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Fear or Favor

The Statesman notes the city council's discussion of higher fines for drunken drivers with very little satisfaction. In Boise we have a condition unequalled in any other Idaho city, as far as drunken drivers are concerned, and naturally we do not condone delay in correcting the situation.

The recent traffic meeting held in Boise discussed the drunk driver situation at length and from the discussion we gathered that Boise's city attorney believes convictions of drunk driving too difficult. Reckless driving charges follow in their stead.

For as long a time as there has been a police blotter "drunks" have been "booked." There seems no hesitancy on the part of arresting officers or the officials in charge of the police station, to slap a drunk charge against man after man. Why, then, this reluctance to place a similar charge against an automobile driver? What reason is there to doubt the opinion of an arresting officer if an automobile is involved?

The city council, and the men charged with the enforcement of law through the police department, know all about the drunk driver situation in Boise; they know how to put a stop to it once and for all time. Until they are ready we will continue to have drunk drivers and wrecked cars and injuries and practically meaningless reckless driving charges. Any time they want to do their duty, and clamp down, drunk drivers will become a scarce article. Speculation on higher fines is wasted conversation. Stiff jail sentences, to friend or foe, rich or poor, to prominent people and to unknowns, will produce definite results. This may require a stiffening of the city hall backbone, but it is the one and only remedy.

The city council and Boise police officials may resent criticism in this matter but every man involved must realize the shadow of suspicion that is cast with each drunk driving case that is quashed into a lesser charge. The public is properly justified in becoming suspicious. Administration of law must be consistent and plain. Loopholes may be discovered by defending attorneys but they must not be originated by men charged with public trust.—Statesman.

An Ancient Number Trick

A statistician has been eliciting "Oh's" and "Ah's" from many laymen with a number-juggling trick. He takes the number 3888, one-half of which is 1944, the present year. One-half of 1944—972—breaks down to the ninth month, seventh day and second hour. Thus, the war will end at 2 a. m. on September 7, he says.

That same "mythical" number, 3888, appears again in some calculations revolving about the careers of United Nations and Axis leaders. President Roosevelt was born in 1882, is 62, has been in office for 11 years, having taken office in 1933. Those numbers total 3888.

Hitler, born in 1889, 55 years old, also in office 11 years, having acceded to power in 1933—total 3888. The same "coincidence" works out in the cases of Prime Minister Churchill, Mussolini, Stalin or Tojo. In fact, it will work out with any individual. Try it on yourself.

Naturally the year of your birth plus your age this year will total 1944. Then take the year you accepted your present job, or the year you were graduated from college, or married—or any significant occurrence in your life. Adding the number of years that have passed since that occurrence will always produce 1944. Twice 1944 is 3888.

Statisticians are like stage magicians in many respects. Once their tricks are analyzed or disclosed, the aura of mystery dissolves like a morning mist.

Fire District Would Solve Problem

Fires in the rural section adjacent to Payette during the past week have brought forcibly to the attention of the public the apparent necessity of the organization of a fire protection district in order that farmers may have proper fire fighting apparatus available at the time that their homes and out-buildings are threatened. Last Monday afternoon the alarm was sounded summoning the local department to extinguish a blaze in the farming area near Fruitland. Due to the fact that one of the city trucks had been damaged at noon there was but one truck available and due to the fact that local property had to be protected it was impossible to permit this truck to leave the city and as a result considerable damage was done.

Under the present arrangement, when both city fire trucks are available, it has been possible for the city to permit one

truck to go to fires in the farming area and the county pays a small portion of the cost.

Provision is made under the law whereby it is possible that a farming section may organize a fire district, purchase their own equipment and assure ample fire protection. There is no doubt but the original outlay of cash for the installation of equipment might be heavy but there is also considerable savings in the fact that farmers would have every assurance of ample fire protection and in addition considerable savings would no doubt be made in insurance rates.



Idaho's financial position is the strongest in its history, with a free balance as of June 30 amounting to \$3,847,387.61 shown by the report of State auditor Calvin E. Wright. The Board of Equalization, which will meet this month to set the state charge for ad valorem levy, could possibly forego any general operating levy at all, if it so chooses. However, in these times of rapidly changing economies, it will only be good business to levy about half of the amount last year, to cover any possible emergency that might develop. Under Idaho's plan of financing, there is not supposed to be any surplus at the close of a biennium, but in view of the known needs for deferred maintenance of institutional buildings, all equipment being without replacement during the war, and population increase in the hospitals, some provision should be made to have funds on hand to permit the legislature to set up post-war funds without special taxes to provide them.

The balance, including the savings made to date under the appropriated amounts, is largely due to a reversal of conditions four years ago. At that time, anticipated revenues fell off sharply and left state financing in a bad way. Taxes were levied to cover these costs, but could not be collected in time. This biennium, the revenues have exceeded the anticipated amounts, and a surplus is indicated. The largest increase has been in income tax collections.

The incoming legislature might well consider setting an amount aside for operating capital, to permit the state to continue its present policy of paying all current bills as they come in, a fund to bridge any future period which might be "dry" as to revenue, until receipts again come in.

A slight increase in the assessed valuation will assist the lower tax-

ing units, now operating on maximum permissive lives, to have a slight margin of increase in revenue available. This is particularly true of school districts of all types.

The state had this week as official visitors from Wyoming, William "Scotty" Jack, State Auditor; Earl Wright, State Treasurer; Norris Hartwell, State Examiner; and Zan Lewis, Secretary to Governor Hunt and Assistant Budget Director. They are members of a Wyoming interim committee studying their state's fiscal control plan in comparison to other states, to determine whether or not Wyoming should change its present system. They went over the Idaho system in detail, and were favorably impressed with the degree of control over all expenditures at every stage. During the discussions and comparisons it came out that at almost every stage, Idaho is just about twice as large as Wyoming. Our population is roughly half a million; theirs, one quarter. Idaho's income tax produces just about twice that raised by the sales tax in Wyoming; assessed valuations are more nearly the same. Wyoming apparently has a much simpler form of government, but it is generally known that as population increases, the problems of government and its operation compound rather than merely increase proportionately.

Following the completion of their official visit, they were shown the fruit, vegetables and dairy industries of the Payette and Boise

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THORNTON COMPLETES PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE

Karl Thornton has completed the 12 weeks course in photography at the Engineer school, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, on August 5, 1944. He is a sergeant in the Corps of Engineers.

He was born on July 27, 1906. He attended Altoona high school, Altoona, Kansas and Fresno State College, Coalinga, Cal. He is married to the former Elsie Wisner. Their home is at 1035 First Ave. South, Payette.

He entered the Army on Jan. 15, 1942 at Boise, Idaho. Before entering the service, he was employed by U. S. Geological Survey as a topographic engineer.

Hardwood Better

Hardwood is far better than softwood for the corner posts (of crates) because it holds nails better; elm is extensively used and is satisfactory. Softwood is used for the slats; basswood is best, for it is straight-grained, rather clear of knots, does not split easily, and is strong.