

# Battalion Editorials

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 1949

## Texas Education; Pumped Away by the Barrel . . .

The question of whether the oil companies are paying enough taxes is a problem now being considered by our legislature. Locally the problem has been widely discussed since John Suman, vice president of Standard Oil of New Jersey, spoke to the Great Issues Class.

Yesterday four students put up an argument in the Letters Column for the oil companies.

In our original editorial we said that (1) Oil companies are not assuming 56 per cent of the state tax burden as the Great Issues speaker said, and (2) the oil industry is not paying enough taxes for the privilege of operating in Texas.

In the column on the right, are complete figures on the total taxes and licenses for 1948 in the words of George H. Sheppard, comptroller of Public Accounts. By adding one third (since they own about one-third of property) of the Ad Valorem Tax, \$9 million, and the crude oil taxes as listed under Gross Receipts and Production Tax, \$87,423,791, a figure equal to approximately \$96 million is found. In addition the oil companies may pay as much as one million dollars of the Franchise Tax.

A total of all these taxes adds up to less than \$100 million—a number which is one-third of the total taxes and licenses. So we maintain as before, that the oil companies pay approximately one-third of the state's total taxes and not 56 per cent.

Concerning the question of whether enough taxes are being exacted from the oil interests, we offer the following bits of information. Texas brags for being first in cotton, beef cattle, onions, wool, turkeys, sulphur, peanuts, pecans, grain sorghums and PETROLEUM.

Texas has other things in which she rates, but no one, not even our legislators, brag about them. Texas is first in pellagra deaths, has more people without a free library than any other state, is second in influenza deaths, third highest in infant mortality, third highest in polio deaths, fifth in diphtheria, and has 42 counties that do not have dentists. Texas is thirty-fifth in school expense per student, and only nine per cent of our rural adults have completed their high school education.

We are not saying by an etch of

the imagination that any group or individual is responsible for the infamous "firsts" that Texas hides. We are saying that Texas needs money and lots of it in order to cure as many of those ailments as possible.

But we are sure of one thing: Texas produces half of the petroleum which is produced in the United States. These products bring in a yearly income of nearly two and one-half billion dollars. This income represents 56 per cent of the total state income. Crops of Texas bring about 25 per cent of the income, and livestock and products account for about 20 per cent more.

Crude oil and natural gas are two of our most valuable resources and represent our greatest source of wealth—until they are exhausted. At the rate oil is being removed, Mr. Suman said our known petroleum supply will be depleted within 20 years. Does it stand to reason that we should go on year after year twenty-fifth in the nation with our public school system until that resource is exhausted?

If we can't improve our state before that 20-year period is up, we might just as well throw in the towel and climb on the federal band wagon.

To improve its educational program, Texas needs money. In order for a state to get money, its citizens must pay taxes. Only those people with money can pay taxes.

We are not pointing a crooked finger at the oil interests and saying, "Ah ha, you are the ones who are preventing Texas from climbing out of the educational doldrums." We are saying that manufacturers, farmers, laborers, and oil companies should be taxed on a basis commensurate with their ability to pay.

If the oil interests produce 56 per cent of the wealth of the state, then definitely the oil interests should shoulder 56 per cent of the tax burden. The same rule should apply to our other sources of wealth.

Every barrel of oil pumped across our state boundaries represents a better education which some Texan, yet unborn, will never enjoy.

We ask you—Is \$100 million "taxes," on a rapidly diminishing supply of Texas' greatest resource, a sufficient contribution from an industry with a \$2,400 million oil income?

## Great Issues; Looking Backward and Forward . . .

Graduating Seniors who have taken this semester's Great Issues course seem to be pretty well agreed that the course has been of interest and value to them. They also appreciate their acquaintanceship with the voluminous Sunday edition of the New York Times.

