



conference on **ALTERNATIVE** state and local **PUBLIC POLICIES**

Copyright © 1976 Institute for Policy Studies

January, 1977

Editor: Barbara Bick

Alternative Legislation

Anti-Tax Abatement Campaign

Community opposition to the Cleveland City Council's plan to give large tax abatements to inner city developers, was given an important boost by one of the National Conference's chief "organizers", Professor David Smith from the College of Public and Community Service in Boston. Smith was called upon by the Ohio Public Interest Campaign, to present testimony on alternatives to the proposed abatements, before the Cleveland City Finance Committee.

After nearly an hour of detailed testimony by Professor Smith, City Council President George Forbes (who is a co-sponsor of the abatement ordinance) stated that he was moved by the testimony and wanted additional information about such alternatives. Vote on the ordinance was then delayed for two weeks so that the opposing groups would be able to present amendments.

Family Farm Act

The Minnesota Family Farm Security Act (H.F. 1984-Chapter 210) will provide financial assistance for eligible young farmers to purchase land. Under provisions of the act, the State will guarantee 90% of the loan for the purchase of the land.

Beginning farmers accepted into the program may receive 4% interest payments from the State for 10 to 20 years. The participant must repay the interest payments in the 11th or 21st years. If the land purchased under the program is sold early, a special capital gains tax will be levied on the profits. To provide against abuses, participants must actively farm the property and submit an annual net worth statement to the Commissioner of Agriculture.

West Virginia Trip

The Transportation Remuneration Incentive Program (TRIP) is an innovative transit development system proposed for the state of West Virginia. It has the two-fold purpose of subsidizing the cost of transportation for the low-income elderly and handicapped, while providing incentives to the transit industry for resurgence and growth of public transportation, particularly in small urban and rural areas.

Subsidies take the form of discounted coupons similar to those sold by the Federal Food Stamp Program. Full-fare tickets are sold at a discount, on the basis of income, to increase the ability of participants to purchase needed transportation.

Continued on page 2

Candidates and Campaigns

Fear and Money on the Campaign Trail (p. 4)

by Bob Schaeffer

What happened to the ballot initiatives in Massachusetts . . .

Election Day in California (p. 3)

by Dick Flacks

Non-voters are seen as crucial for success of the programmatic left . . .

This Elected Clerk Speaks to the Issues (p. 6)

by Kandra Hahn

What's in the Courthouse for alternative politics? A Nebraska District Court Clerk urges candidates to seek administrative office.

Stirring Things Up as an Elected Official (p. 5)

by Judy Stevens

Chicago Alderman Dick Simpson creates local democratic structures in Daley's kingdom.

Women in the November Elections (p. 9)

by Jose Anderson

Incentive measures to encourage the private sector to develop permanent public transit routes in those areas of greatest need, include capital grants for a fleet of mini-buses. Once the fiscal feasibility of carrying passengers in transit-starved areas is documented, TRIP funded projects will move on to other areas of need. Presumably, common carriers will then expand their own routes into the project territory. Project funds will also be available on a matching basis to test the effect of equipment modification, such as lower steps and wider doors, to accommodate the aged and handicapped.

This project is funded by several sources, including federal agencies and state and local governments.

(For more information contact: TRIP, West Virginia Dept. of Welfare, Charleston, W. VA.)

State Insurance Company

In response to the medical malpractice insurance crisis, the 1976 Alaska legislature has created a state insurance company, the Medical Indemnity Corporation of Alaska. Proposed insurance premium rates will average \$5,000 a year for the state's more than 350 doctors. Information available from State Insurance Director Richard Block.

State Energy Conservation Program

The Governor's Energy Council in Pennsylvania has published a pamphlet containing its policy recommendations for a comprehensive energy conservation program. The recommendations go far beyond the mandatory requirements of the federal government's state grants program and are premised on the belief that conservation is a key ingredient in state energy policy. Copies are available from the Council, 905 Payne-Shoemaker Building, Harrisburg, PA. 17120.

