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The Register-Guard's policy is the complete and impartial publication in its news pages of all news and statements on news. On this page the editors of The Register-Guard offer their opinions on events of the day and matters of importance to the community, endeavoring to be candid but fair and helpful in the development of constructive community policy.

"Fringe" Zoning An Urgent Need
Oregon needs a very simple law to enable county governments to set up a control of building methods and sanitary conditions in those "fringe areas" which lie just outside the boundaries of every incorporated city. The fundamentals of such an enabling act should be:

To enable county courts to appoint planning commissions with jurisdiction over those areas. To get into those planning commissions people who live and work in the affected areas. To give those planning commissions broadest possible authority to set up regulations over those areas and to cooperate with the planners of adjacent cities. But—leave as much as possible of the detail of local regulation of HOME RULE, the good common sense of the people who now suffer from lack of any protection. The special interim committee on "rural zoning" which is chairmaned by Bill Bowes, of Portland is doing a remarkable job of assembling the facts, sounding out the opinions of every section and every class of people. We have only one quarrel with Governor Snell's committee and that is with the name of it, "rural zoning committee."

There is no thought or need to extend the authority of county plan commissions into those areas which are adjacent to cities, which are suburban, which have reached a point in population growth where they have city problems.

Any person who could have gone with Commissioner Bowes and his committee Monday—through Glenwood, through many sections of East Springfield and some of the still nameless sections which have sprung up west and south of Eugene—would have agreed instantly that the need for some enabling act to bring order out of chaos is URGENT!

Green, slimy, bubbling sewage from overloaded septic tanks standing in ditches and roadways adjacent to public eating places! (One of the worst is said to be getting ready to put in its own private sewage disposal system, which will be a help, if it works). But there were many other "show spots." Incredible shack tenements pack jammed into back lots! Fire hazards in many areas adjacent to both Eugene and Springfield, aggravated by lack of passable roads for fire equipment or roads laid out haphazard.

In these times of housing shortage and congestion, and almost prohibitive construction costs, a certain amount of temporary and makeshift development is necessary and must be accommodated. It is no crime to be poor and to live in a tiny cottage. But even the poorest citizen is entitled to certain decent minimums of sanitation and fire and police protection and public services.

Likewise the citizen who has moved into a suburban area and developed a neat and attractive home is entitled to protection of his investment from the damage which results from the ruthless intrusion of undesirable enterprises into his neighborhood.

And the public is entitled to protection from the increased taxes and the sheer waste of public funds which is entailed from haphazard and completely unregulated development. Some of these facts need to be more clearly understood.

Your county government is under increasing pressures to spend huge sums maintaining and correcting bad road layouts which never should have developed.

Increased traffic hazards, fire losses, crime and juvenile delinquency take enormous toll of public funds. The type of enabling act which will be sought by the Bowes committee will not bring any miraculous changes. It will take many years of patient effort to correct many of the mistakes. It may take many years to work out all the engineering and financial problems involved in roads and water supply and fire protection and sewage systems and sewage disposal.

But IF the power is vested in our coun-

ty governments to set up local planning commissions with authority to make reasonable regulations, then we can be reasonably sure of an orderly and decent future.

Today, except as a certain amount of protection can be written into deed restrictions, most of our suburban areas are a "no man's land" where nobody can be sure what character development may take. John Jones may spend a great deal of money and take a great deal of pains to make sure that his septic tanks are efficient and adequate, but Bill Smith, his next door neighbor, may defy the sanitary inspectors and do virtually what he pleases.

The fringe problem is not limited to the Eugene-Springfield area. It is troubling every community in Oregon. Already California and some eighteen other states have created county planning and zoning authorities such as we seek for Oregon. In this period of unparalleled growth, all Oregon communities desperately need the same right to protect themselves.

Those who have any doubts about the need should take a look into some of our "neglected corners," the places we do not ordinarily show those who want to "see Eugene."