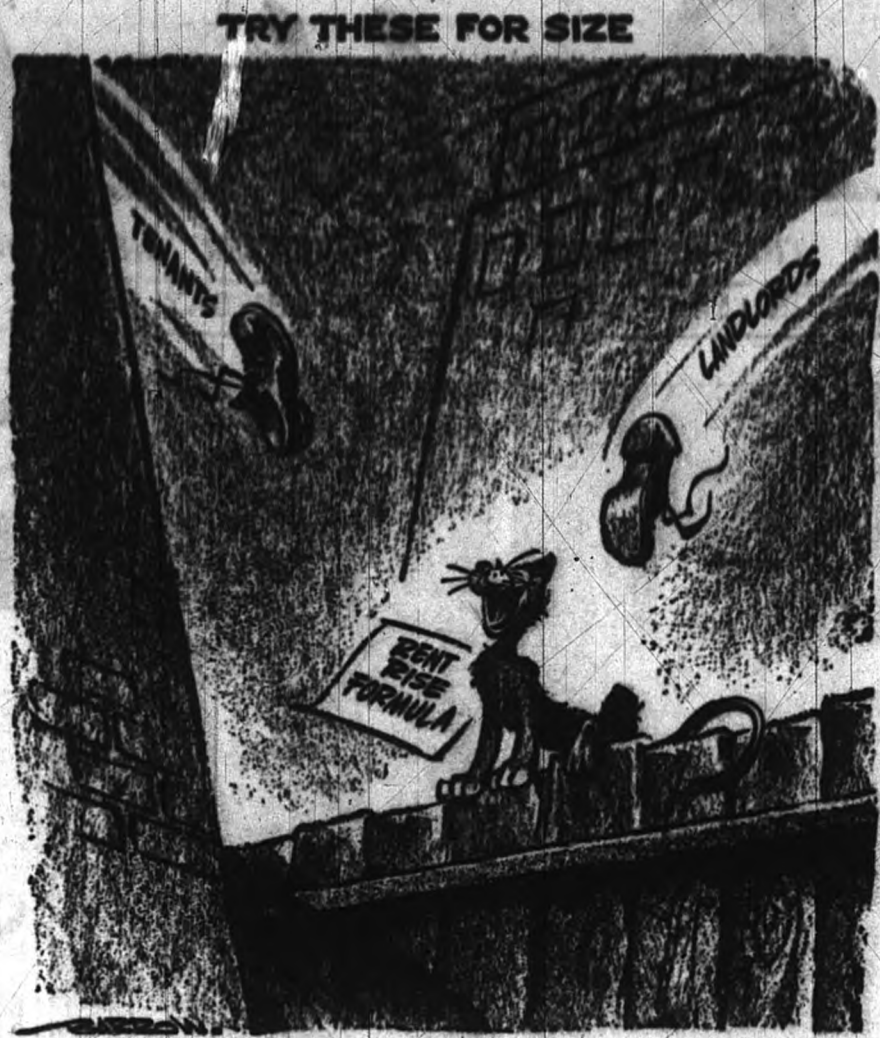
The planning that went into this year's Great Issues course was not wasted or mispent. This course provided Seniors with an opportunity for enlightening and stimulating discussions and study on current state, national, and world affairs. The speakers who lectured before the class were generally good—ranging from unmistakable ecclesiastical eloquence to the readings of what amounted to a com-

mercial for a major oil company.

With two years of experience behind the course, next year's class in Great Issues should profit from things learned last year and this year. We have noted the immense progress the course made this year over last year. We are human enough to hope for an even better Great Issues course next year.

Seniors who are taking the course this semester have made their contribution to the improvement of Great Issues courses by giving suggestions and criticisms. The people who have conceived Great Issues welcome these suggestions and criticisms.

Let's make this year's success stand in the shadow of next year's greater achievement in Great Issues.



## Report of Comptroller's Office

The following figures are taken verbatim from the Condensed Annual Report for 1948 from George H. Sheppard, Comptroller of Public Accounts:

REVENUE RECEIPTS:	AMOUNT
Ad Valorem Tax*	\$ 27,540,321.14
Inheritance Tax	4,040,955.20
Poll Tax	2,255,693.75
Store Tax	851,741.92
Gross Receipts and Production Tax**	107,784,900.01
Insurance Companies Occupation Tax	9,393,024.97
Occupation Taxes, Miscellaneous	1,091,073.12
Cigarette Stamp Tax	22,658,156.13
Liquor, Wine and Beer Tax	13,222,093.47
Highway Motor Fuel Tax	86,667,416.59
Less: Refund Claims (Deduct)	15,031,399.20
Franchise Tax	6,133,919.18
Insurance, Commission Maintenance Tax	446,122.99
Radio, Cosmetics and Cards Sales Tax	881,608.29
Automobile Sales Tax	9,755,023.11
Automobile Licenses	20,759,877.93
Other Miscellaneous Taxes and Licenses	2,192,513.30
<b>Total Taxes and Licenses</b>	<b>\$300,643,046.90</b>

\*Oil Companies pay, at most, about one-third of this Ad Valorem or property tax.