Local Energy Alternatives

LEAP—Local Energy Action Program—is a project designed by the Center for Science in the Public Interest to encourage communities to develop greater capability to solve energy problems, primarily through indigenous resources and their own ingenuity.

Many communities are already experimenting with locally-initiated solutions to the energy crisis. In Pratt, KS feedlot wastes, crop residues, and solid wastes are converted into methane which fuels an electric power plant. The town of Bridgeport, Tx is raising money to build a solar electricity plant that will supply all of the community's power by the end of 1978.

A *Survey of Local Energy Development Programs* (45¢) lists over 100 towns that have undertaken community energy plans. They include conservation strategies as well as development of solar, wind, solid waste, geothermal, methane and other renewable resources. LEAP has also published summaries of the Energy Policy & Conservation Act of 1975 and the Energy Conservation & Production Act of 1976 [EPCA/ECPA Summaries - 50¢]. This legislation provides regulatory guides and funds for local and state development plans over the next several years.

For further information on LEAP or to order resource materials contact: LEAP, c/o Alan Okagaki or Ken Bosson, CSPI Energy Project, 1757 St., N.W., Wash. D.C. 20009.

Intelligence Gathering Curbs

Recent disclosures about the CIA and the FBI demonstrate the need for curbs and guidelines on the nation's law enforcement agencies. This is especially true in relation to their efforts to collect information on U.S. citizens. Many states have passed laws which regulate the use of com-

Election Day in California

By Dick Flacks

Election returns in California offered a mixed bag to progressives. In local races, left oriented candidates and coalitions generally held their own, and several new progressives were elected to the state legislature. The most depressing defeat was suffered by the campaign for Proposition 14—the measure that would have guaranteed funding to the newly created Farm Labor Relations Board.

A conservative trend was notable in other statewide results as well. Several major bond issues—including those for low income housing and low-cost loans for home solar energy installations—were defeated. S.I. Hayakawa defeated incumbent Senator John Tunney while Carter defeated Ford. Hayakawa's victory was something of a surprise: during the campaign he appeared ludicrous and plausibly senile—for instance, claiming on more than one occasion that wartime internment did Japanese Americans more good than harm; advocating an end to the minimum wage for young people; favoring U.S. military occupation of Africa.

Some reports in the Eastern press have attributed Tunney's defeat to the alleged fact that Tom Hayden failed to support him after the June primary and that much of the Hayden vote went to Hayakawa. In fact, Hayden strongly opposed Hayakawa and repeatedly stated his intention of voting for Tunney. The most important factor in Tunney's loss was that some 400,000 people who voted in the presidential contest abstained from voting in the senate race; it seems correct to say that the results of the California senate race reflected the cynicism about politicians in this state—a cynicism that both Tunney and Hayakawa helped to further.

Indeed, perhaps the main fact about the California election results was that they dramatized the dilemmas involved in attempting to use the ballot box as an instrument of social reform.

The results showed a conservative trend because hundreds of thousands of Californians who both need and favor social reform failed to vote. The non-voters are heavily concentrated in the 18-35 age group, and in minority communities. Majorities in California are won most readily for candidates and policies that promise not to interfere with the pursuit of private happiness. In concrete terms, this means above all that majorities quickly form against measures that threaten to raise taxes. From this perspective, Hayakawa's appeal—such as it was—lay in his loud boasts of ignorance concerning most major issues; many voters seemed reassured that he would be an ineffectual senator, thereby increasing their chances of being left alone.

Continued on page 9

Fear and Money On the Campaign Trail

By Bob Schaeffer

More than two and a half million Massachusetts voters went to the polls on November 2nd. This was the highest number in the Commonwealth's history. The record turnout did not stem from any great interest in the lackluster Presidential campaign, nor in any particularly exciting state or local candidates. What fired up the Massachusetts electorate were nine ballot questions which offered voters an opportunity to play a major role in setting the direction of state policy.

