## Howard Morgan Explains Accusation of Automobile Tire Theft

For the past four or five years Democratic, State Chairman. Howard Morgan, and the party itself, have been haunted by a ghost in the form of a story that the state chairman stole a tire from a Maupin service sta-tion back in 1936.

Wednesday Morgan himself jerked the ghost into the light and beat it over the head with an affidavit from the man who says he gave Morgan the tire in question as part of back wages he owed him.

The affidavit is signed by Jack R. Eatch, Portland general contractor, who employed Morgan on a highway surfacing job in eastern. Wasco county a few months before Morgan was arrested by Portland police in 1937 as a fugitive wanted for questioning in connection with the Maupin tire theft.

Enemies Employ Story Morgan, a Monmouth rancher, Reed college graduate and son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Corbett, prominent Portland-ers, was quickly cleared of any connection with theft of the tire from the service station, accord-ing to Eatch's affidavii

ring to Eatch's affidavit.

That was the origin of the ghost, which has been nurtured in recent years by Morgan's

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liticos.

Both Democrats and Republicans have long carried billfoldsize replicas of the record kept by Portland police in 1937, when they arrested the Reed college student as a "Tugiliye" wanted for questioning in connection with the Wasco county tire theft.

Morgan gave his version of the incident many times privately in the past five years, but never publicly until Wednes-

The effect of explanations Eatch said, was to send Morgan's enemies to the contractor "repeatedly;" asking for statements that would be "damaging to Morgan."

Pressure Tactles Used

Morgan said Wednesday the ghost's existence first came to his attention during the 1949 session of the Oregon legislature, the one session in which the state chairman served. "It was mentioned then," he

said, "in an effort to change my vote on a couple of gambling bills."

But that was only the begin-ning, said the rancher-politician. He decided to make the inci-dent public, he said, after a number of replicas of this record card in Portland police files recently were circulated

mail.
"Since I first served in the Oregon legislature nearly five years ago," said Morgan, "a bipartisan machine composed of the shabby element in be political parties has tried control my behavior in public affairs through political blackmail.

Legal Action Threatened

"For five years, I have been telling them quietly to go to hell. Instead of voting with them in the legislature I killed



HOWARD MORGAN

Discusses tire case over their bitter opposition, helped nominate the best slate of candidates either party has run in some years, and helped defeat some of the worst mem-bers of the bipartisan gang, re-gardless of party."

Morgan said he would take legal action if "these tactics"

are continued.

"Although I could long ago
have begun criminal and civil actions against the men who are involved in this matter," he said, "I have never felt such actions are really decisive in separating truths from lies. "So far, I have never appeared

in a courtroom as witness, plain-tiff or defendant, and would like to continue thus. However, if my friends and family are subjected to these tactics any longer, I shall proceed against those responsible with the full force of moral, civil and criminal law." Eatch said the passenger car tire in question "appeared in the construction camp sometime during the job (in the summer of 1936) and was transported

### Theft Involves Two-Time Loser

A two-timer loser was in jail Wednesday in connection with the theft of several electric irons from the Uptown hardware store, 27 N. W. 23d place. Gerald Joseph Concannon, 24, Woodburn, was acussed of being an accomplice of a 17-year-old girl, also in custody, who admitted taking the articles.

Concannon was charged with receiving and possessing stolen property. His record showed two previous terms at Englewood ederal correctional institute in Colorado, and McNeil island pen-tentiary on auto theft convicEatch expressed appreciation of Morgan's attitude during the

Eatch said he had no idea how the tire got into the camp. When Morgan next February sought back wages owed him, Eatch offered him the tire as "At any time during this af-fair Mr. Morgan could have placed the major blame for this situation upon me," he testified part payment, saying he could trade it at some service station "but he chose not to do so. In the circumstances his behavior for one that would fit Morgan's was not only entirely honorable but extremely generous."

ice station accepting the tire revealed it to have been stolen from a Maupin service station,

pened," said Eatch, "I immedi-ately went to The Dalles, ex-plained that I had given the tire to Mr. Morgan, and arranged for reimbursement to the service station proprietor.

"Of course, the police immediately released Mr. Morgan. No formal charge was ever brought against him, nor was there any kind of court procedure con-cerning this matter."

## Risk Concern Denies Claim

car, according to the affidavit.

A routine report by the serv-

and Morgan was taken into cus-

tody.
"Upon learning what had hap"are Fratch. "I immedi-

Report Bares Theft .

The Colonial Insurance company of California Wednesday filed suit in federal court askng that it be relieved from defending a death damage suit for \$123,400 and a personal in-

jury suit for \$25,000.

The suit is the result of an accident on the Pasco-Spokane highway, July 29, 1953, in which J. Yandt, an employe of the Washington state highway department, was killed and Kenneth Beal was injured.

