

At the CAPITAL



By M. R. Dunnagan, The Pilot's Raleigh Correspondent

Extensive reduction of governmental costs, in state, county and city, even in nation, is the main, the overshadowing, in fact, about the sole issue on which A. J. Maxwell would go before the people as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Governor, in a statement issued "to the people of North Carolina" Sunday.

No new sources of revenue are available and those now tapped have been placed in a dangerous position, Mr. Maxwell holds, stating that a re-adjustment of public burden is essential, when the annual tax bill of \$102,000,000 is nearly equal to the present value of the combined corn, cotton and tobacco crops, or greater than the entire total incomes of all domestic and foreign corporations in the state.

Proper reduction of cost of government will meet many obstacles, but it can be done, Mr. Maxwell pledging

his best efforts and experience to doing it. He would cut nearly \$100,000 of the \$116,000 extra legislative bill, by abandoning the custom of much help. He would charge the 1,124 non-resident students at the State's three higher educational institutions fees that more nearly represent the cost of their education to the taxpayers of the state, saying that 26 per cent of the investment and expenditures are for the benefit of non-resident students. The consolidation plan will reduce costs, he adds.

He would utilize the 6,000 vacant school rooms, an actual extravagance, which taxpayers must meet in interest and principal of bonds. While favoring a broad school policy, he would apply the test of practicality and ability to pay to every phase of school cost. Three million dollars will be saved this year without lowering of existing standards, Mr. Maxwell states.

A common laborer outside the prison is able to provide the common necessities for a family and one inside State's Prison should produce enough to take care of his own necessities, Mr. Maxwell states, mentioning the more than half a million dollar deficit in two years. Prisoners could be utilized in beautifying as well as maintaining highways and in forests. The policy of placing them on the roads should be extended until the prison pays its way.

"An unrelenting stand to limit public borrowing to actual necessities and to decrease our public indebtedness and its annual load of interest," is one of the important and difficult tasks of the next administration. "A large part of our tax burden today is directly due to bad management and mismanagement of public funds, and to an alarming frequency of actual defalcation," Mr. Maxwell states, saying public funds must be protected.

Local government does a large part of the spending, spending directly related to the tax on property, and these costs must be reduced. Some counties are passing on the reduction due to State assumption of functions formerly given to them; others are not. They, cities as well, should reduce their spending to add to that made by the State.

"While Great Britain and other countries are making drastic readjustments to fit the times, Washington goes heedlessly along spending at the rate of a billion and a half dollars a year in excess of revenue, and continually increasing the burden of tax free bonds," Mr. Maxwell swings at the Federal Government, saying such extravagance should

For Governor



A. J. MAXWELL

"not be tolerated to support the most extravagant and most important Federal government in the history of the country."

Mr. Maxwell would not cripple or abandon any form of public service that is worth the cost. He would adopt the beginning made by the last General Assembly and fostered by this administration. He would, when practical, remove the 15c-levy on property for schools, but would emphasize proper spending rather than seek new sources or increase of present sources of revenue.

The general sales tax is unjust and unfair, in part for the unequal competition which it would impose on domestic business, particularly near the borders of the state, and because it violates the traditional policy of the Democratic party that taxes should be measured by ability to pay. A luxury tax has most of the objections of the general tax, with another peculiar to North Carolina. Three-fourths of the proposed revenues would come from tobacco products, its adoption inviting other states to do likewise, thus cutting down materially the market for a commodity manufactured and grown primarily in this state.

The program of the present administration has stopped and turned backward the rising tide of governmental costs. Unless rigid economy is used in State and local government, the relief given by the last General Assembly to property will be restored to the former high levels because of demands for increased spending, as was done 10 years ago when the State tax on property was removed entirely, Mr. Maxwell states. Although believing firmly in local self-government, he advocates protection against abuse of power by all public officials.

Relative to the quadriennial revaluation, Mr. Maxwell recalls that he was busily preparing for that assessment—had a school in Raleigh for assessors—when the General Assembly interrupted preparations. He favors revaluation, but asserts that revaluation will not relieve from the excessive tax burden. "The only actual relief is in actual readjustment and reduction in the size and volume of our spending," he states.

Mr Maxwell thinks the people should have a period of thought before an active campaign is opened, thus opposing a long-drawn-out fight. He states that his statement is what he believes, not colored for campaign purposes, is based on intimate knowledge gained over a long period of years in close study of the State's problem and tax resources. Whether he wins or not, he feels that North Carolina will be better off for all classes of citizens in his use of his candidacy to carry this issue to the people.

Governor Gardner has called a meeting of leaders in many fields of activity in the state for this Friday in Raleigh to outline a State program for relief operations in North Carolina this winter.

Pointing out that the activities of the administration last year were largely to aid the unemployed in securing work, Governor Gardner states:

"This year it will be the policy of the administration to emphasize relief and to undertake to arouse the consciousness of the state to a proper realization of the obligation to provide for the unfortunate in this period of depression."

Stuart W. Cramer, North Carolina member of the Federal Commission on Unemployment, has been invited to meet with State leaders here Friday.

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