Three questions:

- a state equal rights proposal
 - graduated income tax
 - absentee voting rights on religious holidays
- were constitutional amendments, up for adoption by the public after being approved by the General Court (legislature) in two consecutive sessions.

Four more proposals:

- establishing a state power authority
 - mandating "flat" electric rates
 - requiring returnable beverage containers
 - banning private possession of handguns
- reached the ballot through the initiative petition route. In each of these cases citizen groups had collected more than 55,000 signatures of registered voters after the proposition had been rejected by the legislature.

As late as mid-October, activists believed that most of the substantive proposals stood good chance of passage. Public opinion polls showed all but public power ahead. Thousands of grassroots volunteers were taking the "Vote Yes" message into local communities. Citizens for Participation in Political Action (CPPAX), the 2500 member Massachusetts "new politics" organization, alone distributed upwards of a quarter million leaflets urging a "yes" vote on the first six questions. ("Flat" electric rates had failed to get a two-thirds endorsement vote from the group's membership). Other groups were working with equal diligence.

But in the final weeks of the campaign, all these efforts paled in the face of a saturation advertising campaign which whipped up public fears of inept government action and further damage to an already ailing state economy. When the polls closed, only the ERA and the relatively minor absentee voting provision had survived a tide of "No" votes. The Bottle Bill came closest to passage, losing by only half of one percent (while winning in Maine and Michigan). The grad tax and flat rate (both of which would have lowered direct costs to more than 75% of voters) as well as handgun control and public power, all lost by more than two-to-one margins.

Continued on page 4

Alternative Legislation Briefs Continued . . .

puter systems by their own law enforcement authorities.

In Alaska, the State Legislature has gone further and passed a law which will require the enactment of formal guidelines for all phases of intelligence gathering. The bill, which was allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, gives the Governor's Commission on the Administration of Justice the responsibility of promulgating regulations for every phase of gathering, storing, and disseminating information on citizens by law enforcement authorities.

Law enforcement authorities, both State and local, are required to certify each year that they are in compliance with the guidelines. If a law enforcement authority willfully violates any of the guidelines, he may be convicted of a criminal misdemeanor. Citizens whose rights have been infringed may bring a civil action for damages.

A copy of the Alaska bill and the District of Columbia bill, which establishes a Police Intelligence Policy Commission, are available in the Alternative Legislation Series from the National Conference Center.

Municipal Energy Conservation Program

A 19-point energy conservation program for the city of Seattle would substantially reduce electric consumption by 1990. It would, for instance, require complete insulation of homes and other buildings before owners would be permitted to convert gas or oil furnaces to electric heat.

Seattle City Light, a municipal utility, drew up the program after the City Council reviewed its *Energy 1990* study—a six month examination of the municipality's future energy needs. The Council then voted against city participation in two nuclear power plants planned by the Washington State Public Power Supply System.

The Council also requested specific programs to save 230 mw of power by 1990 as an alternative to constructing thermal power plants.

The proposed program would establish a City Energy Office to: develop information for residents about energy-conserving appliances; certify energy-efficient homes; adopt new heating and cooling standards for commercial buildings and performance standards for industry and business; study ways to improve the efficiency of power generation and transmission, and the effect of rates on energy consumption.

Reverse Dillon Rule

Local governments in Montana are in the midst of a promising experiment in local self-determination. It revolves around the reversal of the "Dillon rule," a judicial interpretation that essentially says that all powers not specifically granted to local governments are the province of the state. In Montana, the 1972 Constitution provides that all powers not specifically delegated to the state belonged to the local government.

For further details contact Jim Parker, Dept. of Community Affairs, Capitol Station, Helena MT 59601.

Public Power

Environmental Action Foundation has published an informative resource book which documents the accomplishments of the nation's 3000 municipally-owned utilities and rural electric cooperatives. *Taking Charge: A New Look at Public Power* analyzes the tactics and strategies used by public power advocates. *Taking Charge* is available for \$2.50 from EAF. For more information contact: Michael Troutman, EAF, Dupont Circle Bldg., #724, Washington, D.C. 20036. (202) 659-1130.

