the federal government.

The government paid Southern Pacific (successors to O & C) \$2.50 an acre for the lands. Then in 1916, Congress paid the 18 counties in which such lands were situated for the taxes they had lost from government ownership. In addition, the law provided that the revenues from sales of land and timber would be divided as follows:

Money Distribution Listed

To the counties, 25 percent; state of Oregon, 25 percent; Reclamation fund, 40 percent; and the U.S. Treasury, 10 percent. From time to time the O & C counties received full payment from Congress for lost taxes until 1937 when Congress passed the O & C Sustained Yield act. This law provided for a sustained yield program on O & C lands (owned by the government). It was and has been one of the most efficient forest operations in the nation and managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

The federal law of 1937 also changed the distribution formula and provided that 25 percent of all revenues would be kept by the government for administration and the remaining 75 percent would go to the O & C counties.

The expressed purpose of the grant to the counties was to "offset the counties' loss of taxes" because lands were once in their ownership. As a matter of practice, the counties allow one-third of their 75 percent to be appropriated to the BLM for con-

struction of roads, reforestation, etc.

18 Counties Receive Windfall

In 1964, the 18 O & C counties received \$21,136,028, an increase of \$6 million over 1963. In 1964, Douglas county alone received over \$5 million; Lane and Jackson counties more than \$3 million each. These are funds which these counties receive without having to levy one mill of tax. They are bonus and windfall funds that come to them, as a result, for use as they will. Some counties have accumulated handsome surpluses in their treasuries.

The sustained yield program by BLM has been so efficient that there is assurance of the sale of at least one billion board feet annually forever, and there is no doubt that these counties will continue to receive as much as they did in 1964.

In addition, the BLM spends at least \$5 million on roads. The bureau maintains at least 1,000 miles of forest roads, and the purchaser of the timber constructs at least 250 miles of roads annually.

Purpose to Replace Taxes

All in all, it is a beautiful setup. It must be remembered that the purpose of these O & C grants to the 18 counties was to replace the taxes they would lose by reason of federal ownership of the lands. However, in 1951 the counties received 300 percent of tax loss equivalent.

In 1952, they received 600 percent of their tax loss and since the annual "take" is increasing, it is easy to determine that presently they are receiving no less than 1000 to 1200 percent of tax loss. This is indeed fortuitous and Congress may one day re-examine this entire problem with a view to making the grants truly equivalent to tax loss.

All Oregon Should Share

In any event, we believe that every child in Oregon is entitled to his or her fair share of the O & C excess over and above that which would reimburse O & C counties for their loss. We cannot stop the waters of the Snake or Columbia rivers as they flow through our counties. It has frequently been urged, and successfully in this legislature, that county boundary lines are artificial and creatures of statute.

In the "one man-one vote" arguments that changed apportionment in Oregon, this artificiality of county lines was upheld. Applying the same principle, I believe that all O & C funds in excess of tax loss equivalent are a natural state resource and that

Mail Carriers Earn Safe Driving Awards

Four Nyssa postal employees were recently presented with pin and certificate awards in recognition of safe driving records.

Among recipients is Walter Ashby who has driven on a 90-mile route, 304 days a year for 16 years, making a total of 437,760 miles without an accident.

Other awards went to Herbert Bergam for six years of safe driving time and to Frank Simmons and LeRoy Mechem, one year each.

To receive the awards, an employee must complete 12 months of continuous driving at least four hours daily, without an accident. If he has a mishap, he must begin anew if he has less than three years of accident-free time.

After three years, he is assessed one year for each accident but continues to accumulate time.

JIM BENEDICT ELECTED TO SOPHOMORE HONORARY

Mr. and Mrs. Deward Benedict recently received word that their son, Jim, has been elected from his living group to Thane, a sophomore honorary. Jim is a 1964 graduate of Nyssa high school, is attending OSU in Corvallis and majoring in engineering.

they should be shared by all the people.

They constitute the granting of an unfair advantage to some taxpayers at the expense of others. Furthermore, basic school support could be increased by at least \$10 per child without unfairly treating anyone or any county.

