

By FRANK JENKINS

Highways and politics: Some weeks ago, President Eisenhower warned the congress and the country that work on the 41,000 mile interstate superhighway network must soon slow down to a walk unless the federal gas tax is boosted 1 1/2 cents from the present 3 cents to 4 1/2 cents per gallon.

The money, he said, is running out. If the federal highway system is to be completed within the time envisioned, more money must be provided. It was his opinion that the money should be provided by TAXES, and he so informed the congress.

DEMOCRATIC leaders emphatically rejected the President's proposal. Presumably they were looking forward to next year's election and reasoned that an addition to the gasoline tax wouldn't be a popular campaign issue.

But Oregon's Senator Neuberger went along with the President. He sponsored the 1 1/2 cent increase in the gasoline tax (which Ike had recommended) as an amendment to the revenue bill of 1959. Explaining his reason for doing so, he said:

"I believe that, if the federal government is to provide 90 per cent of the cost of building 39 1/2 BILLION DOLLARS WORTH of interstate highways, it makes sense to raise the federal motor-fuels tax from 3 cents to 4 1/2 cents per gallon to PAY FOR THESE ROADS."

It should be added that the senate defeated his amendment by a vote of 46 to 33.

LET'S take a sharp look at this federal highway program, as the problem of financing it is beginning to shape up. Loosely, there are three choices:

1. Call the program off or stretch it out over a MUCH longer period of years.

2. Go ahead and PUT IT ON THE CUFF—that is, add it to the national debt to be paid for by posterity, if posterity has anything left to pay with.

3. Pay for it as we go by taxes; preferably by gas taxes, which are paid a little at a time, as we use the roads.

THE first is probably OUT. People want the roads. They want them now—not a generation or so hence.

The second is utterly reckless finance and OUGHT TO BE OUT. Recklessness of that sort is the last step before national bankruptcy.

The third is the reasonable, SENSIBLE way proposed by Senator Neuberger in his amendment to the 1959 revenue bill, which was defeated in the senate.

WHICH way will be chosen? It's hard to say. Putting it on the cuff seems to have a lot of political appeal. Just why, one wouldn't know. Everybody knows that if he throws fiscal wisdom and caution to the winds in his own personal affairs the result will be bankruptcy. Why is it that so many people—especially politicians—persist in claiming that it is different in the case of governments?

ANYWAY—Let's give thanks to Senator Neuberger for his words of fiscal wisdom spoken into the prevailing Babel of "put it on the cuff and trust to luck and the future to pay for it" nonsense that is being peddled in these days.

He is displaying signs that he is leaning toward the role of STATESMAN rather than the role of politician.

Industrial Mishaps Take Lives of Two

Dallas—(UPI)—Two men lost their lives in industrial accidents near here Monday, according to the Polk county sheriff's office.

Charles R. Culley, 40, Springfield, was killed when a log rolled over him while he was working in the woods near Valsetz.

A Salem man, Ted Witham, was killed when he was crushed in a storm sewer cave-in on a highway project in Dallas. He was buried in his neck and died in a Dallas hospital several hours later.

Culley was an employee of the Shipler Logging Company. Witham worked for Scharff Brothers of Salem, a sub-contractor on the Dallas project.

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Geysir in Lake County May Be Capped by State

Salem—(UPI)—A geyser-like eruption that is wasting millions of gallons of 228-degree hot water belonging to Oregon will be capped if the combined efforts of Attorney General Robert Y. Thornton and State Engineer Lewis A. Stanley are successful.

The spectacular column of water and steam erupted July 1 from an abandoned well shaft near Crump lake in Lake county. It has been shooting a continuous jet some 150 feet into the air ever since.

Although the geyser is located on privately owned land, the water comes from an underground reservoir and therefore is the property of the state, Thornton said.

The State Engineer, concerned about the wastage of water, has asked the attorney general to check into the legal problems involved in getting the well capped. Capping the well could cost thousands of dollars and require special equipment, Stanley said. He is now at the site investigating the eruption.

Original Drillers Sought Thornton is attempting to locate the persons who originally drilled the well in cooperation with District Attorney Chuck Chaloupka of Lakeview and the attorneys general of California and Nevada.

A Nevada firm, the Nevada Thermo Power Company, is the reported driller of the well. They apparently intended to use the hot water for a thermo-power plant.

The legal question is whether the company which drilled the well is responsible for capping it or the state, which owns the water.

Eagle Point Swimmers Should Register Soon

Eagle Point participants in the second swim class session to be held at Hawthorne pool must sign up by 5 p.m. Wednesday, it was announced today. Registration can be made at Eagle Point High school.

The two-week session of Red Cross instruction is for those between 8 and 18 years of age.