Massachusetts continued . . .

A number of factors worked against the questions. The broken promise of Governor Mike Dukakis for no new taxes, and the imposition of the largest and most regressive tax package in the state's history less than a year later, coupled with the inefficiency and corruption of many state agencies had made the public deeply cynical about state government action. At the same time the state's economy had improved little from its recession trough and the statements of corporate leaders that a "bad business climate" was responsible were widely reported as truth rather than self-serving threats.

Into this receptive climate, referenda opponents poured more than \$4 million of sophisticated advertising (nearly 10 times the combined budget of all six presidential campaigns in the state) linking the ballot questions with bad government/job loss fears. Most of this money was corporate funds, funnelled through a loophole in state law that exempts corporations from the \$1000 ceiling limit on personal contributions. The container manufacturing industry, for example, spent over \$1.5 million for ads, literature, and salaries. Much of that was raised from firms such as Coors Beer, which do no business in Massachusetts. In contrast, proponents of the bottle bill ran their entire campaign on less than \$40,000. Similarly, electric companies fielded 3000 to 4000 "volunteer" employees to defeat the public power proposal.

Referenda supporters were hampered by a division of funds and volunteers among the different campaigns competing for the same pool of resources. But efforts to build working coalitions among supporters of all "progressive" questions were repeatedly rebuffed by those who thought their issue would be hampered by association with others. Most importantly, no campaign was able to find an effective way to counter the corporate image-makers and reassure voters that "Yes" votes would really serve their self-interest.

One bright note: at the same time Massachusetts voters were rejecting most ballot questions by wide margins, they were re-electing the most issue-oriented Congressional delegation in the country and significantly improving the composition of the state legislature. In fact, many of the newly elected legislators supported the very questions which their constituencies soundly defeated. Certainly some candidates were able to avoid the connection between the ballot questions and their own campaigns. Others persuaded voters that personal characteristics were more important than issue stances. No matter what the reason, however, the marked contrast between the results for candidates and ballot questions have forced Massachusetts activists to reassess their future strategies.

Bob Schaeffer is a staff member for CPPAX. He has been involved with all aspects of state legislation, and has also done considerable political organizing.

Public Use of Capital Meeting

By John MacLay

A mid-October conference on Public Use of Capital, sponsored by the National Conference and Colorado State Treasurer Sam Brown, brought together 55 participants from all over the country to Estes Park, CO. They represented groups, in and out of government, involved in financial reforms at the federal, state, and local level.

Reform of the current system of financial institutions was the opening thrust of the meeting. Robert Kuttner and Michael Flaherty, from the staffs of the Senate and the House Banking Committees, reported on congressional actions foreseen for the next session. Kuttner stressed Senate efforts to define, through charter provisions, the obligations which banks have to their service areas.

On the state level, the recently funded \$10 million Massachusetts Development Finance Corporation, which will provide equity loans for development and job creation industries in low income areas of the state, was described by Belden Daniels, Director of the Governor's Task Force on Capital Formation for Economic Development.

New anti-redlining regulations for savings and loans institutions in California, are the most stringent in the country. They were described by Jim Lowery, from the Center for New Corporate Priorities, who also illustrated how community groups can impact on bank applications for new branches in their communities, in order to secure greater allocation of funds to neighborhood loans.

A different effort was described by Ron Grzywinski, chairman of the South Shore National Bank, which does almost all its lending in the old Chicago neighborhood where it is located. Grzywinski said his aim in buying the bank three years ago had been to prove

that investing in community development is compatible with higher earnings. His bank has \$52 million in assets and \$48 million in deposits, and earnings for this year were about average for all banks of similar size. He presented several proposals for federal reform, after detailing problems the bank has had with federal guaranteed loans.