WASHINGTON LETTER
By PETER EDSON
Register-Guard Washington Correspondent

Shenanigans in Congress

WASHINGTON, Aug. 7.—(NEA)—Some of the back-stage shenanigans necessary to get the Congressional reorganization act in acceptable shape for the House of Representatives were amazing.

The "streamlining" bill passed the Senate June 10. From that time until July 23, it lay on the House table, where every congressman who thought he had something to lose by it gave it the fishy eye. Chief among the objectors seems to have been Speaker Sam Rayburn himself. Before Congressmen A. S. Monroney of Oklahoma and Everett Dirksen of Illinois could get the speaker's clearance for their bill, they had to strike out several important reforms.

The principal thing to which the Speaker objected was the creation of majority and minority policy committees to replace the long-dead steering committees. The speaker objected, also, to the creation of a new joint Senate-House legislative-executive committee to meet with the President and his cabinet and shape administration policy.

The purpose of both these reforms was to create more party responsibility, and to force politicians to live up to their party platforms.

Speaker Rayburn Wanted to Retain His Power
But the Speaker would have none of them. He wanted to perpetuate the present system, in which the Speaker and the majority leader of the House, plus the President and the majority leader of the Senate, meet with the President every Monday morning that Congress is in session, to map out the legislative program for the week.

What this amounts to is that the Speaker is apparently unwilling to yield any of his present power. The best demonstration of his present power is the fact that he was able to whittle down the reorganization bill in this manner. A second source of opposition to the streamlining bill came from the House committee on appropriations, whose chairman is Clarence Cannon of Missouri. Rayburn is reported to have given Cannon the assignment of going over this bill line by line. That Cannon did so is evidenced by the block of amendments his committee brought forward.

Under the bill as passed by the Senate, a "Legislative Budget" would have been set up in joint meetings of Senate and House committees on taxation and appropriations. Procedure requiring a balanced budget at all times would have been established. But pressure from Chairman Cannon, backed by the Speaker, knocked this provision out.

Advocates of the full employment act also had a hand in this, as they feared a balanced budget would cripple their economic report and economic planning.

Congressmen Feared High-Paid Assistants
A third major reform struck from the Senate bill was the provision for a \$8000 executive assistant for each member of Congress. Arguments against this were curious. Some of the congressmen were afraid that a highly-paid assistant might steal their jobs. So the congressmen decided not to have any of that, preferring to go on being overworked.

House leaders also forced Monroney and Dirksen to take out a number of minor reforms in the Senate-passed bill. The ban on special investigating committees was removed. Joint hearings of standing Senate and House committees dealing with the same subject will not be permitted. Committees will not be required to keep records of their proceedings.

Under the gentlemen's agreement with the speaker, Monroney and Dirksen were not permitted to reintroduce these reforms as amendments from the floor of the House.

The strategy of Congressmen supporting the streamlining bill, led by Senator Bob LaFollette and Monroney, was to yield ground wherever necessary and to salvage as much of their program as was possible. They have come through with greater reforms than they anticipated. To the proposals for cutting Senate committees from 33 to 15 and House committees from 48 to 19, surprisingly little opposition developed.

There is every prospect that the Congress convening next January will be able to work under greatly improved conditions. Anyone who remarks that "it's about time" is merely being trite.

Lunch Project to Continue, State Board Action Indicates

By ELDON BARRETT
SALEM — (UP) — The indications are that Oregon will go into a partnership with the federal government in continuing the school lunch program in this state. The State Emergency Board has approved a deficiency appropriation of \$10,000 for the superintendent of public instruction to get the lunch plan started in Oregon. This fund is expected to pay the state's share of the program through the month of January. If the program is to be continued beyond that month, the legislature will have to provide additional funds.

According to department of agriculture statistics approximately 50,000 Oregon school children were served hot lunches at nominal cost last school year through the school lunch project which was then operated entirely by the government. These 50,000 youngsters were in about 400 of the state's 1800 schools.

