

FIGHT FOR TAX SLASH PLEDGED BY GRIMSTAD

Senatorial Candidate Assails High Levies and Machine Before Laurel Voters.

Special to The Billings Gazette.

LAUREL, Aug. 26.—O. K. Grimstad, candidate for the Republican nomination for state senator at the August 28 primary, addressed a large and enthusiastic gathering here tonight. He was given most liberal applause as he outlined the high spots.

Mr. Grimstad spoke as follows:

People to Decide.

"When I decided to announce myself for the state senate from Yellowstone county, I first got the consent of my father, Richard Henry, and then announced myself. I didn't think it was necessary to ask the consent of anyone else. It was my judgment that the people should decide under my direction, whether or not I would be the nominee, and I am willing to have it in the people.

"Apparently my opponent, Mr. Conroy, would prefer to do away with the primary, for at the meeting the other night, when the Council for Senatorship was formed, one of the main questions of the evening was an urgent address requesting repeal of the primary law. Now, I think the people are able to decide between Mr. Conroy and myself and I'll abide by the decision.

Not Machine Fugled.

"I frankly admit that our primary law needs some changing, but don't you think the change should be made by its friends and not by its enemies? I presume I should have gone to the powers that be and respectfully asked them if I might run for state senator. Well, I didn't do that and never will. Why should I? I don't owe them anything and what's more I never will.

"The office of state senator from Yellowstone county is an important one. Legislation of vital importance will come up at the next session and your senator should be in a position to act impartially, fearlessly and for the best interests of the people. He must not have interests that conflict with those of his constituents.

Not Camp Member.

"I entered this field absolutely independent of all parties, political and otherwise, and I am going to finish in the same way. I don't belong to the 'camp' that runs things politically and what is more I don't want to. I prefer to take my chances with the average citizen. I think he comes nearest being right when anyone else. I want the people to know that my fight is the fight of the people to have their rights safeguarded through their authorized servants, servants who will do the bidding of the people who think of the people before they do of their own interests. I am not interested in any business that sells to the counties of Montana or to the state of Montana, or to any of its agencies. I am not interested in those business deals that are for my own profit and will advance the interests of my friend, and I don't think any difference to the where that law emanates from or who sponsors it. If it is for the best interest of our people I'll be for it, and let the other side say that I'll be opposed to it. I don't care what the other side says, and you'll find me voting that way if the law remains. I don't believe in backing these bosses. I haven't any political machine, back of me, nor is there any ahead of me. If I run across any I am going to back it to pieces and then watch these political revolutionaries get it together. I don't believe you need a political machine to send into law modifications, amendments. I'll give the other fellow the political machine and I'll take the people.

Taxes Too High.

"We are a great state and we have wonderful possibilities. However, our taxes are too high—they are all out of proportion with other states. We are squandering our public money too freely. We have too many men interested in spending the public money and altogether too few interested in saving it. In the last seven years our taxes have increased 100 per cent, and in the same time our population has increased but 12 per cent. Why all this spending? Who is getting it? Where is it going? The taxpayers are entitled to know.

"Now, it is my greatest pleasure that this can be accomplished by abolishing waste, by fixing a list of political beneficiaries and seeing that the public gets a dollar's worth of service for every dollar it spends. We can decrease our taxes in the same proportion that we decrease our public expenditures. I am in favor of trying it out and seeing if it can't be done. Why should we sit here by and see our property confiscated by taxation because of incompetence, gross mismanagement and extravagant waste by our public officials, elected and appointed by a political machine? Who spend all our time and money to provide some machinery for increasing political favoritism? There is no statute that I know of forbidding them to work. At the present rate of public expenditures it will be but a short time until our farms are abandoned because of high taxes.

Equal Contribution of Taxes.

"Let us get a common sense, practical system of taxation and equalization that the conditions existing in Montana. There is no such thing as anybody or any business out of anything in the state. We need capital and we need people. Let us encourage them to come by reducing our taxes. Let us encourage the farmers by spreading loss of the public money. Let us encourage the laborer by paying him, good wages and allowing him to see even his wages without paying contributory taxes. Let us encourage the day when labor and capital will meet and travel the road to prosperity together. The success of one is dependent on the other."

Farmer Great Asset.

"The farmer is Yellowstone county's greatest asset. He is our biggest taxpayer and if our doctors had taxing power by high taxes all of us suffer. The business men of Yellowstone county must learn that their success is absolutely dependent on the prosperity of the farmers and laborers.

"Another thing which shouldn't be said is that I am not a member of any party."

Grimstad Announces for State Senate

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