

Salem Scene

by Jack Zimmerman

News stories from the nation's capital indicate the Nixon Administration's Federal Revenue Sharing program is enjoying a revival of sorts. And the splash is causing some ripples in Salem.

Among revenue-short state and local governments generally, the idea of receiving funds from a new source--with a minimum of strings attached and without levying additional taxes themselves, sounds attractive.

But many fiscally astute observers look upon Federal Revenue Sharing as something of a "straw man." And no one in Oregon sees the program as something that will solve the money puzzle State Legislators will start trying to unravel when the 56th Legislative Assembly convenes January 11.

Nonetheless, the Revenue Sharing concept is gaining momentum in Congress and 1971 could be its most-publicized year to date. And it might even achieve passage at least in the House.

Revenue Sharing is a fiscal plan whereby the federal government would provide state and local governments with a portion of federal income tax receipts. Proponents point to the fact the feds have largely pre-empted the income tax as a revenue source. State and local governments usually must depend on less progressive taxation for their money. And there is a limit beyond which the public simply will not venture when it comes to sales and property taxes, for instance.

Meanwhile, demands for services from state and local governments are proliferating at a pace those governments' coffers cannot sustain.

In theory--and in a "good economic climate" (in which the economy is on the rise), federal income taxes are supposed to reap rewards even greater than the economy dictates. This is supposed to create a "surplus" of federal funds that could be returned to governments on lesser rungs of the bureaucratic ladder.

Revenue Sharing is especially attractive to those lesser lights because it connotes a minimum of restrictions, isn't supposed to be expensive to administer and shouldn't create a new level of federal bureaucracy. Federal assistance to state and local governments so far has been largely on the basis of aid grants requiring local matching funds and block grants, whereby the aid is ear-

Bank Debits Up In November Idaho Power To Invest \$22.5 Million In 1971

Bank debits for the eight reporting banks including Harney and Malheur counties were up in November, 1970, compared to November, 1969, the University of Oregon Bureau of Business and Economic Research has reported.

Debits for November, 1970, totaled \$63,419,000. For October, 1970, the total was \$51,583,000 and for November, 1969, the total was \$62,138,000.

Oregon with 364 banks reporting had a percentage increase of 8.7 per cent in November, 1970, as compared with October, 1970, and a 7.1 per cent increase in November, 1970, compared with November, 1969.

Total bank debits for November, 1970, came to \$5,386,482,000. For October, 1970, the total was \$4,955,607,000 and for November, 1969, the total was \$5,031,419,000.

State School Superintendent

Dale Parnell, state school superintendent, will return to classroom teaching during the month of January. He will work in the primary grades at Whitworth Elementary School, Dallas, under the direction of Mrs. Norma Gorman, First Grade teacher; Melvin McCutcheon, principal, and Gordon Kunke, superintendent. Parnell gave the following reasons for his unprecedented action:

- "I've made my commitment to the teaching-learning process--that's what it's all about. All administrators should teach from time to time, because teaching and learning are the only reasons for the existence of everyone involved in education.
- "Improvement of primary education is a top priority objective of the Oregon Board of Education. The first grade is the most important grade in all education. By becoming better informed about primary education myself, I hope to focus more attention on the needs at this grade level."
- "Oregon Board of Education staff people need to keep in touch with the classroom. I hope to begin a routine exchange program whereby state-level people have opportunities for teaching in local school districts."

state through the next biennium. The possibility a "benevolent" Uncle Sam is poised and ready to come to the rescue might be reason enough to concentrate on "gap-plugging" at Salem.

Idaho Power Company announced that it will invest nearly \$22.5 million in new service facilities during 1971 as actual construction starts on the 1.5 million-kilowatt Jim Bridger steam generating complex.

"In spite of steadily rising costs now at record levels, Idaho Power has no choice but to move forward with its expansion so that we can continue providing the essential and reliable energy supplies required by our customers' growing demands," said company president Albert Carlsen.

"Among the most critical of those growing demands that must be met," he noted, "is the use of clean electric energy to help improve the environment and our quality of life."

Carlsen announced the utility's spending plans in a report on its accomplishments in 1970 and its construction program this year.

Idaho Power's 1971 investment, he said, is the second step in a five-year expansion that will see it spend an estimated \$250 million--equal to more than \$1,800 for each of the some 134,500 domestic customers the company is presently serving.

