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WHY GOVERNMENT COMES HIGH.

FORMER PRESIDENT TAFT is worried over the advance of the Socialist propaganda, of which, he declares, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt is the chief exponent. Of course, the ex-president is right in the main, every thinking man knows that, overlooking his personal reference to the Colonel. All our so-called progressive laws are socialistic, more especially in a state like Oregon, where we have the workingmen's compensation act, widow's pension law, and commissions and inspectors to probe into the affairs of all kinds of private business concerns, regulating hours of labor and general conduct until the proprietor has become little more than the manager, with limited authority. Government is becoming centralized and individualism minimized more rapidly than the most ardent Socialist could have hoped for only a few years ago.

Taxes are high mainly because the machinery of government is becoming more complicated. New laws are constantly calling for additional commissions, inspectors and officials of varied rank and grade. This vast horde of office holders is living at the expense of the taxpayers, and each successive session of the legislature and general election, through the initiative, creates more officials at the behest of the people or their representatives.

The only logical conclusion is that the taxpayer who believes in plain, old-fashioned government, has a right to object to high taxes, while the "progressive," who is constantly demanding new and expensive innovations, should take his medicine like a man when taxpaying time comes around.

PANAMA CANAL TOLLS.

GENERALLY speaking, the people of the country seem to take little interest in the Panama canal tolls question. It is doubtful if many of them really understand the issue raised sufficiently to form a positive opinion. No fair-minded person will contend that the bill might stand if it contravenes our treaty rights with England, because the faith of the nation should be inviolable. Congress probably passed the bill hastily, as it has done in many cases of important legislation.

None is disposed to do any injury to American shipping. Every one, on the contrary, wants to help it along in every legitimate way; but to repudiate a treaty in order to benefit this industry would be dishonest and short-sighted. Just what can properly be done to stimulate our carrying trade may well engage the serious attention of our statesmen.

BONDS EASY TO ISSUE, HARD TO PAY.

M. R. F. E. PACKARD, of the North Dakota tax commission, has an article in the Courier-News, of Fargo, on bond issues and public debts, interest, etc., which is interesting reading.

The things he states are not new, but they are in a way cheering, because they show that other cities are at least as foolish as ourselves. Fargo is about the same size of Salem, and is in debt almost identical in amount with ours, it being \$1,205,056.73, while Salem's debt, according to the very full and detailed showing made by Mayor Steeves early in the year, is \$1,264,881.81.

Mr. Packard points out that the city has paid out more for interest than the total of the principal, and owes the debt yet. He also calls attention to the practice of bonding without making provisions for meeting the bonds when they come due.

In this connection he cites a case in Grand Forks. In 1882, when that city was a village, the citizens needed a fire engine, or thought they did, and so bought a baby steamer, agreeing to pay \$6000 therefor. For this the village issued bonds bearing 7 per cent interest. When the bonds came due \$1000 was paid on the principal, and the \$5000 refunded at 6 per cent bonds running for 20 years. The interest charges to December 31, 1913, were \$10,375. The payment at time of refunding, \$1000, and the total paid for the baby steamer, which was sent to the dump pile years ago, was \$11,375, and the city still owes \$5000 of the original \$6000, its cost price.

The same city, in 1889, bonded for bridge building in the sum of \$50,000, and at maturity \$10,000 was paid and the balance, \$40,000, was refunded by 20-year 4 per cent bonds. When the bonds are paid the total will be \$102,000 paid in interest and \$50,000 principal, a total of \$152,000, and the bridge is now worn out and must be replaced.

Sounds like home, doesn't it?

Salem, in 1886, issued bonds in the sum of \$30,000 to build a

wooden bridge across the Willamette. This bridge washed out in the winter of 1889-1890, but the bonds did not; they are still with us and drawing interest at the same old rate. They were refunded in 1904, and are due in April of this year. Mayor Steeves insists they be paid, and it is hoped he can find some way to do this.

There is also outstanding an issue of \$20,000 bonds issued for building the steel bridge which replaced the wooden one, washed away as stated, and which will be due in 1920. This bridge is also about worn out and must be replaced, and for this purpose still more bonds must be issued before long. We will then have two bridges worn out one after the other, and neither paid for; while the third one will be wearing out and getting ready for another bridge and more bonds.

We are not objecting to the issuing of bonds for needed purposes. They are, under our system, a necessity, but we do suggest that, while issuing bonds, we occasionally vary the monotony by paying some of the older issues, for the interest account is growing steadily and rapidly. The city's interest debt now is about \$66,000 a year. Mayor Steeves is eminently correct in insisting that we begin to pay off some of this old indebtedness. This means economy and retrenchment, and this should be the rule, until the debt is paid off. The sum of \$66,000 a year now going out of the city in the way of interest would come handy.

NOT A CREDITABLE PROCEEDING.

WEDNESDAY Governor West made public his ideas about the Fish and Game Commissions, and among these was the opinion that the expense was too great, and should be reduced. The same day the Fish and Game Commission met in secret session, and, in order to comply with the governor's ideas made two extra offices and increased the running expenses \$2800 a year.

The board also showed its understanding of the situation by making one of its members the state Game Warden and the clerk of the commission the Master Fish Warden. This shows talent was abundant among the commission members.

Mr. Finley was retained and will have charge of the educational and biological department, and Mr. Clanton will be superintendent of hatcheries. The new commissioners will draw a salary of \$2100 each, while the salaries of Finley and Clanton were reduced \$700 each, leaving them with only \$2400 a year. But they stood for it, and did not even resign. This helps pay the salaries of the new wardens, but increases the salary account \$2800 a year.

