



The "no new taxes and no deficit" pledge of Governor Kim Sigler, voiced in his inaugural message to the legislature, points the way clearly to re-submission of the issue of sales tax diversion to the voters at the April election.

The governor's stand was expressed in these words:

"The approval of the so-called sales tax diversion has taken away a major share of the state's chief revenue and placed it in the hands of schools and local units of government. Under this amendment the schools may receive upward of a total of one hundred sixteen million dollars a year—a sum far in excess of the wildest dreams of the most enthusiastic school supporters but a few weeks ago.

"Many townships, villages and cities will receive money without any relationship to their needs.

"This condition presents a long-sided financial picture, and we find ourselves faced with this question—Can we continue the present state services and operate the government at its present level without the adoption of new taxes?

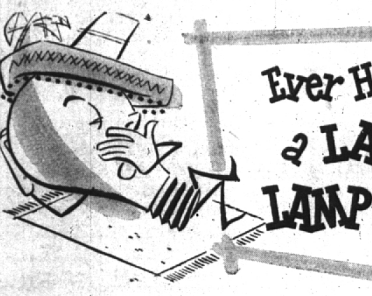
"In my statements during the recent campaign, I voiced opposition to the levying of new taxes. I believed then, and I have not changed my opinion, that the people of Michigan are paying enough taxes to finance good government.

"I am convinced that the solution of the problem lies not in more new taxes but in seeing to it that those which we are now paying are used and expended equitably."

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The "better half" seems a bit short-weighted in this picture, as Charlotte Arlene Jones of Denver, Colo., playfully pulls the beard of her husband-to-be, pro rasser Martin (The Billip) Levy at Dallas, Tex. She is 110, weighs 110. He is 24, overweighs the scales at 630.

Interpreted as you wish, puts the State of Michigan first on the list. As governor of the state, Sigler is displaying the same spirit of devotion to the needs of the state services as did his predecessor, Harry F. Kelly. Sigler chided the voters for jumping to the conclusion that "we had accumulated huge surpluses" whereas the state did have "certain surpluses, but not to the extent commonly supposed."

If the state is to achieve "a more equitable distribution of our income and responsibilities among local units of government on all levels," then the new sales tax diversion amendment must be eliminated or revised. This amendment, as we have repeatedly emphasized, does not divert one-third of the sales tax to home governments; it diverts 76 per cent of the revenue to home governments with public schools getting the lion's share.

In that extreme and inequitable distribution of the state's major tax lies the basic trouble. The amendment created a financial impossibility. State Treasurer, D. Hale Brake, recently warned school districts against counting their chickens before they were hatched; that is, increasing teachers' wages in anticipation of the

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new financial melon from the state treasury.

A "more equitable distribution" of taxes now collected by the state would still make possible financial relief to school districts. Prior to the November election, Rep. John P. Espie of Eagle, long-time chairman of the house ways and means committee, warned that the state government could not function on only 24 per cent of the state sales tax. He recommended an increase of 25 to 33 per cent in the state's school tax—some \$15,600,000 to \$20,000,000 more for the coming biennium.

February 9 is the deadline for filing of a legislative resolution to re-submit the amendment at the spring election.

If the legislature would decline to re-submit the amendment to the voters next spring—and it is likely that the Michigan Education association and the mayors of large cities will want to get assurances of adequate financial substitutes—the next alternative steps would be circulation of petitions by the voters or the calling of a state constitutional convention.

In recent years the state elective officials have been hesitant about risking a constitutional convention because of the fluctuating temper of the public. The present financial crisis might overcome this objection.

Governor Sigler's recommendation for "better marketing and distribution of agricultural products" focused attention on a long-felt need in Michigan. The state department of agriculture has been pushing this program for years—with limited success. The greatest obstacle has been the Michigan grover himself. He has declined to submit to uniform state inspection, grading and marketing of such products as potatoes.

Here is a basic progressive program, and Governor Sigler's emphasis should be most helpful. There is some feeling at Lansing that the state's food advertising program itself has been premature, like putting the cart ahead of the horse, and that it should have been preceded by consumer confidence and acceptance of Michigan products through uniform inspection and grading. Advertising itself cannot create confidence in the consumer's mind that Michigan potatoes, for example, are superior to those from Idaho or Maine.

The Sigler spirit of grand jury reform was reflected throughout the inaugural dinner. The governor would encourage honesty in public service through better salaries for legislators, prohibition of the "sale" of political influence for money, regulation of lobbyists, and more direct control of state commissions.

More executive power was suggested by Sigler as a way of ending the independent operation of commissions, many of which make rules and regulations having the effect of law, over which the legislative branch has no jurisdiction.

Inaugural Notes: The American cowboy has replaced the log-cabin as a symbol of political virtue. A greeting from the governor's old cow-hands at Broken-Bow, Neb., was met at the inaugural dinner. Ray Gorrell's orchestra, which furnished music for the inaugural ball, featured a vocal attired as a cowgirl. Ray wore a big western hat.

The inaugural dinner was "haunted," the hotel's public address system emitted wild shrieks and noises until a provoked audience yelled "throw him out!" as a persistent electrician tried to fix it.

Quentin Brelsford Picked for All-Ohio Team as Best Miller

Quentin Brelsford, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry E. Brelsford, 212 Pilgrim, has been selected as one of the track athletes for the 1946 All-Ohio track team. He was selected as the best All-Ohio trackster in the mile run after winning for Ohio Wesleyan. The National Cross Country Championship held last fall at East Lansing, Mich.

The announcement was made by George B. Gauthier, president of the state track coaches group, who was also given a coaching award. He is director of athletics at the Bishop school in Ohio.

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