

THE VOICE

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EDITORIALS
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Economic Highlights

Happenings That Affect the Future of Every Individual National and International Problems Inseparable From Local Welfare

The Ides of March are past, but the national headache that occurs each March 15 when the income tax falls due lingers on. At the present time, even the smallest taxpayers (in the under-\$2,000 must pay more than a fifth of their taxable income to the federal government. In the rarified air of over-\$200,000 the federal tax begins taking a whopping 92 per cent. And you don't have to be rich to be in the group that pays half its income to the federal treasury—the 62 per cent rate is reached when your taxable earnings pass \$20,000 and it goes up exceedingly fast from there. The many state income taxes take a slice of what's left in addition to property taxes.

This fiscal year the federal tax take is expected to total almost \$69,000,000,000, of which half will come from individuals and the rest from corporations and indirect sources. A great many of us are wondering just where all that money goes.

U.S. News & World Report supplied this information in its issue of March 20. Here is what happens to each tax dollar: Armed forces, 58c; interest on the debt, 8.7c; foreign aid, 7.7c; to veterans, 6c; social welfare, 3.4c; stockpiling and related security activities, 2.9c; public works, 2.9c; atomic energy, 2.7c; to farmers, 2.6c; other purposes, 5.1c.

These, of course, are general classifications. For instance, the government payroll is \$18,700,000,000 a year, with civilian workers accounting for a little more than half of it. The states are given grants of \$1,300,000,000 as part of the public-assistance pro-

gram. The Post Office Department is currently spending \$666,000,000 more than it takes in. The Navy is getting some new ships—bill, \$900,000,000. Military airplanes are a much bigger item—\$7,400,000,000 this year. Collecting taxes is a costly business in itself—The Bureau of Internal Revenue's budget is \$273,000,000. Crime is another substantial expense to you, the taxpayer—the federal prisons cost \$29,200,000 and the FBI \$70,300,000.

The Eisenhower Administration is committed to going over all of these expenses with a fine-tooth comb, and reducing them whenever possible. It must pare billions just to balance the budget, much less to start slicing it. It's a whale of a job—but a job that practically everyone is convinced must be done.

It is likely that fairly substantial reductions will be made in the public payroll—there seems to be a great many cases where two or more people are now doing work suitable for one. Some water will probably be squeezed out of the public assistance set-up—various investigations indicate there has been much waste here. There will be a paring of work which can be abandoned or postponed, or which can be done by local government or private enterprise, such as electric power projects.

Spending for the armed forces, which accounts for much more than half of your tax dollar, will be scrutinized with extreme care. This doesn't mean that there will be blanket cuts—reports indicate that the President feels that outlays for certain military purposes must be increased rather than decreased. But it is believed that the forces have gone in for some extremely expensive and unnecessary frills. It is also believed that there has been some bad management in the Pentagon. As an example, Congress was strongly upset by General Van Fleet's report that there had been ammunition shortages during the whole time he commanded in Korea.

The overall goal is to balance the budget, and then to start working on tax reduction.

Capitol News

By Melvin Paul
Statehouse Correspondent
The Nebraska Press Association
LINCOLN—The Legislature was back in session this week after a recess over a long Easter week end in some of the members appeared relieved to find themselves in the comparative sanctuary of the Capitol, away from the harrying of bewildered constituents who are confused about 1953 property tax assessments.

The constituents have little on the legislators.

Last week's bizarre events are now history, safely tucked away in the pages of the Legislative Journal but the memory lingers on, hauntingly.

Highway legislation was the No. 1 problem this week but the sharp clash over the tax problems had left its uneasy stamp and it was touch and go whether anything really constructive would come out of the road debate.

You could get into all kinds of arguments here over the effects—political and otherwise—of the Legislature's refusal to accede to Gov. Crosby's suggestion that the 50 per cent assessment law and the annual valuation law be repealed.

Sen. Arthur Carmody of Trenton, chairman of the important Budget Committee called the refusal a "repudiation" of the governor and said "It is obvious the governor has changed his thinking" on the whole property tax assessment picture. Carmody also challenged the governor's warning to farmers and ranchers that their valuations are going to be raised.

"If they are raised," he said, "and I doubt it, it will be due to the fact that an honest job of assessing property and business schedules will not be done in the towns and cities of Nebraska."

