

Capital Journal

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PUD Bosses Vs. the People

Among the measures due for speedy action by the Legislature is SB 146, introduced by Senator Naterlin of Newport February 12, and referred to the Committee on Financial Affairs, where it was slightly amended. It relates to the issuance of revenue bonds by Peoples Utility Districts, amending the present law, which has functioned satisfactorily for most such districts.

The change sought by SB 146, as amended, would authorize any PUD to issue and sell each year revenue bonds without a vote of the people, in an amount equal to 10 per cent of bonds outstanding, for the purpose of making emergency repairs or betterments to its system. It was reported out of the Committee favorably by a vote of 5 to 4. This bill would open the way for indebtedness that might possibly lead to eventual bankruptcy.

The original PUD act, passed in 1931, wisely included a provision guaranteeing to the people of every district the right to vote on every proposed bond issue, as a curb on abuse of power, and has been retained ever since. SB 146 deprives the people and the bond holders of this safeguard and their basic rights.

Proponents of the bill claim that the bill is necessary to provide the districts with money to meet emergencies, due to damage by storms or other catastrophes. It has not been necessary in many well-managed PUDs, for they had the foresight that private utilities utilize, insurance against such damage, the premium charged to normal operating expense. Or the district could accumulate a reserve fund out of the annual earnings for this purpose—self insurance.

Opponents point out that the PUD law at the present time gives every district the right to borrow money without voter approval to the extent of its annual net income and this provision has been clarified and strengthened by SB 140 which has already passed both houses of the Legislature. In the case of Central Lincoln PUD, for example, this would amount to approximately \$300,000 a year, which would be more than ample to take care of unforeseen emergencies.

It is also pointed out that the Supreme Court of Oregon has refuted the suggestion that PUDs should have the right to issue bonds in case of emergencies without voter approval in this language:

"The ingenious argument is put forward that the apparent purpose of permitting the directors of a district to borrow money without voter approval was to provide the District with a residuary borrowing power to be used in case of emergencies or when voter approval of bond issues did not keep pace with extraordinary or unforeseen demands for additions or improvements to the plant. We should have thought rather that the requirement of prior approval by the voters was intended by the Legislature to put a brake upon the runaway enthusiasm of directors, who might otherwise be tempted to look upon the ordinary exigencies arising in the operation and development of a district as if they were situations of emergency requiring for immediate and drastic action by way of remedy." (Fullerton v. Central Lincoln Utility District, 195 Or. 28)—G.P.

Called Back to Service

In Seattle a grand jury will be impaneled May 20 to investigate the Teamsters. It will be an interesting case to watch because Seattle is the home city of Dave Beck.

A much commented on preparatory move is that of the Seattle prosecutor, Charles O. Carroll, in persuading William F. Devin, a former Seattle mayor, to serve as special prosecuting attorney for the King County Grand Jury.

This could be interpreted in two ways. Carroll might be accused of sidestepping the case because it is too hot. Or he might be regarded as willing to forego, in the interests of public service, any laurels that might accrue to himself by a successful prosecution of the case. It could make him or break him politically.

But Carroll isn't running out, for he and Victor D. Lawrence, said to be an able attorney, will be in the case as assistants to Devin. So any doubts seem to be in Carroll's favor.

As for Mr. Devin, he has wide legal experience and has been a municipal judge and mayor of the city. He had gone into retirement, and reluctantly responded to Carroll's call. The assignment, it is said, will be the toughest of his career. It could be a climax to his career—or an anticlimax.

The Seattle Times observes that the grand jury will delve into corners that are very sensitive politically, and that in some quarters it probably will be accused of witch hunting, and thinks Carroll had these things in mind when he urged Devin to accept appointment as chief special prosecutor. It applauds his action.

Devin indicates that he will not be party to any witch hunting, and reminds the public that the obligation of a legal adviser to a grand jury is to protect the innocent as well as to see that the guilty are brought to account.

The Seattle grand jury is not limited in its investigation, but at the start will be concerned only with alleged misuse of Teamsters' Union money. Misuse, of course, is a broad term. Its immediate responsibility will be to find out if any laws of the state have been violated. In this inquiry it will be guided by Devin, Carroll and Lawrence.