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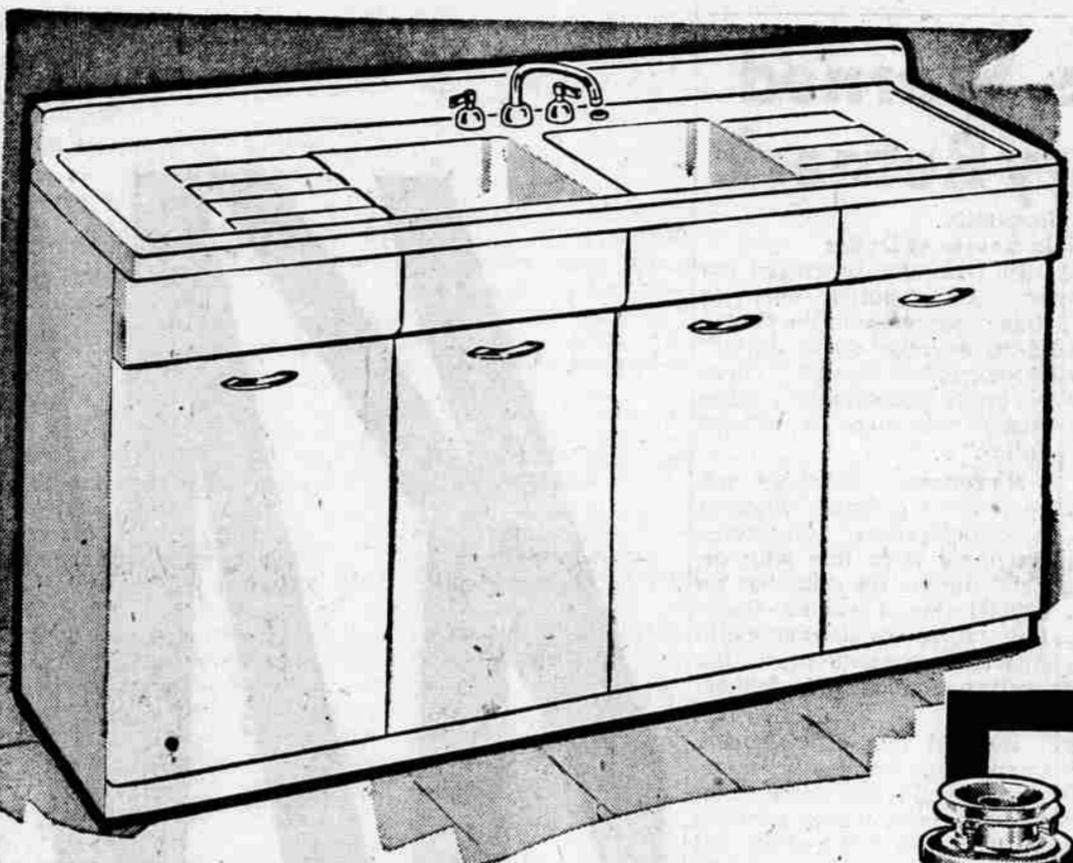


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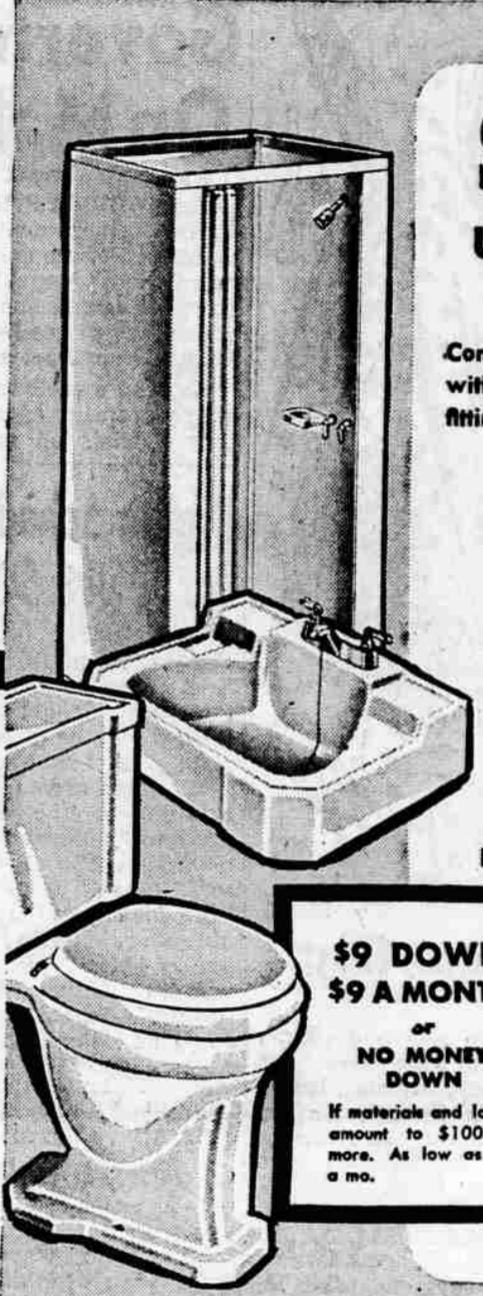
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