

NEW LONDON AND ITS TAXATION

One Member of Board of Assessors and Equalization Believers Increased Revenue Should Be Obtained from Higher Rate Rather Than Higher Valuation—Wants to Avoid Double Taxation—Bigger Budget By \$100,000 This Year—Jackson Slated For Police Captain.

(Special to The Bulletin.)
There is friction in the combined board of assessors and board of equalization, each board being composed of the same members. Allen Penhale, Francis J. Braeken and Thomas R. Murray, and there is rumor that Mr. Murray contemplates resignation in or more, the mayor appointed the assessors as a board of equalization and it was generally supposed for the purpose of placing the taxable property in the city on a more equal basis, and of course, for the purpose of increasing the city income. It was not supposed that an equalization of taxation meant a general increase on practically every piece of real estate in the city, as most of the taxation in the residential sections are now practically to the limit. The majority of the board has acted upon the theory that the equalization desired by the mayor was the one of common council was an increase in property valuation and have acted accordingly. It is said that every dollar of property in the city has been increased in valuation at least ten per cent, and that means real hardship on the part of the present rate of taxation and this more so than ever at present with the prevailing high cost of living. That is a reason why Mr. Murray dissent from his two associates on the board.

Assessor Murray contends that if more money is needed to meet the war exigencies and the extreme demands of the state tax and assessment on the new bridge at Niantic, it ought to be raised by an increase in the tax rate, rather than increase in valuation. It is plain that the present budget of the court of common council requires increased revenue to meet the increased expenses, and no serious objection could be made to the present emergency year to meet the present emergency, as perhaps by exercising economy the rate could be reduced a year later. The raising of the tax rate need not necessarily be permanent. Not so with property valuation. But the raising of the tax rate and increasing valuation at the same time is practically double taxation, one of a permanent and the other of a temporary nature. This is what Assessor Murray does not approve. At present the tax rate is 15 mills, but at the city meeting the Finance committee of the court of common council stated a 20 mill tax would be none too large, and now, when the assessors are completing their work, it is indicated that the tax rate will be 22 mills, perhaps, in addition to the increased valuation in the grand list. Mr. Murray believes that if the court of common council recommended and the city approves of estimates above the receipts that the council and the people should bear the responsibility by fixing the tax rate, and have it ample to meet all requirements, and he is no objector to a fair equalization of taxable property, but he considers that a general increase of valuation does not cover equalization in any sense, especially when that valuation is based on the fictitious value of real estate during these war times, when the city is overcrowded and there is demand for dwelling houses. There is sure to be a drop in the excessive values when the slump that is sure to come gets here, or when conditions return to normal. The new valuation will remain, even should there be reduction in the tax rate.

Years ago when the equalization of taxation was so strongly urged it was explained that the equalization meant reduction in tax rates and without loss of revenue to the city. That the burden of the little fellow would be lightened and the big fellow would bear his just part of the burden of taxation. This is Assessor Murray's idea, but his associates insist that the only way to get the returns according to the expressed wish of the mayor and the court of common council, and for the service for which the salaries of the assessors have been doubled, is to raise the coin by increasing the valuation and increasing the tax rate as well. Messrs. Penhale and Braeken, both experienced assessors, (as well as Mr. Murray) claim that their plan is the only one practical and will therefore be adopted by the board, or majority of the board, Mr. Murray dissenting. That is the city meeting will fix the tax rate based on the grand list and the assessors will see to it that the grand list will be ample large enough for the most extravagant city expenses, regardless of the size of the roll of the poorer tax payers, and the dear public in general, all being indirect taxpayers.

The city budget for this year as prepared by the court of common council is about \$1,000,000 more than the year which upon its face means an increase of two mills or more, but it is believed that when the city meeting comes for the fixing of the tax rate, that a couple of mills more will be added. There must be need for this increase or the honorables and intelligent court of common council would not so recommend. That the last court of common council, the same that made up the budget, is of a generous make-up is shown in the liberality in raising already overpaid salaries of some city officials. In these instances, perhaps, the increased cost of living was taken into consideration, but no consideration was given to the already overburdened tax payer, the little fellow who possesses his little home and home, or to the workingman who hires the tenements and really pays the tax. The grand list of New London has troubled within the past few years which is all of out of proportion to the grand list of New London. Last year the grand list of New London was about \$1,500,000 larger than the town of Norwich with about three times of

teen present are in favor of having any New Londoner either captain or lieutenant of the police force, and in order to get a couple of officers from the outside are ready to raise the salaries to be paid with money from the pockets of the people of New London. Hats off to the citizens committee. They never could have been elected to the place they assumed by the vote of the people that elected the members of the police committee and all other members of the court of common council, and in good faith. This self-constituted citizens committee has caused the resignation of Captain Haven, is forcing Lieutenant Jeffers to resign, and are even now threatening to get the scalps of other members of the force. In fact it is the play of the committee to control the police department. It has been suggested that the council fade away, and let this new committee take charge of all city affairs. It might be well to save the mayor as it is understood that he is in full sympathy with the citizens committee, as against some of his own appointees in the court of common council. However, the reformers are all gentlemen of the highest type of citizenship and whatever they may do is for the best interest of the city, perhaps. But every member of that committee cannot slide with a safety down every cellar door. Suppose it does come to pass that Mr. Jackson is made captain of the police force, and let the direction of the police committee or the committee that secures the job for him.

Panama Cold Storage Plant.
In carrying out its plans to make the Canal Zone self-supporting as far as possible the commissary division of the Panama Canal finds it necessary to have some larger buildings, one for an ice manufacturing and cold-storage plant. A large ice and cold-storage plant in Cristobal, Canal Zone, just outside the city of Colon, of reinforced concrete construction, three stories high, 350 by 105 feet, is planned. On the first floor will be the ice factory to make 150 tons a day, the ice-cream plant to make 500 gallons a day, and the freezers for meats. On the second floor will be the mixing room for making ice cream and storage rooms for vegetables, fruits, milk, butter, cheese, eggs and cured and pickled meats. On the third floor will be the sausage factory, chill rooms for 500 beef carcasses and coolers with a capacity for 6000 beef carcasses and 1000 hogs. This big plant is to serve as a supply depot for the seventeen commissary stores throughout the Canal Zone. It is expected that the building will be completed within a year at an estimated cost of \$750,000. —Commerce Reports.

We Use Other Words.
The Kaiser has decreed that Count von Bernstorff be called "Wirklicher Geheimrat." End as that sounds it isn't a marker to what Bernstorff has been called in this country. —New York Herald.

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the war takes it is charging you. Remember, other Americans are paying their share of their obligation to the country with their lives. —St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Is Still Prudent.
Of course, the German fleet will not get so cheery over whipping a few second-hand Russian ships that it will go out and wiggle its fingers under the bulldog's nose—to say nothing of the eagle's. —Savannah News.

Mountain of a Mole Hill.
From the American point of view, the political crisis in Great Britain is an illustration of making a mountain of a mole hill and setting the mountain between one's guns and the enemy. —Louisville Courier-Journal.

Another Call for Iron Crosses.
German soldiers in their desperation are again heroically assaulting fruit trees in the war zone which they find untenable. —New York Telegraph.

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The Real Thing.
The Postoffice Department wants a design for a new 10-cent stamp. How about a profile of the Jinx? —Boston Transcript.

Lucky Aberration.
"Russians Cut Their Way Through German Lines." —Headline. Judging from recent performances the Russians for the time being lost their sense of direction. —Memphis News.

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