Today, the Senator is checking on several other devices designed to assist "big business" interests, although there may have been justification for them in the wartime emergency. Ironically, in this venture he is lined up with such liberal extremists as Senator Wayne L. Morse of Oregon and that other but different Humphrey—the Senator from Minnesota.

"INDEFENSIBLE" PRIVILEGES
Senator Byrd criticizes as "indefensible" the fast tax write-off privileges granted by the Treasury to firms supposedly engaged in national defense production. In his opinion, most of these temporary tax deductions are unjustified because the beneficiaries do not qualify, while causing a tremendous loss in Federal revenue. And the incident which angered him most involved a quick amortization grant to a great utilities project and company. He has introduced a bill for repeal of this provision.

Byrd is also concerned over apparent tax favors to five great oil firms operating in Saudi Arabia under the name of Armaeo. It has been charged that they escape U.S. income taxes of \$100,000,000 a year by paying prearranged taxes and royalties to King Saud. In short, bookkeeping manipulation is suspected.

After studying 13 volumes of evidence, State Engineer Charles E. Stricklen had issued an order determining water rights in Mill creek and its tributaries in Marion county. About 155 persons were claiming water rights with rights for development of power and manufacturing totaling 1000 cubic feet of water per second.

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people of Oregon. The lack of car parking space near the State House is a constant annoyance, not only to Salem people and state employees, but to everyone in Oregon who has business at the Capitol or any of the other state buildings. Members of the Legislature have complained about it ever since the new State House was occupied, and the complaint has mounted with the addition of each new state building.

An accumulation of things worked against the parking area bill. Mr. Hatfield proposed a \$300,000 appropriation to buy the property. The Ways and Means Committee cut this in half, which would not have been nearly enough, and another appropriation would have been necessary in 1959. It was provided in the bill that the project pay for itself by rental to be paid by persons using it. This is hardly dependable.

The Legislature had already approved ultimate extension of the Capitol Mall to D Street, and some members objected to further state purchases of property extending laterally from the Mall. One reason was that every purchase by the state removed property from the tax rolls. In this instance it would be an area valued roughly at \$300,000.

There is talk of reviving the bill. One argument for it, assuming that the State will have to acquire parking ground, is that the area doubtless could be bought more economically now than some year hence.

In purpose the bill was good. Reasons considered practical seem to have beaten it, indicated locally by the fact that all but one of the Marion County members voted against it.

RAY TUCKER

Byrd May Reduce National Budget

WASHINGTON — A conservative Democratic Senator for whom President Eisenhower and Treasury Secretary Humphrey profess warm regard has become the most vocal and effective foe of their financial and budget policies. Although a successful millionaire businessman, he fights chiefly their alleged costly favoritism toward certain great corporate interests here and abroad. It is the most fascinating human interest drama on Capitol Hill.

This influential individualist, whose conduct bewilders even as it gratifies most of his colleagues, is Senator Harry Flood Byrd of Virginia, the aristocratic apple-grower from the Shenandoah Valley. Regularly assailed as a "reactionary" by Democratic radicals and liberals, he is now aligned with them, albeit for different reasons. He has turned his attack on policies that would benefit banks, private utilities, bond houses, vast corporations and petroleum interests.

If the \$71.8 billion budget is seriously reduced, it will be due largely to Senator Byrd. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and leader of the Southern bloc, he wields enormous influence in the Upper Chamber. And it is this body which generally restores whatever appropriation cuts have been made by the House of Representatives.

Byrd's stand will win Senate support because he shows utter disregard for politics or personal friendships. They recall that, chiefly because of his attitude, the Old Dominion twice cast its electoral vote for Eisenhower. He has expressed his admiration for Secretary Humphrey, regarding him as the ablest Secretary of the Treasury in 25 years, and the Cabinet member consider the Senator his "good friend."

OPINIONS AND FRIENDSHIP
This remarkable friendship persists, although this is the third time that the Senator has opposed policies which seemed to benefit his admirers in the banking and business community.

When Humphrey proposed that the huge road-building program be financed through the issuance of private bonds, thereby removing the cost as a current charge against the budget, Byrd denounced it as "legerdemain." His single blast killed the idea. Although it would have profited the issuing bond dealers, it would have cost the taxpayer extra billions in the long run.