James Smith, Comptroller of the Currency under Nixon and Ford, was sharply challenged when he called for increased competition as the key to unlock investment for community development from private institutions. Studies which show that competition does little to solve the constraints which discourage banks from loaning funds in deteriorating neighborhoods, were used to buttress the claim that more competition is not the long term solution. A Colorado study, undertaken by Sam Brown, shows that boards of the major banks are drawn from a limited socio-economic group that effectively exclude women and minorities. Brown stressed that increased competition among the same group would not increase their ability to identify with neighborhood problems and needs.

Other sessions of the conference focussed on alternative financial institutions.

Sam Brown, in summation, said of the conference, which was the first this group has held that was confined to a single public policy issue,

"Rather than come up with any one specific program for all of us to work on, we came up with a series of ideas which people will now be working to implement in their areas. We brought different people with different notions of what to do, together and established a communication that will give us all information on how to follow through with these ideas."

John MacLay is a law student. He also works closely with Colorado State Treasurer Sam Brown and acted as coordinator for the Public Use of Capital Conference.

Electoral Politics as Route to Social Change

The development of a new politics that is programmatic and issue-oriented is the basic goal of the new alternatives movement. Crucial to the spread of this politics is the candidate who runs a clear and forceful campaign on issues. The National Conference is committed to the policy of encouraging and supporting women and men who have been involved in community groups, unions, issue-organizing, and who are proponents of alternative programs, to run for elective office. We are especially pleased when we can report on the kind of rapid response and success story as the following:

Dennis Koehler came "out of the blue" to the Austin national conference in June, 1976. He wrote us that he had been Environmental Control Officer for Palm Beach County, Florida, for the past two years. Koehler discovered that through his office he could offer the public a relatively low-cost and highly effective means of dealing with public health

and pollution issues. His concern was for people-impact issues, such as waste disposal of construction companies, patient neglect in nursing homes, and sanitary problems in migrant labor camps.

The Austin Conference was Koehler's first contact with the alternatives movement and it really stirred him up. Last week another letter came from Dennis with a clipping from The Palm Beach Post: "Koehler Ousts Johnson." He had unseated an incumbent Republican to become the youngest Commissioner in the county's history. Koehler wrote, "The Austin conference was a major motivational factor in my decision to enter elective politics. I can hardly wait to get started. But let me know about the southern regional conference planned for Atlanta. I am anxious to participate and contribute."

Below, are other candidate stories.

Stirring Things Up, As an Elected Official

By Judy Stevens

In 1969, when 29-year-old Political Science Professor Dick Simpson decided to run for the Chicago City Council, a number of his friends and associates gently suggested that he might be able to find a better use for his time. An Alderman in Chicago, they reminded him, is something slightly more than a glorified dog catcher but definitely something less than a legislator.

Although manners and customs have changed somewhat, Chicago Alderman today are not far removed, in the public's mind or in fact, from their colorful, turn-of-the-century predecessors.

So what does a newly elected, local public official like Dick Simpson do in this milieu? Of course he can vote the "right" way, he can speak out against bad policies, he can try to live up to the public's expectations regarding the delivery of services to the ward. But there are also a surprising number of other possibilities, not legally required of an officeholder.



Alderman Simpson in Chicago is a good example of what can be done to tackle the problems of many local governments: remote decision-making, exclusion of citizen input, influence peddling, entrenched political leadership, centralized executive power, unaccountable bureaucrats, non-performing workers. As Alderman, Simpson proposes model legislation, educates the public and brings community groups together on common problems. He also creates institutions, using his public position as a vehicle for achieving community goals.

Institution Building: The Ward Assembly

When local government becomes too remote and loses its direct link with citizens, the creations of a local, informal institution can begin to restore that direct relationship between citizens and their elected representatives. It can teach people new forms of citizenship and it can force government to be more accountable. This has been done in the 44th Ward.

Dick Simpson created a 44th Ward Assembly to advise him on his votes in City Council, his new legislative proposals and on local programs which don't require city approval. One major difference between the 44th Ward Assembly and the multitudes of advisory councils is that the Assembly can, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote, bind the Alderman's vote in City Council.

