

'Cut Govt. Spending' Is An Oft-Heard Tune

BY ELMER E. WHITE
Michigan Press Association

The call by President Johnson for tightening the belt on U.S. Government spending rings a familiar bell.

Michigan's agency heads have been under similar orders since the beginnings of the now famous cash crisis. The orders have not changed even now, when the prospect of a surplus is within close reach.

Shortly after he took office Gov. George Romney said he wanted to be assured Michigan taxpayers were getting a dollar's worth for every dollar spent.

QUITE SOME TIME before

Romney became Governor, it should be noted, several legislators were shouting about the state's expenditures.

Rep. Harry De Maso, Battle Creek Republican, was one of the more vocal of these. As each new tax was proposed during the late 1950's, De Maso had the same thing to say: "Tax problems exist because of decisions to spend and they grow because spending grows more rapidly than existing tax bases. Both the level and the trend of spending, but especially the latter, determine the size of the problem."

De Maso's solution to the annual calls for new taxes to meet spending demands is a simple one. "It is time we all took a good look

to see if the (spending) barrel has a bottom, for from the taxes that have already been levied and spent it seems the barrel is bottomless," he said.

CAREFUL, TEDIOUS studies of spending and agency management in the past year or two have indicated there are many areas where savings could be accomplished.

These studies are yet to be fully implemented but it appears progress will be made. Most of the areas noted represent savings of only a few thousand dollars per agency, but multiplied by the number of agencies in operation it could mean a substantial amount of funds could be eliminated from

the state's budget or put to areas of real need.

Substantial or not, the maxim of "A penny saved is a penny earned" applies to state and federal government just as it does to individuals.

A NEW PHENOMENON is taking place in state government, but it will be repeated every decade in the future.

The new Constitution provides for disapproval of the State Legislature to be accomplished by an evenly divided bipartisan commission named by the major political parties.

The first commission operating under the apportionment provision has been at work for several months. By the end of January the eight man group hopes to have an apportionment plan ready.

A DEADLOCK APPEARS likely even though the method of dividing the 110 House seats and 34 Senate seats is spelled out in the Constitution.

The four Democrats on the commission, of course, want to write the district plans so their party can gain seats in the Legislature. Republicans, who have held the majority in both houses for many a year, are anxious for their four commission members to maintain this edge.

The national trend appears to be giving city delegations a greater portion of representation.

FAILURE TO AGREE on a plan by the self-imposed deadline would mean the commission's job goes to a higher level, the State Supreme Court.

This possibility would appear to favor the Democratic viewpoint in two ways.

First, after the start of the year, Democratic-nominated judges will hold five of the eight high court posts.

Second, this national trend is largely being set in courts across the land and there is no indication that this state's highest tribunal would take a position in opposition to the trend.

The reversion of the commission's responsibility to the Supreme Court and the prospect of developments there could well give Republican commission members a strong desire to settle it themselves, holding as much as they can but giving some small measure to their political counterparts.

No Need to Stop At X-Way Entrance

Highway interchanges are designed to blend two lines of traffic without confusion and make it unnecessary to stop before entering a freeway.

The Michigan State Highway Department reports slowing down makes it much more difficult . . . and more dangerous . . . to join the flow of traffic.

So as you approach the end of an entrance ramp, try to match the speed of traffic on the freeway.

Delay Hearing On Request For Rezoning

A public hearing on the rezoning of five lots owned by the Church of Christ in the Lincoln-Floyd area was postponed until Jan. 13 by Birmingham city commissioners Monday night.

The Church of Christ is seeking to change the zoning on the lots from their present R-3 and R-4 classification to a multiple-family (R-5) classification.

THE HEARING was postponed because more than 20 per cent of the abutting property owners in the area oppose the rezoning.

Under the city charter if the abutting property owners object to the rezoning it takes a six-sevenths vote of the commission to make the change.

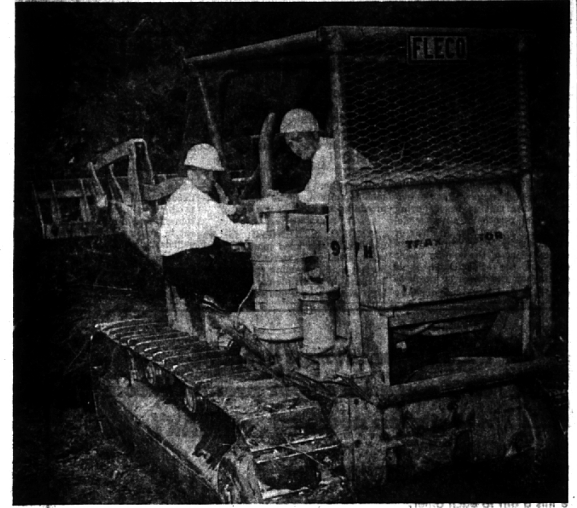
Only five commissioners were present Monday night. Both Mayor William H. Burgum and Commissioner Ralph A. Main were absent.

THE OTHER property owners in the area object to the rezoning because most of the land surrounding the church property is presently zoned single family.

They feel that apartment buildings next to their homes would lower the value of the single-family dwellings and also cause serious traffic and parking problems in the neighborhood.

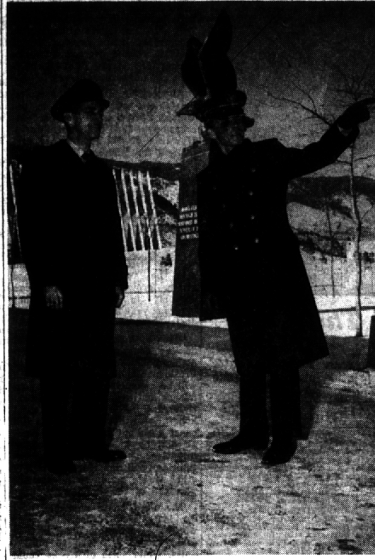
The Birmingham Plan Board has recommended to the commission that the rezoning be denied.

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Digging Out The First Hole In '63

Birmingham's Mayor William H. Burgum (in cab) and Commissioner William E. Roberts were on hand in early July as construction crews began clearing away the land for the new municipal golf course at Lincoln and Cranbrook roads. The nine-hole golf course is being constructed on the old sewage disposal plant property and is scheduled for completion by the start of this year's golf season.



Recruiting Cadet

Major Delmer C. Gowing, Jr., left, an Air Force Academy liaison officer from Birmingham, is spending his annual reserve tour at the Academy near Colorado Springs, Colo. Recently he visited with cadets from his home area and observed their academic classes and leadership training. He is shown here talking with Cadet Mitchell L. Terry from Royal Oak. Major Gowing acts as an official liaison officer for the Air Force Academy. He is available to provide information about the Academy to young men, their parents and school guidance counselors, and may be contacted at 1106 Wakefield Drive in Birmingham.

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