

Increasing Taxation

By THOMAS A. CONLIN

(Editor and Publisher, The Crystal Falls Diamond Drill)

Editor's Note: This is the final installment of an address delivered by Mr. Conlin before the Michigan Press Association at its annual meeting in East Lansing on Jan. 22.

Lumber Levy Large The records of a large manufacturing concern in its vicinity show that lumber in pile paid a tax of 25 cents per thousand feet in 1914 and that in 1930 the tax increased to 88 cents per M. I might go on through the list of products and industries throughout the entire state and show you the increasing costs of taxes against each unit—the bushel of beans, or potatoes, the barrel of oil, or a bushel of coal, a manufactured product such as an automobile, a stove, or a table—against every article there has been an increasing cost of taxation that, unless it is checked, will soon become confiscatory or increase the cost of living to an unbearable extent.

Here are a few facts about tax rates and valuations that I wish you to remember in connection with what I have to suggest later on in this paper.

In 1914 the average tax rate in Michigan was \$18.37 per thousand

was assessed at \$630,613,132; it was still high in 1930, but its valuation was up to \$4,500,000,000. The total valuation of the state has more than doubled in the period of fifteen years.

What this business slump will do to the high valuations remains to be seen. But the fact that we are getting completely through the cringer will be an odd specimen with which we will have to live in 1930.

What Remedy? Now if you are a philosopher to convince you that these things can't continue; that even a tax on tax burdens is going to swamp us. The question is: "What are we going to do about it?" We have state commissions appointed and hearings held, we have had tax remedies of all kinds suggested, but so far nothing has been done. How long can this condition last?

In my opinion it will last until some relief plan is agreed upon that can get by the legislature or meets the approval of the people on a referendum.

Most of our tax reformers forget that changing our tax system is a very important affair that many minds have to meet upon the subject and that no particular plan is a cure-all. The scheme adopted just as presented.

None of them seems to be getting relief from the present tax rates, but one who does not want to spend money—that is, none of the taxpayers—seems to be thinking of getting money out of the system.

I believe that the highway maintenance and construction should be centered by and confined to two agencies: the state, which should do the work of constructing and maintaining the state and federal trunk lines; and the county, which should have charge of and actually do the work of construction and maintenance of all of the other highways, including the connecting county trunk lines, including primary and secondary arteries in the cities.

Weight, Gas Taxes It is my opinion that all of the money collected from the weight tax should go back to the counties, excepting that collected from trucks and buses that do commercial hauling and confine their activities to our main trunk line highways. The automobile tax of the local tax roll and communities, including the cities have an interest in the weight tax.

Turn to Your Telephone For shopping... for keeping in touch with out-of-town relatives and friends... for making social engagements and to assemble dinner guests or your bridge group, quickly.

By figures we have compiled in our own county where this system is now being tried, it will point to the closing of outlying schools and the dismissal of teachers as a result of its experience that these savings are cancelled in expanding costs in other directions, such as, highway maintenance, etc.

THEN WE HAVE THE COUNTY. This should be the unit of government next below the state. The county should be charged with the administration of its territory, the care of the indigent, public health, and all other activities necessary to fill in between the state and the cities.

Reform, Not Change It is true that township government means relief, but it warns you who come from the rural sections that when you surrender your right of representation and direction of your own immediate affairs, you are surrendering your heritage and you will regret it later.

Limit Property Tax Such a commission would fix salaries of state officers and the maintenance of state offices, the care of the mentally ill, the care of reformatories, and the state courts.

Higher education, welfare work and other state activities, including rural agriculture and stock raising, forestry, public recreation and conservation should be placed on a separate tax roll.

Election Tax Election tax of every kind should be paid for by a head tax of some kind—call it a poll tax, vote tax, or what you name, but let it be too cheap in Michigan.

Consider Legislators I have necessarily left many questions of government untouched in this short discussion. All such are subjects of legislation now, the time has come when they should be considered.

William Lunger Service Manager Says "I've scratched my head plenty times as to what is wrong with Michigan, but I've never found a better way of serving you better. Come in tomorrow and next day, AND YOU'LL SEE FOR YOURSELF that motorists are getting CORRECT attention."

Ralph Johnson Brake and Wheel Expert: "Actions speak louder than words. I'm not a talker, but I know what I MUST DO KNOW WHAT MOTORISTS WANT and what they have a right to expect—AND BELIEVE I'M AM GIVING THEM JUST THAT. Come in and see."

Oil Change and Full Lubrication Here is a chance to save. Guaranteed 188 Proof Alcohol Special Here's a chance to save. Guaranteed 188 Proof CORRECT SERVICE only 44c

Where Actions, Not Words, Prove That You GET Service Here! S. Woodward at Daines Phone 9 for Road Service

16 Fined By Buck Here In January

Only 16 defendants were arraigned before Justice Floyd S. Buck in January for violation of village ordinances, according to his monthly report.

Breaking a pledge to abstain from liquor for two years cost Eldridge M. Kruger, 1288 Emmos avenue, \$100 when he was arraigned before Justice Floyd S. Buck on a charge of drunk driving last Thursday morning.

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Here IS Proof of Greater Values and Greater Service for all Motorists! Just compare these offers

WANT YOU TO FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF... Come in and let us service your car with the specials we are now offering—AND YOU WILL BE CONVINCED that Sternal's DO PROVIDE YOU with a service and values THAT ARE UNCLASS ALL BY THEMSELVES.

This Week-End Is Your Last Chance to Take Advantage of This Special Sale at STERNAL'S

Boys! Has there been action around here... All the managers and the rest of the crew are right on their toes to put their department at the top of the list. THAT MEANS MOTORISTS are getting the utmost in service and values.

Firestone Oldfield Tires

Table with columns for tire types (6 and 8 Cord Pliers, Heavy Duty) and prices per inch.

ALL TIRES ARE MOUNTED FREE! SPECIAL! USED TIRE BARGAINS! Yes sir! I have some REAL BARGAINS in USED TIRES and you'll find them ideal for space. Many featured \$1.00 for as little as

Brakes Adjusted! Batteries Genuine Firestone \$5.95

Oil Change and Full Lubrication Guaranteed 188 Proof Alcohol Special

Where Actions, Not Words, Prove That You GET Service Here!

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MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE CO.

Turn to Your Telephone For shopping... for keeping in touch with out-of-town relatives and friends...

Increasing Taxation continued with details on various taxes and economic impacts.

Main article text by Thomas A. Conlin regarding taxation and government reform.

Advertisement for Sternal's tires and services, featuring a portrait of a man and detailed text about tire quality and service.

Advertisement for Firestone tires, including a price table and promotional offers.