The Ward Assembly also is more directly representative than many local citizen advisory committees. Its delegates are elected, two from each of the 61 precincts in the ward, and one from each community organization. Elections are held at meetings to which each household in the precinct is invited and which the Alderman attends. Once elected, the Assembly meets once a month with Alderman Simpson. The

Ward Assembly has opened up the process of city government to several thousand 44th Ward residents who have attended precinct election meetings and the hundreds who have served as Ward Assembly delegates in its four years of existence. It has given its members a sense of their own ability to understand government and to get things done. They do many of the things that formal governments do: draft legislation, take surveys, testify at hearings, and debate controversial ideas.

The Ward Assembly has evolved continually as an institution of local grassroots decision making. It has developed its own procedures for electing delegates, discussion of issues, training leadership, originating legislative proposals, and continuing to perpetuate itself despite lack of official recognition by city government except for Alderman Simpson. The City has refused to pass legislation that would enable formally-recognized Ward Assemblies throughout the city.

The Community Zoning Board

Since one of the most basic decisions affecting any neighborhood is how its land will be used it makes sense to decentralize local land use decisions.

Continued on page 8

This Elected Clerk S

By Kandra Hahn

What's in the Courthouse for alternate politics? I have found the following:

- Assessment powers over real and personal property.
- Discretionary investment of idle public funds.
- Law enforcement powers.
- Prosecutorial discretion in the courts.
- Coalition with public employees and neighborhood groups.
- Public purchasing and contracting powers.

In short, as an elected district court clerk I have discovered that I have many tools for public policy change on the local level. A few of the obvious ones are listed above; many others are waiting rediscovery.

Despite the unmistakable example of Colorado State Treasurer Sam Brown, the lesson of seeking elective *administrative* office is too often lost in the stampede of new politicians to more glamorous *legislative* posts. This is unfortunate. Those of us who have gone after elective administrative office see that policies which may take an unmeasurable amount of energy to accomplish legislatively, can frequently be done instantly by the administrative directive of a single public official. In addition, creative legislators often learn all too quickly that the most shining of legislative feats can be reduced to a murky impossibility by an unwilling executive.

These being the possibilities, the structure of much of America's county government cannot be shrugged off by those interested in change in public policy. County government ought not to be swept to oblivion by intended good-

governmentism. Rather, it should be examined for its innate governmental responsiveness.

Who's in the Courthouse today? Frequently, aging white males of conservative leanings. Occasionally, old strongmen of local party works; no matter which party.

But the stereotypes are being broken. The inadequate pool of rewarding jobs available to the college-educated offspring of the middle class is pushing a new class of candidate onto the county ballot.

In my own case, faced with the option of selling my skills to business, bureaucracy or the voters, I chose the voters. They gave me a break into court management and local government.

Consequently, the District Court Clerk's office in Lancaster County, Nebraska, is no longer a bureaucracy reclusive and defensive of the judiciary. It has become an enthusiastic source of information to the public. Users of the office have been invited in to meet the staff. They have learned that the staff works for them. It has been made clear that the records are maintained for the benefit of the public, not exclusively for the judiciary or the bar.

Because of my elected independence I have been able to take a position in favor of jury reform—albeit without results to date. I am never in the position of defending the Courts, although my statutory obligation is to serve them.

I believe strongly in openness and accessibility of public court records. As the Legislature considers closing some records this session, I will be able to lobby independently and from this office for maintaining the integrity of the open records.

In Nebraska, District Court Clerks are elected on a partisan ballot to a four-year term. In our county the office

If You're Elected County Clerk

By Art Buchwald

Not everyone was running for President of the United States this year. I have a friend named Jerry Altshuler who ran for county clerk in Oklahoma City. A county clerk, as I understand it, is in charge of recording deeds, births, deaths, court records and legal papers that must be filed in the county courthouse. It is not a very glamorous job, nor does it pay very well. But Jerry, as a good citizen, decided to run for it anyway, if for nothing else than to prove to himself he could get elected to something.