State Also Pays
Under the terms of the Federal School Lunch Act, which the President signed last month, Oregon must provide dollar for dollar matching funds with federal funds to participate in the plan. If the state fails to put up the money, the school lunch program in Oregon's public schools is out.

The dollar-for-dollar ratio lasts only until 1951. Then until 1955 the state must pay \$1.50 for every federal dollar contributed. After 1955 the state pays three to one.

Supt. of Public Instruction Rex Putnam, within whose duties the administration of the school lunch program falls, asked the emergency board for \$15,808 to get the project under way. This amount was to last until the end of the next school year. The emergency board, which was reluctant to grant any money at all, decided to go along with the crowd until the legislature could have its say when it meets in January. That's why the original request was cut by one-third.

Reece Avers GOP 'Liberal'

TACOMA, Wash. — (AP) — Republican National Chairman Carroll Reece hailed his party as the champion of "True Liberalism," in a speech here Tuesday night, while describing the Democratic Party political philosophy as a "counterfeit imitator, which is liberal only with other people's money."

The Tennessean told the Pierce County Republican convention that "our system . . . is liberal because it preserves and protects the liberties of individuals."

He charged that "the principles of the Atlantic Charter were sold down the river behind the backs of the American people in secret conferences at Teheran, Cairo, Yalta and Potsdam."

Accusing the Democratic administration of being "a faithful follower . . . of a well organized technique for the destruction of free governments," Reece said:

"One of the first steps is to deceive the people by false slogans and false promises. A second step is the destruction of the value of money. A third step . . . is the concentration of power in the executive branch of the government at the expense of the representatives of the people in Congress."

Describing the nation as "standing at the crossroads," Reece declared:

"The election of a Republican Congress in November will put us back upon the high road to freedom and prosperity. I have every confidence the people have resolved already to elect a Congress dominated by the Republican party."

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School Lunch Program Set

PORTLAND — (UP) — Oregon school children were assured of hot lunches this winter after an agreement was completed by Supt. of Public Instruction Rex Putnam and the Production and Marketing Administrations state office here.

Under the agreement, PMA was to certify payment to Putnam of \$96,758.82 as first installment of Oregon's share of \$75,000,000 appropriated by Congress for a permanent school lunch program. The first installment represented one fourth of the initial amount available for food and half the



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amount earmarked for equipment and other non-food assistance. The federal allotment was to be matched dollar-for-dollar by state funds.
Last year 392 Oregon schools served 6,347,653 lunches to 50,986 children.

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Coroner's Jury Finds SF Fire Victims Died of Gas Poisoning

SAN FRANCISCO — (AP) — A coroner's jury of nine men have decided that the four firemen who perished in the Herbert's Hotel and backstage club fire last Tuesday died of carbon monoxide poisoning but concluded the fire's origin still was a mystery.

The jury, after hearing testimony of 34 witnesses, made a four point recommendation for prevention of such tragedies in the future:
"1.—More stringent building inspection.
"2.—Review of the ingress and egress of buildings, housing and places of public amusement.
"3.—More stringent rules as to handling of rubbish and refuse effected.
"4.—The mode of inspection of gas masks should be reviewed and users receive the benefits of periodic refresher courses by competent experts."

The coroner's jury returned its decision after hearing two gas mask experts testify that the breathing equipment worn by two of the firemen who died was faulty.

After Dr. Jeanne Miller, autopsy surgeon reported that all four men died of carbon monoxide asphyxiation when trapped inside the blazing backstage club on the ground floor, the two gas mask experts took the stand.
Daniel Sullivan, fire department drill tower instructor, told the coroner's jury that the nuts on both the main and by-pass valves from the oxygen bottle attached to the breathing apparatus were loose on the masks worn by Fireman Walter Elvitsky and Albert Hudson.
Confirming Sullivan's opinion, Harold Berg, bureau of mines gas expert, said that had the masks been "properly charged" and worn it would have been impossible for the men to inhale carbon monoxide fumes.
The fire-blackened breathing apparatus was displayed on a table before the jury as the witnesses took the stand.

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