\*\*Of this figure, Crude Oil Tax is \$87,423,791; Sulphur Tax, \$4,858,451; Natural Gas, \$7,323,095; and Carbon Black, \$2,139,900. The source of the other approximately \$6 million is not given.

## Letters To The Editor

### GRADE POINTS AGAIN

Editor, The Battalion:

In last Friday's paper, appeared an editorial called "Those Little Rascals, Grade Points, Are Important," which in my estimation somewhat discourages one of the most important parts of college life, extracurricular activities. The argument put forth in this article is a commendable one, but I'm afraid that the group it concerns, namely the ones who have over-participated in extracurricular activities or will in the future are a small minority of our student body. For proof of this, you need merely to recall the small number of candidates available for many of the offices at the last election.

I think that a more appropriate theme for an editorial would have been to encourage extracurricular activities. Besides the many benefits a student derives from them, they have much to do with how people judge our school. Aside from being famous for our spirit, we have the best engineering and agriculture schools in the state, but our school is very poorly represented in many conferences which the different societies sponsor. Staffs on some of the publications are lacking.

I daresay that some of the group

who have let their grades suffer some because of their outside work have gained as much or more from their experiences as they would have from the entire time spent on studies. A good grade point ratio shows you have a brain, but extra work shows you know how to use it.

I think that the boys you should talk to are the ones who don't do anything extra. Nobody has to worry about the boys who take responsibility they don't have to . . . except maybe their competitors.

Dave Sanders '50  
(Editor's Note: You may be right.)

### Job Calls

Opening for student at the YM-CA camp on Possum Kingdom lake north of Mineral Wells. Duties would consist of caring for saddle horses, guide for campers, and counseling duties. Salary is \$150 dollars per month with room and board furnished free.

Camp opens June 8 for two months. All interested persons should leave their names at the Placement Office. A personal interview will be taken Thursday afternoon beginning at 1.

## Never Fear Son, The World Is Not All Fang and Claw

NEW YORK, May 25.—(AP)—Now is the golden time at end for many a rose-tipped maiden and This is the season when alma mater opens her iron gates. And out into an iron world she hurls her annual tide of college graduates.

Goodbye to Brackety-Yackety-Yack. Farewell dear campus so well beloved, but never so loved as now. Hello, world, so wide and terrible.

Ah, me! Ah, youth! Ah, wilderness! Ah hell! Don't look so forlorn, son. Life isn't all fang

and claw and a sharp tack in a tight shoe. You're just a freshman in a bigger university—a university in which it is terribly important to pick the right professors.

Until now there has always been somebody ready with a handkerchief to wipe your nose. The first thing you have to learn in this new university is to keep your nose out of places where people will make it bleed. There are tough kids around who live by the creed that a grin in the hand is worth two in the head. Don't play with them. Stay with the nice boys.

There are cleared places in this age-old jungle that is your new campus. Work with the people that want to tear down some of the choking moss and chop down some of the dead trees that hide the sky. The best fun in life is to leave something better than you found it. And if you don't keep clear the campus, the moss will smother you in time, as it has so many, and you will become a dead tree in a dying part of the forest.

Okay, son, I know that sounds highfalutin. Get the glaze out of your eyes. I know what's on your mind—you want a job. Fine. Drop that sheepskin from your warm little hand. Here's a broom. Get busy.

What's that? You don't want to push a broom? Why not? Do you want the broom to push you?

Oh, you'd hoped for something better? Well, so do we all. But you have to learn to saw wood before you can make a cabinet.

### Local Snook Man Succeeds in City

BATON ROUGE, La. May 25.—(AP)—The story of Snook earned Robert Leonard Shrabanek a doctor of Philosophy degree.

The sociology major took Snook, Texas, his home town, as the subject for his thesis. The Czech-American community is a tiny Burleson County Hamlet about midway between Houston and Waco.

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## The Battalion

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