In 1911 the expense of the game commission was about \$44,000 and this grew in 1912 to \$123,000, and this year it was \$137,000 for the first 11 months, and not including the month of December.

Despite Governor West's suggestions it is probable it will continue to grow.

There are several reasons for this belief. One of these is that the commission appointed its own members to office, which is neither a clean nor a decent thing to do, for, while the appointments may be the best, they always have the appearance of crookedness to the public, no matter how good they may be. For another reason the commission held a star chamber meeting in discussing and making these appointments, sitting behind closed doors, when their meeting should have been open and above board, and the public admitted.

When a committee or a commission is afraid to let its proceedings be known to the people who employ them it always awakens suspicion that there is something crooked going on and this suspicion is generally found well grounded.

It is claimed, however, that the expenses will be reduced, in spite of the fact that there are now permanent official bosses whose salaries amount to \$9000 yearly.

How quickly the scenes shift in this progressive age! Only a few days ago we were told by high railroad authorities that the filing of the S. P.-C. P. dissolution suit would spell ruin and disaster to the state of Oregon. Now that the suit has actually been started the same railroad sources give out the news that it will force much active railroad construction in the state, including the completion of the important Natron cut-off to California. If so, the pending calamity will prove a stimulus to development long overdue.

W. S. Conner, one of the best local newspaper men in the state, has sold the Cottage Grove Leader to J. D. Quellen, an experienced publisher, and will retire from the work for the present, at least.

Kansas always manages to keep in the limelight as the champion freak-producer. The latest is a postmaster who worried himself to death because his resignation was not accepted.

THE ROUND-UP.

Work on paving the Central Point-Medford unit of the Pacific Highway will begin in a few days, and will be completed in two months. The pavement will be four inches of re-inforced concrete with granitoid surface and will be 16 feet in width.

Nearly 4,000 judges and clerks of election were appointed in Multnomah county Wednesday.

Judge Virgil E. Waters has been appointed receiver of the Kinney properties at Marshfield. L. D. Kinney is in a sanatorium at San Francisco. It is said the properties will be sold, and they are estimated to be worth from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000.

When Rev. Adolph Gauditz, of Portland, returned from a two months' visit to California last week he found his wife had secured a divorce, and that he had been deprived of his personal property and a ten acre tract of land. For this reason he asks that the divorce proceedings be re-opened and he given his day in court.

The Multnomah Club, of Portland, shows a gain of 142 members during 1913, and is on a solid financial basis.

Lou Caper and Jack Murdock, two farm laborers staged a frontier scene like old days, at a dance at Pendleton

SALEM'S SILK HOUSE IS THE CHICAGO STORE

If you want to see silks stacked up in piles of every class and kind visit Salem's leading bargain-giver. Silks of every description and at prices from 25 cents a yard to any price you wish. Tub Silks, Charmeuse Silks, Taffeta Silks Messaline Silks and Fancy Dress and Waisting Silks. Come here for bargains.

Advertisement for SALEM OREGON CHICAGO STORE. Features 'NEW SPRING Suits and Coats' with prices ranging from \$7.90 to \$12.90. Includes an illustration of a woman in a suit and a high-heeled shoe. Text: 'Come and see the new styles and the best bargains in Salem. The new arrivals are very classy, and best of all, we make the low prices. Up to the hour styles, now only \$7.90 \$8.90 \$10.90 AND \$12.90'.

Tuesday night. Caper danced with a pretty school ma'am, but on asking for a second whirl he was refused and thereupon drew his gatling and fired three shots, but was overpowered and put out. He soon returned with Murdock, one armed with a rifle and the other a shotgun, and threatened to shoot the whole crowd. They finally left taking two horses that did not belong to them.

Roseburg's city marshal swooped down on the local lodge of Eagles in that city Tuesday night, and confiscated 48 bottles of beer. On the trial the judge held that there was no evidence that there had been any attempt to sell the beer and ordered it returned to the lodge.

GOOD ROADS URGED.

[UNITED PRESS LEARNED WIRE.] Columbus, O., Feb. 13.—Good roads throughout the country would mean the saving of enough money each year to build 15 Panama Canals. This was the statement today of State Highway Commissioner James R. Marker in discussing his plans for a publicity campaign in connection with the department's good roads movement. "The cost of hauling one ton, one mile on a good road by horse drawn wagons is eight cents," said Marker. "The average cost in the United States is 23 cents. Five billion tons of freight are hauled annually over roads. The average haul is ten miles. This makes the

traffic amount to 50 billion ton-miles. At 23 cents a ton mile the annual cost is \$11,000,000,000. At eight cents a ton-mile, the good road cost, the saving would be \$7,500,000,000."

CHRISTOFFERSON PLANS TO PROCEED SATURDAY

[UNITED PRESS LEARNED WIRE.] San Francisco, Feb. 13.—With a larger engine in his original machine, Aviator Silas Christofferson plans to rise from Bakersfield Saturday to complete his flight from San Francisco to San

Diego, which he was forced to abandon after four unsuccessful attempts to top the Tehachapi mountains.

"The air was too cold for my engine," said Christofferson upon his arrival here by train today. "With a chilled engine I could not get high enough to cross the mountain. I am going to substitute a 100 horse power engine for my 60 horse power. With this I will be able to rise 7000 or 8000 feet, and then will be able to cross the mountains easily."

Christofferson expected to return by train to Bakersfield today.

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