Nearly \$9 million of this year's outlay will be used to launch actual construction of the Bridger complex, being built jointly by Idaho Power and Pacific Power & Light Company.

Preparation of the new plant's site some 30 miles northeast of Rock Springs, Wyoming, already has been completed and its structures are scheduled to start taking shape by the end of 1971. The first unit at the coal-fired plant, estimated to cost \$300 million with related transmission facilities and coal-field development, is due to go "on the line" in 1974 to supply Idaho Power customers.

The company's 1971 budget also earmarks nearly \$3 million for transmission lines and substations and more than \$8.6 million for distribution lines and substations. Another \$1.5 million will go for general facilities and equipment.

Carlsen pointed out that while other sections of the U.S. "suffered" through power shortages and brownouts in 1970, Idaho Power was able to supply customer demands that set a new record for the company.

"Energy use by our general-business customers alone is expected to reach an estimated 7.1 billion kilowatt-hours in 1974," he said, "but Idaho Power should be able to meet even this extremely high load requirement without any difficulty if we are permitted to proceed with

our expansion in an orderly manner."

Electricity, the utility president predicted, will play an "increasingly important role" in helping to improve the environment.

He said several large industries in the Snake River Valley are installing or planning to install high-voltage pollution control equipment and that "electricity, which itself produces less pollution than other forms of energy, can be used in many additional ways to clean up our air and water."

Among them, according to Carlsen, is electric heat, which he said is being installed by "additional hundreds" of Idaho Power customers every year.

"Ironically, the people who speak the loudest in their commendable concern over the condition of the environment are the first to protest against increased production and use of the very energy that can do the most to clean it up," he said.

"These people not only suggest that we stop building new facilities to produce electricity, but that we stop promoting its use and thus reduce demand."

They fail to realize, Carlsen asserted, that the primary obligation of electric utilities is to fill existing demands in a better way."

He said that in a recent nationwide survey, more than 90 percent of those questioned were opposed to any restriction in their use of electricity and 83 percent believed air pollution would be reduced if every American home and building were electrically heated.

Carlsen reported that Idaho Power's 1971 investment in transmission facilities will include construction of new lines and reconstruction or reconductoring of existing lines for greater capacity and service reliability.

The utility also will install new equipment designed to increase the capacity of its transmission substations.

One of the three facilities to be enlarged is the Boise Bench substation, where Idaho Power last year completed the \$2.5 million installation of series capacitors to boost the carrying capacity of its 230,000-volt transmission lines from the T.E. Roach Hells Canyon development.

Two new distribution substations are scheduled for construction this year, while larger transformers will be installed in eight existing substations throughout the utility's system to boost their service capability, Carlsen said.

GRAZING INCREASE

The increase follows a one-year moratorium the two departments had placed on fee increases to allow time to review recommendations of the Public Land Law Review Commission. In announcing the increase, assistant secretaries of the two departments said that a review had been made of both the commission report and decision of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals on the matter of grazing fees. The commission report, while criticizing the formulation of the fee structure, indicates that the announced 1971 level is within its concept of moving toward fair market value. The court found the fee structure consistent with existing law and the intent of Congress, and that it was fair, reasonable and equitable.

Grazing fees for Federal lands will be higher next year, according to a joint announcement by the Departments of Agriculture and Interior.

Most stockmen using lands administered by Interior's Bureau of Land Management in 1971 will pay 64 cents to graze one cow or five sheep for a month compared with 44 cents in 1969 and 1970. The new rate applies in eastern Oregon, Wash., and throughout other western states.

New fees on western Oregon lands administered by BLM will be 88 cents per animal unit month. In 1970, the fee was 63 cents.

Fees for public lands administered by BLM inside grazing districts consist of a 43-cent basic grazing fee and a 21-cent range improvement fee, for a total of 64 cents.

Outside of grazing districts in eastern Oregon and in Washington, the basic grazing fee is 48 cents with 16 cents allocated toward range improvements for a total of 64 cents per animal unit month. One cow or five sheep equals one animal unit, whereas a horse is counted as two animal units. Grazing fees are not assessed for livestock under six months of age.

The annual increase toward fair market value in fees for public lands administered by BLM is nine cents, while the Forest Service average annual increment is seven cents. Both Interior and Agriculture are increasing fees an additional eleven cents to reflect market increases in forage prices during the two years since the last fee change. The increases will add to revenues for local and Federal governments and will expand funds available for land improvements.