The complaint sets forth that prior to the date of the accident it had issued a public liability insurance policy to David R. and Charles Gilkey, Davis Satre, Jesse Lewis and Claude Verrall, doing business as the Chapman Manufacturing company and Frank Ellis, on a truck and trailer owned by them.

State Truck Involved The truck and trailer collided with a Washington high-

way department dump truck on the date mentioned, and Yandt was killed and Beal injured. Beal sued for \$25,000 as the result of his injuries and the estate of Yandt sued for \$123,-400 damages because of Yandt's

The insurance company states the Gilkeys, et al, claim protection under the policy and denies that it is liable to furnish such

protection.

The court is asked by plaintiff to construe the policy (a) so as to find plaintiff not obligated to defend the two damage actions; (b) to find that the policy was not in force and effect at the time of the accident and (c) that the policy was void at the time of the accident.

Although the "tire theft" story Although the "tire theft" story has been circulated by anti-Morgan Democrats, the state chairman sees Republicans as the principal offenders in rumor mongering, and he said Wednesday this point might bring him back to Portland from his Monmouth ranch. 1950 Race Fails

There was some indication in this part of Morgan's statement that the state chairman might intend to run for office in 1954, with gubernatorial, senator and with gubernatorial, senator and representative seats to be at stake, and no Democratic leader clearly a candidate for any of them. If such were his objective, bringing the "tire story" into the open would serve to spike some of the biggest guns he would face in a campaign.

He was elected to the state house of representatives in 1948, and was the unsuccessful Democratic nominee for state

labor commissioner in 1950. "The gravest issue in this matter," Morgan said, "one af-Miss Rosina Corbett, and they have four children. fecting every citizen, is whether or not Oregon will continue to be governed by means of sys-tematic slander applied to every Democrat or independent who dares to oppose or criticize the dominant party and its biparti-U. S. Post Calls

san henchmen... Obviously my attackers hope I will be sick-ened and disgusted to the point of withdrawing from public af-fairs, as many men have done before me.

before me.

"I have given the matter a great deal of thought and there seems only one choice open to me. I will rearrange my personal affairs, probably selling my Polk county ranch and returning to the Portland area as soon as practicable, in order to devote all my energy to public affairs for whatever length of time is necessary to establish, on a permanent basis, a genuinely competitive two-party sysinely competitive two-party system in Oregon."

Morgan is a native of Tilla-mook and a graduate of Jeffer-son high school in Portland. He attended the University of Oregon one year, and received his degree, with a major in economics, at Reed college in 1940.

In 1940 he married the former

Morgan was president of the Morgan was president of the Reed college student body the year he was graduated, and served the next two years as assistant to the late Joseph Eastman, who was chairman of the interstate commerce commission and chief of the office of defense transportation.

From 1942 to 1946 he served as an officer in the navy in Washington; in the south Atlantic and south Pacific.

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state chairman by a one-vote majority over ex-State Treasurer Walter J. Pearson in February, 1952, and was re-elected unanimously the following June.

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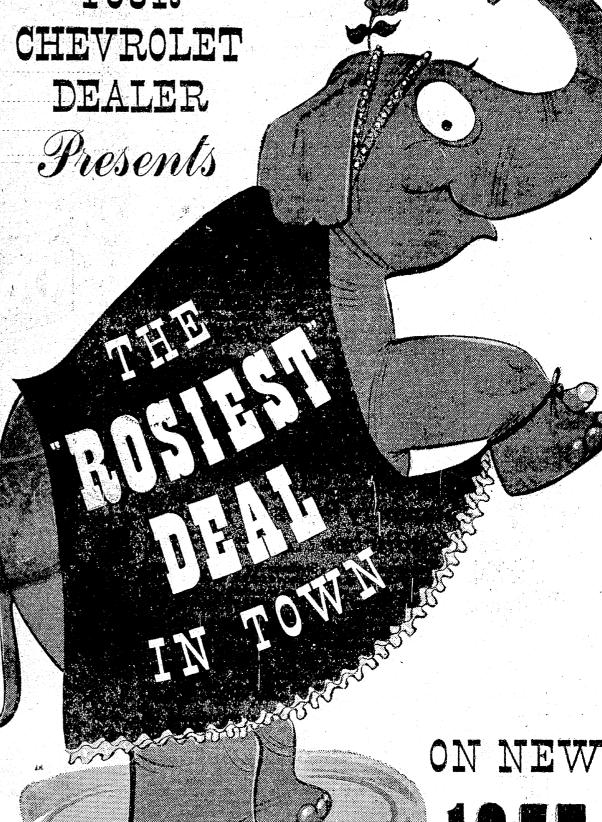
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