



# THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK

F. B. SWAYZE, PRESIDENT      R. ALEXANDER, VICE PRES.  
A. H. NORTON, CASHIER

Hermiston, Oregon

October 3, 1941.

Charles A. Sprague, Governor,  
Salem, Oregon.

My dear Governor:-

I have your letter regarding putting a state policeman in front of our bank or on the corner near and am sorry you think it will not be possible.

We went through the main payday for this week today. We had the bank full and a line on the sidewalk so we have the real necessity, whether we get protection or not. This afternoon two small children were hurt with a truck in front of the bank and were taken to the doctor's office. I have not heard how seriously. Right this minute, which is exactly eight P. M. I look out of my window and the street is full of honking cars on the highway stopped by reason of a traffic jam or something that has happened in the next block down Main Street. It might be impossible for the state to furnish one man on this corner or in this block but I have observed at many different times that single automobiles have had escorts. I have been in Salem when the traffic was heavy, with my own car in the line of traffic, and I also observed that there were state officers at junctions and at corners. I would not want to compare Salem with Hermiston but a traffic jam or a murder is just as serious at Hermiston as it is in any other part of the State.

Just why the State cannot see its way clear to care for this situation for a few weeks is not clear to me. It is sure that one man must be available at some point in the State. If not, we are in a hell of a condition so far as our state police system is concerned, are we not.

So far as I am individually concerned, I am asking nothing of the State myself. As I mentioned before, we can insure the money and thereby be safe. The men can have life insurance so their families will not be a charge on the State, but I have never noticed that a murderer made much of a distinction when he was working. The man who was murdered here by a bum a few days ago had his life insured in favor of his dear old mother but they are both dead.

These men who have been attracted here by publicity are not local. They come from far as well as near. They came to see how the rich picking looks and unless they are taken care of, they are not going to pass up as easy a proposition as this one here is. They are not scared away. They are still here and no one knows who they are plotting against all the time and when the next job may be pulled. It is necessary that we make a trip to the P. O. after money when it arrives. Anyone who studied the deal at all would soon spot the time when our men were carrying money. Just how would you like to be traveling along a street in a little town like this with \$100,000.00 on you and you know that it was easy for most anyone to know you had it and could see that there was very little or no protection. Or be one of our merchants who go in and out Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays with from one to seven or eight thousand in their shirts when any one who was studying the matter would know they had it.



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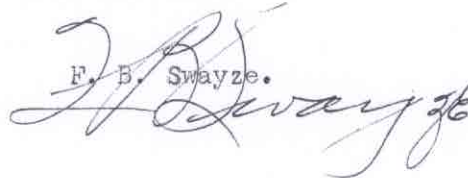
Hermiston, Oregon

2.

The State is taking thousands of dollars out of here on gas tax. It will take thousands in income tax, that is, unless all these people move out of the State when this is over. The great majority here are Oregonians. What does Oregon need or want factories and payrolls for unless they are willing to give usual protection, or, at least, offer a little protection. If you do not furnish any here, I do hope, when Salem or Portland or any other town gets one of these defence jobs or a factory, that the State Police force will be made available for ordinary protection.

I am sincerely hoping you will see your way clear to again talk this over with Mr. Pray and see if he cannot find one man who is now protecting some poor lonesome doe up in the woods and have him let the doe take her chance for a few weeks while these citizens of your state ~~xxxx~~ be offered a little protection. I am told the top of this rush will be over in six weeks.

Very truly yours,

  
F. B. Swayze.

I believe I mentioned in my former letter that the Surety Companies cancelled the holdup insurance our merchants were carrying when we recieved the nasty publicity from the Oregon Journal and a few other papers who copied it around over the country. I noticed just last night that Los Angeles is still giving us radio publicity.