'Hoop Snake Ball'

Editor's Note: The following account of the history of basketball was written by Stan Thompson, former Nyssa sports authority (?), who has been a reporter on the Pendleton East Oregonian. That paper printed the article, which probably accounts for the fact that Stan has changed jobs and is now in the public relations department of the Pacific Bell Telephone Company in Portland.

It seems the earliest account of basketball was in the primitive jungles, before mankind, and was played by our close friends, the monkeys. Only then it was called "Hoop Snake Ball" because hoop snakes would crawl up trees at each end of a small clearing and make a hoop for the monkeys to throw coconuts through.

A time clock for the game was a turtle. He was turned loose at one end of the clearing, and when he reached the other end the contest was over. Some games, of course, lasted longer than others, depending on how ambitious the turtle was.

Then came the Fred Flintstone era -- the cavemen dominion. Monkeys sat down with man and taught him the fundamentals. But man called the game "Huff 'n Puff Ball" because the only suitable clearing was two miles long, and the ball they used was a large rock.

Many times the turtle would get lost and the game would have to be called off. Hoop snakes were nearly mashed to extinction and became hard to catch, come game time. It was tough playing barefooted on the rocky ground, and the only time-outs came because of earthquakes or passing dinosaurs.

THE SPORT WAS almost forgotten during those years as the wheel and fire took so much attention.

Then came the Roman Empire and the game became even tougher. Hoop snakes were still in fashion, but turtles were replaced by sundials, except on cloudy days. The game took on a new name, "Food Ball," because the losers were thrown to the lions.

And because the lions were getting fatter by the game, the rules were changed to allow only five men on a side, thus reducing the calorie intake per day, keeping the lions trim. This rule improved the game, but the number of available players was diminishing at a rapid pace, and the game nearly fell with the empire.

Robin Hood and his band of merry green men took a fancy to the sport and called it "Bow and Arrow Ball." A small leather ball was tied to the end of an arrow, the arrow was shot to a teammate who in turn shot it to another until a clear shot was available through a hoop snake. Players had to be able to move fast.

But, unfortunately, during a playoff game, one fellow took bad aim and his arrow struck a hoop snake sorely in the rear, causing all the snakes to stage a crawl-out. This was a stunning blow to the future of basketball, until an enterprising someone borrowed some bushel baskets (in which William Tell kept his practice apples) and hung them on trees. Holes were cut in the bottoms without telling them, and the game flourished.

THE SPORT came over to this country with the Mayflower and was played by the Pilgrims and Indians after the first Thanksgiving. It was called "Slippery Ball" then because it was played with a greasy turkey gizzard, and the winners took the gizzard home.

Finally, the game reached the Old West, the most important era.

Hoop snakes were plentiful, but their hereditary instincts made them shy of any clearings. The game had changed somewhat and, as the old-timers tell it, instead of turkey gizzards the rough and tough cowboys used a live porcupine, and called the game "Stickleby Ball."

The "porkies" didn't mind except when someone tickled them in the belly. In place of bushel baskets were iron wagon wheel rims, and the court was on a street between two saloons. Because of the six-gun, many arguments were settled by the fastest draw.

Sometimes this would result in one team having fewer players than the other, and realization of the need for a referee came to being.

The fastest gun in town was always chosen for the job. The players designed a shirt for him with the same striped colors of a little unpopular animal, befitting, in their estimation, of a referee. The shirt idea stuck, as apparently did the estimation.

This same referee tried to figure a way to stop the play when a foul was committed. He tried whistling, but his horse would come on the run and nearly trample the teams. He tried calling the players by name, but he stuttered so badly the game was in the next quarter before he could finally blurt out the foul.

THE PROBLEM HURT the sport until a young fellow, known as Sam Basket, happened along. A fast talker with a new idea, he soon had the cowboys out of their boots and indoors, chugging around on a shiny varnished floor, and wearing soft rubber shoes and spongy knee-guards.

Glad to get out of the cold weather, the cowboys liked this idea, and toured the country with the game, calling it "Basketball" -- after Sam.

The game has come a long way from the dark, primitive jungles and the monkeys. Let's hope world situations don't change to allow the game to be once again played by monkeys!

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