Provision of Bill Explained

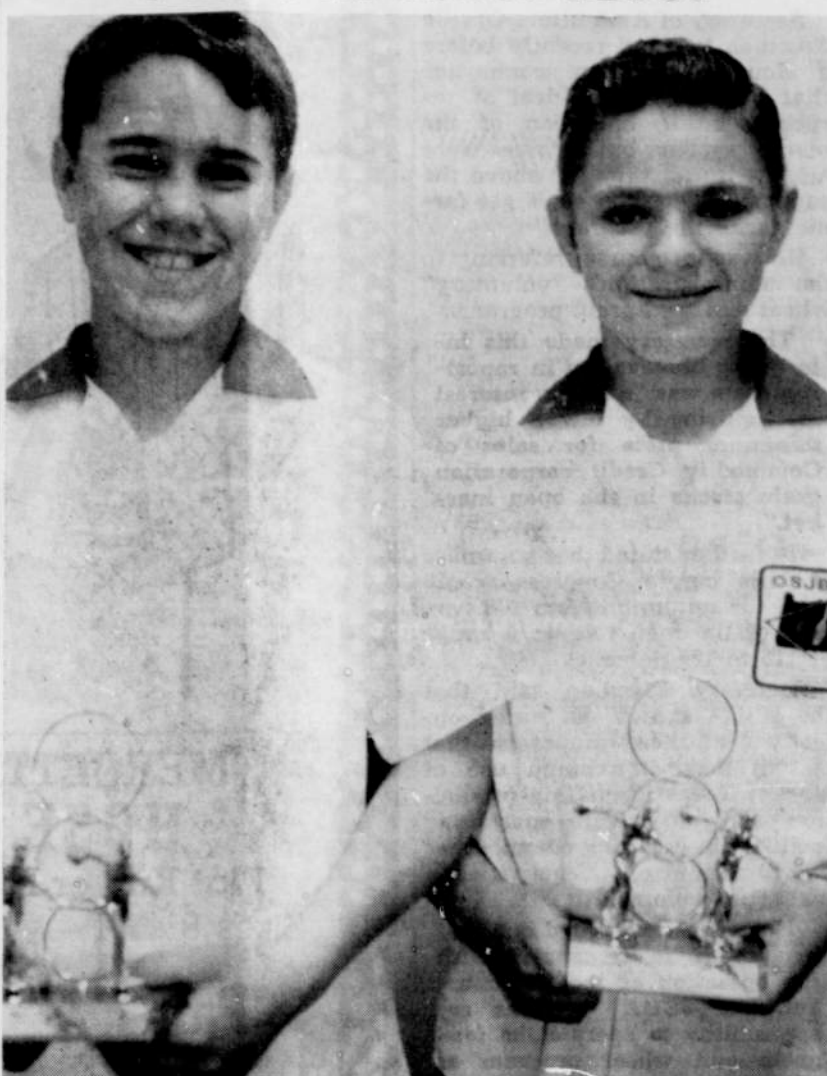
First, it must be remembered that 50 percent of the O & C funds which those counties receive would far exceed their tax loss. Thus, SB 288 provided that the O & C counties would be required to place one-half of the funds they receive into the county school fund. Then, in distribution of state basic school support funds, there would be subtracted from each county the money it received from the county school fund.

The balance of basic school funds remaining would be divided among all the counties. In this manner, the non-O & C counties and their children would at least share partially in the excess O & C funds. To put it simply, SB 288 merely provided that O & C counties could retain 50 percent of this money, but the remaining 50 percent of such funds would be divided among ALL counties, including the O & C counties. This is only fair.

Bill Apparently Futile

This will some day come to pass. It must pass. The approach of SB 288 has never been utilized before, but education is a state function and excess O & C funds should be tied to education. Unfortunately, O & C county representation is too strong on the appropriate committees at this session and I am saddened by the apparent futility of our bill. Maybe next session??