Carmody was obviously miffed when State Tax Commissioner Norris J. Anderson spurned his suggestion that the number of Anderson's field agents be doubled.

On the other hand are arguments by Crosby's supporters that when the assessment situation becomes hopelessly muddled and when an even heavier share of the tax burden is shifted to farmers and home owners, Crosby will be able to say "I wanted to change it but the Legislature wouldn't go along."

As is usual whenever the unicameral, non-partisan Legislature gets itself in a jam, there are cries for a return to the two-house or at least to the partisan system.

This much seems certain: Last week's confusion would have been highly unlikely under a partisan system. The party in power—in this case the Republicans—

would have huddled, decided on a policy and stuck with it.

Med College

One of the most intensive campaigns being carried on in the Legislature is being waged in behalf of the University of Nebraska's College of Medicine in Omaha.

Supporters of the institution last week echoed what many a legislator has already suggested: The University in the past has "neglected" the college at the expense of other units, particularly in the College of Agriculture.

Dr. Harold Morgan of Lincoln, president of the Nebraska State Medical Association, told the Budget Committee:

"The College of Medicine has been allowed less than its share of University funds in the past."

Earlier in the week, Sen. Charles Tvrdek of Omaha, sponsor of a bill to create a special quarter mill building fund for the Med College, offered on the floor evidence to show that the Med College, with far fewer students, received about half as much from the institutional building fund as had the Ag College. Other colleges lagged even further behind.

Backers of the Med College point out that the need this year is greater than ever because the institution stands to lose its Class A accreditation from the American Medical Association if it doesn't launch an immediate improvement campaign.

Hike

The Legislature's Committee on Government has given its approval to a bill calling for a popular vote on the question of raising legislators' salaries and providing longer terms.

The measure, introduced by Sen. Howard Britt of Lincoln, provides that half the membership would be elected every two years, resulting in four-year terms. The senators would receive a salary of \$3,000 for the odd-numbered years and \$2,000 for even-numbered years. In addition, they would be paid \$10 a day for the first 100 days of the first session of the biennium and \$10 a day for extra sessions up to ten days.

The lawmakers now receive \$1,744 for the two-year period plus their traveling expenses once, to and from Lincoln. There is no provision for extra pay during special sessions.

Britt said it was "a matter of indifference" which led to defeat of a proposal in the 1952 election to raise legislative salaries.

The American Cancer Society is seeking \$18,000,000 in its 1953 drive.

Grassroots Opinion

PLATTSMOUTH, Neb., JOURNAL: "Senator Harry F. Byrd, of Virginia, would require that all government departments and agencies spend carried-over funds and unspent balances before they are voted a new annual appropriation."

PALM BEACH, FLA., POST: "Long overdue is the survey President Eisenhower has ordered into the question of conflicting and overlapping sources of federal and state revenue. . . . Such a study is an essential preliminary both to economies in government and to a restoration to the state level of many government functions that federal agencies have taken over virtually by default. This is the path to wise decentralization."

Quinn Chapel News

Easter Sunday at Quinn Chapel was a day long to be remembered. The day was warm and sunny, and the services were well attended. "Kind hearts and gentle people" seem to dedicate themselves anew to the tasks which lie ahead.

Who could forget the Sunrise services, the delicious breakfast served by the Pastor's aid at the church, and a program of Music and Poems given by the Sunday School; the soul-stirring sermon by the pastor, the baptism of infants and adults, acceptance of new members, Holy Communion at the morning service, followed by a superb presentation of the cantata "Victory Divine" by the choir.

The day was made brighter by the thoughtfulness of friends who donated flowers, etc. for decorations.

Rev. Harris expressed the gratitude of officers and members to Mr. and Mrs. Wyatt Williams for the gift of a large illuminated Cross which hangs from the Chancel.

Next Sunday at 4:00 p.m. the Elks (IBTOE) of W and Daughter Elks will hold their annual Memorial service at the church.

The joint efforts of the Trustee Board and the Men's Club will be a Spring Dinner on April 22nd. Save this date.

Parents are invited to bring their children age 4 to 6 to the Bible-Kindergarten at Quinn Chapel every Sunday, beginning at 9:45 a.m. Mrs. Clifford Harris is superintendent of this department.

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