He formed a committee consisting mostly of relatives, raised a few thousand dollars through friends and started his campaign.

What Jerry wasn't prepared for was the citizenry of Oklahoma City, who were not too concerned with how good he was at county clerking but wanted to know where he stood on the issues.

"How do you feel about abortion?"

Capitol Punishment

was one of the first questions Jerry was asked at a church meeting.

He responded, "The county clerk's office will not be concerned with abortion. I believe abortion is a matter between a woman and her congressman, her senator, her doctor, her church and the Supreme Court of the United States."

He was loudly booed.

"What do you plan to do about unemployment?" a union man asked him at a rally.

"As county clerk I will keep accurate records of all unemployment in the area."

He was booed again.

Jerry found himself in front of an ethnic group and a man in the audience stood up and said, "What will you do if the Soviet Union invades Yugoslavia?"

It was a question that his campaign manager had not prepared him for. He said off the top of his head, "I would immediately notify someone at the Pentagon."

This did not satisfy his audience.

Peaks to the Issues

had often been filled unopposed. In fact, I later learned that for nearly a century each Clerk had been the preceding Clerk's deputy. Although publicly elected, something like an ascension had been the pattern.

I believed that the ascension ought to be put to a political test. I also believed that the election process ought to be viewed as a promise of and not a threat to good, responsive government. And I believed that there were issues at stake, issues the voters would understand and make a decision about.

In Nebraska, District Court Clerks were by law members of the Board of Mental Health, participating in involuntary commitment to mental institutions. I told this to the voters — a big surprise to most. In speeches, in the press, wherever possible, I suggested that the duty ought to be taken seriously. I also said I would work for change in the state's commitment law, to instill due process. That change has been effected.

I spoke to the voters about the Clerk's obligation to account for the collection of child support, and generally informed them about what an elected Clerk does. They seemed to be grateful for the information.

My opponent, a 62-year-old Republican man, was lost, flabbergasted, overwhelmed. A Clerk by training and inclination, he was unprepared to face a political challenge, and he lost.

Opportunities like mine, and better than mine, exist throughout the country and are waiting for the right alternate politician to pick up on them.

The cost? The risk of a political gamble. Not all will win. There are also the several months of organized political effort, fund-raising, and analysis. And there is the glad-

handing in bars, the ball games, the front doors, the church basements, small businesses, the county fair, and the monthly realtors banquet.

But the possibilities for change are remarkable. A county treasurer may have sole and absolute discretion over investment of funds, subject only to state law. In conjunction with community red-lining groups for instance, pressure could be applied to local financial institutions.

As a long-term investment, a daily demonstration of competence in office should go a long way toward selling more thorough changes in government, when opportunities arrive or are made. A public official who has shown a single parent compassion and respect in handling child support may have gained respect and trust in matters of public investment as well. A Board of County Commissioners will be more inclined to cooperation in a new plan for managing employees' retirement funds if the employees, and an officer who has shown responsibility in managing a departmental budget, suggest it.

For me, not the least of the rewards is a comfortable living. While county officers' salaries have traditionally been low—in Nebraska the county courthouse has often been the domain of married women and disabled veterans because of low rural salaries—many localities are improving rapidly. It may offer women, especially, salaries and benefits unavailable elsewhere, despite the good efforts of the Equal Opportunity Commission.

I count the experience in government as another reward. At the end of four years in administration in the county courthouse, I will have much more than I would at the end of a post-graduate program in public administration.

Continued on page 8

k, What About Yugoslavia?

Why should you tip your hand to the Soviets as to what you would do?"

"There isn't much the county clerk Oklahoma City can do if the Soviets invade Yugoslavia," Jerry protested.

He was booed again.

Jerry had a meeting with his staff members who were worried that he had put himself on the defensive. They concluded that he had to put forward an affirmative program which would win the hearts and minds of the people of Oklahoma City. They suggested that he promise, if elected, that he would institute a new computerized system in the county recorder's office and microfilm outdated files to save space and taxpayers' money.