Place in State Meet



THESE LADS, STEVE PECORA (on left) and BUTCH WRIGHT, display trophies they won at the recent state bowling tournament staged in Portland. The young keglers placed 9th in junior doubles competition. Steve is a son of Mrs. Dick (Lucille) Wilson and during the recent local tourney for young bowlers, rolled a 238 scratch game. Butch is a brother of Nyssans Billie Wright and Jimmie Ann Hatch. The lads became eligible for state competition through their efforts during a district tourney staged earlier at Bye Lanes in Ontario.—Journal Photo.

EOC Students Plan Weekend Activities In Honor of Parents

Eastern Oregon college sophomores Jacquelyn Brindle of Heppner and Vicki DeLong of Elgin have been named co-chairmen for the EOC Parents' Weekend, May 22-23.

Plans for the traditional campus visit by parents of EOC students include a beef barbecue, faculty and father-son baseball game, talent show and the EOC production of the Broadway musical, "Once Upon a Mattress."

The Sunday breakfast, honoring visiting parents, highlights the traditional weekend activities.

In addition to demonstrating their sewing ability, the girls will also show care of fabrics used. Residents of the area are invited to attend this annual FHA event.

To Buy, Sell or Rent, Try the Classified Page!

Biographies of Queen Victoria, Lenin Available at Malheur County Library

New books going into circulation Saturday, May 1, at Malheur county library include the following.

"Queen Victoria" by Elizabeth Langford. A story of the queen's unhappy youth and her emergence as a strong, forceful ruler.

"The Life of Lenin" by Louis Fischer. A masterful analysis of the development and impact of a revolutionary.

"Dearest Debbie" by Dale Evans Rogers. The story, in letter form, of the Korean daughter adopted by Dale and Roy Rogers, their years of happiness and her death in a bus accident.

"The Italians" by Luigi Barzini. A full-length portrait featuring their manners and morals.

"The Oysters of Locmariaquer" by Eleanor Clark. The story of the best known oysters in the world seasoned with a smattering of Breton myths and steamed with a historical and zoological background.

"Letters From the Peace Corps" edited by Iris Luce. What life is like for members of the Peace Corps as can be gleaned from the selected letters of the volunteers.

"The Future of Man" by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Mystical speculations on the ultimate spirituality of evolution.

"The Mother Tongue" by Lancelot Hogben. A fascinating exploration of our linguistic heritage.

"Crisis in Black and White" by Charles E. Silberman. Illuminating suggestions for meeting the racial crisis.

"The Historian and History" by Page Smith. A noted historian's view of the nature of his craft and of the historian's role in molding the present and future of man.

"Shaping Educational Policy" by James Bryant Conant. The author advocates that states help develop sound educational policies.

"The Miracle of Plastics" by J. Gordon Cook. An English scientist's nontechnical introduction encompasses the origins of the industry, physical properties of plastics, various types and similar topics.

"The Explorer" by Frances Parkinson Keyes. A young Vermont marries an aristocratic young Virginia woman only to leave her five days later to search for a lost city in Peru.

"Funeral in Berlin" by Len Deighton. A suspense story set in the shady world of international espionage operating from London to Prague, from the beaches of France and Spain to the realities of divided Berlin.

"The Private Life of Henry VIII" by N. Bryson Morrison. The events of Henry's life and the history of his reign are covered briskly in a well-researched, somewhat romantic biography.

"Fiji: Islands of the Dawn" by Leonard Wibberley. A history of Fiji and reminiscences of a trip to the islands by the author.

"Life and Wildlife in Eurasia" by Francois Bourliere. The first in a projected series of six volumes that will introduce the major land areas of the earth.

"The Last Days of the Sioux Nation" by Robert M. Utley. An historical approach to the Sioux and the consequences of their adoption of the Ghost Dance religion.

"Approved Practices in Poultry Production" by George H. Biddle. A comprehensive list of activities which involve approved practices with information on how they should be done.

"Love, Hate, Fear, Anger and the Other Lively Emotions" by June Callwood. Examining the early theories of philosophers and doctors, as well as modern thought and discovery, the author discusses the human emotions and the efforts that have been made to understand them.

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