

SEXTON PLAYS ROLE OF 'GHOST' AT TAX PARTY

Raps \$1.50 Limit as Step
Toward Bankruptcy;
Realtors Celebrate.

BY JAMES A. CARVIN

While members of the Indianapolis Real Estate Board celebrated passage of the \$1.50 minimum tax rate with a buffet supper and smoker at the Washington Monday night, there was present a "specter at the feast" in the form of Timothy F. Sexton, Marion county treasurer.

Speakers at the celebration called upon budget makers of both county and city to show a "co-operative spirit" by reducing expenditures to the minimum in order that the \$1.50 rate would be sufficient to meet governmental costs.

Before the dinner, Sexton assailed the \$1.50 law as the first step in "leading to the bankruptcy of country government."

Charges Opposition

Newspapers and others working for tax relief also were charged with creating a public attitude which has resulted in tax delinquencies in Marion county reaching a total of approximately \$2,000,000, double the defaults of last year.

"An attitude on the part of the public has been created in opposition to the treasurer and his office," Sexton charged. "The result has been that tax payments have been allowed to lapse because of promises of relief."

Sexton said it is impossible for the tax rate to be confined to the \$1.50 minimum, pointing out that the city levy alone is \$1.08.

Takes Men and Money

"It takes men and money to collect taxes, and delinquent collectors must be provided," Sexton asserted. "The legislature cut the treasurer's fee from 6 per cent to 2 per cent. In years past, approximately 3 per cent of the treasurer's fee has been spent for administrative expense in salary and mileage paid collectors."

Several weeks ago, Sexton discharged thirty-seven collectors for lack of funds to pay them. He said that today he would seek advice of Charles Clarke, county attorney, regarding legality of the law passed by the special assembly empowering the treasurer to ask the county council for funds with which to hire delinquent tax collectors.

"It takes about \$25,000 to pay the cost of deputy collectors, and this entire expense has been borne in past years by the treasurer out of his feet," Sexton said. "The total amount of fees from delinquent collections has been approximately \$50,000—and it's certainly worth a \$25,000 salary to the man who directs the work."

Let 'Em Go Uncollected

If the county council does not appropriate funds for collectors, Sexton will be faced with the necessity of allowing the taxes to go uncollected, or else pay expenses from his own pocket.

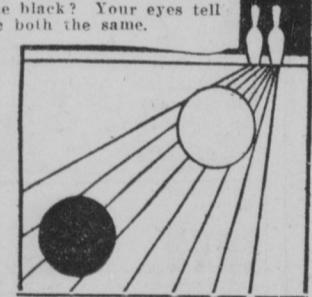
On the basis of the reduced treasurer's fees, the \$2,000,000 in delinquent taxes would bring a total of \$40,000, sufficient to pay the administrative cost of collectors and leaving a remainder of about \$15,000.

"We must have money to run the government, or Marion county will be in the same situation as Chicago," Sexton said. "I want it known that I am more interested in getting the taxes paid than in my own salary, because if we don't get more money in the treasury, there won't be salaries for anybody."

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