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JAMES MARLOW

Ike, Dulles Issue Stern Jordan Talk

WASHINGTON — Were President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles just making stern sounds or do they mean to do something if anti-communist King Hussein is attacked or overthrown? Yesterday Hussein, pushed from one crisis to another for weeks by pro-Egyptian and pro-Communist in his kingdom, blamed his troubles on "international communism and its followers."

Judging from what soon followed, his use of those two words — "international communism" — may have had a special significance. What followed was this:

Jordan Independence Vital
Eisenhower and Dulles — the former in Augusta, Ga., and the latter in Washington — talked 20 minutes by phone. Presidential press secretary James Hagerly told reporters that, among other things, the two men had agreed that they regard Jordan's "independence and integrity as vital."

Hagerly took pains to point out that the language was part of the resolution which Congress adopted last March in approving Eisenhower's Middle East program.

That resolution in Section 2, using the very words mentioned by Eisenhower and Dulles and the words "international communism" employed by Hussein, said:

"The United States regards as vital to the national interest and world peace the preservation of the independence and integrity of the nations of the Middle East. To this end, if the President determines the necessity thereof, the United States is prepared to use armed forces to assist any such nation or group of such nations requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism."

Although Hussein's immediate troubles may be inspired by Communists, he is not now under attack by any country, controlled or not controlled by international communism.

From the surface evidence, his problem is with revolution in his own country. And there is nothing in the congressional resolution which authorizes Eisenhower to use American forces to crush a revolution within a single country.

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Too many people do not know that whatever they might save, through tax reduction, could be eaten up and further drains imposed on their shrinking income if an inflationary price rise ensues.

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Fuel oil consumers would receive approximately 45 per cent of their year's supply under OPA's fill-up plan.

Beaver hotel at Independence had been sold by Mrs. Pearl Van Orsdel to Mr. and Mrs. Guyon Blissett of Astoria. Beaver hotel, long known as the Independence hotel, is a three-story structure on Main street. It has about 60 rooms and was opened in 1912 by M. W. Walker of Independence who operated it until his death in 1929. Between 1929 and 1943 it was run by Mrs. Van Orsdel. The place has been practically vacant for many months.

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That's Sweet of You, Sam



DAVID LAWRENCE

Amount of Misinformation About Federal Budget Sweeping Country Is Incredible

WASHINGTON — The amount of misinformation about the federal budget circulating throughout the country is so incredible that it is almost unbelievable.

—judging by the letters received by this correspondent by many members of Congress.

Too many people do not know the difference between money "appropriated" or "authorized" for a given year and money actually spent in that next year.

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Beaver hotel at Independence had been sold by Mrs. Pearl Van Orsdel to Mr. and Mrs. Guyon Blissett of Astoria. Beaver hotel, long known as the Independence hotel, is a three-story structure on Main street. It has about 60 rooms and was opened in 1912 by M. W. Walker of Independence who operated it until his death in 1929. Between 1929 and 1943 it was run by Mrs. Van Orsdel. The place has been practically vacant for many months.

After studying 13 volumes of evidence, State Engineer Charles E. Stricklen had issued an order determining water rights in Mill creek and its tributaries in Marion county. About 155 persons were claiming water rights with rights for development of power and manufacturing totaling 1000 cubic feet of water per second.

MOST NEEDED STIMULATOR
Most of the people we know are more in need of a stimulator than a tranquilizer.

Sherman County Journal

From the increasing difficulties readers tell me you encounter in trying to buy various items for whipping up a batch of this or that home remedy, I get the impression that the prescription pharmacist is doomed to go the way of the dodo bird. Among the items that are hard to find in drugstores these days are: Powdered benzoin, boroglyceride, sodium citrate, whole flaxseeds, salicylic acid, mild tincture of iodine (also spelled iodine), and boric acid. Formerly every one of these items was available. Anyone could purchase some in any drugstore that purported to serve the public, and without impertinent cross-examination as to what he intended to do with it.

MORE DIFFICULT
As it becomes more and more difficult to buy drugs in drugstores, the cubbyhole assigned to the prescription pharmacist, if the store employs one, becomes smaller and smaller. It begins to look as if the drugstore of tomorrow will stock no drugs and need no pharmacist. It will be a kind of serve-yourself emporium where the shelves and bins will not only be kept always filled with not only proprietary medicines but also the "ethical" nostrums that trick specialists and "knimik" racketeers seem to prefer to prescriptions.

On first thought it might seem

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