He presented his plan at a press conference covered by one reporter from a weekly paper. Then Jerry opened the conference to questions.

The reporter asked, "How do you feel about nuclear energy?"

"That's not my department," Jerry responded tersely.

"Then you refuse to take a stand on all environmental issues?" the reporter said.

"My staff is now working on a position paper on that," Jerry replied, "and it will be released next week."

"What about the Panama Canal?"

"I promise that as long as I am county clerk of Oklahoma City the Panama Canal will remain a part of the United States."

The headline in the next edition of the weekly paper read: "Altshuler refuses to discuss Soviet wheat embargo."

I wish I could tell you that Jerry won his election for county clerk. But he lost, as did so many other people in this election. He wrote me, "I don't know if it was the abortion issue or my stand on Yugoslavia or the Panama Canal. But when you're running for county clerk I guess the electorate expects you to be all things to all people. The people have spoken. I shall now retire to private life and only pray that the legal papers of this great county for the next four years will be filed in alphabetical order."

© 1976, Los Angeles Times

KANDRA HAHN

Democrat For

CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT COURT CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT
COURT CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT
OF THE DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT COURT CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT



KANDRA HAHN for Clerk of the District Court Committee, Don Gels, Treasurer, 2425 Delwert; Jim DeMars, Chairman, 3531 Hanson.

District Court Clerk continued . . .

The alternative spotlight ought to be turned on local courthouses. The same skills that have elected city council members, mayors and state legislators can be transferred to county elections.

The electoral skills have been tested. The victories for direct local change remain to be claimed.

Kandra Hahn is the elected Clerk of the District Court, of Lancaster County, Nebraska.

Simpson continued . . .

In the 44th Ward, a Community Zoning Board was created to open up and make more accountable and accessible the decision making process in local zoning. The Board holds an open community hearing whenever there is an application for a zoning change. Not one of the Board's 25 zoning decisions has been reversed by either the City Council or the Zoning Board of Appeals.

A Chicago Alderman has virtual authority over zoning decisions in his ward. Therefore, a local alderman can delegate this authority (without the necessity of passing enabling laws) with the same effect as if the body had been created by law. Alderman Simpson has done this for the Community Zoning Board. Once again the Chicago City Council has refused to pass legislation allowing Community Zoning Boards to be set up wherever they are requested by local residents.

Educating the Public

A public official can speak out on the broadest range of issues with credibility. In addition to informing his constituents about city programs (like tax reassessments or pollution ordinances that may affect them) and communicating to them as a community leader (via newsletters, community newspapers or almanacs) Alderman Simpson speaks to community groups in different parts of the city and seeks city-wide press coverage for his proposals.

Public office can be used as a vehicle for focusing thought and discussion on proposals that may be adopted sometime in the future: model legislation creating new housing programs, creating a Fair Rent Commission, a better personnel code, cable television regulations, public access to public records legislation, control over bank and insurance redlining and an alternative city budget are a few of the ordinances Simpson has proposed in six years on the Chicago City Council.

In short, being an Alderman isn't just a flunky's job. When approached creatively it is a way to fight local corruption like that of the Daley machine, to create local democracy in a neighborhood, and to forge legislation which can be used in future years to come.

Judy Stevens is Legislative Aide to Alderman Simpson, and a former community organizer.

NOTE: Alderman Dick Simpson has written a number of books which the National Conference recommends highly. They can be ordered directly by writing to: 44th Ward Service Office, 1045 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657. Several are listed below.
STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE, How to Make The American Political Dream Work by Dick Simpson & George Beam. (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1976.) \$10

WHO RULES? AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF POLITICS by Dick Simpson, (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1970)

CHICAGO'S FUTURE, An Anthology of Reports, Speeches and Scholarship Providing an Agenda for Change Dick Simpson, Editor. (Champaign: Stipes Publishing, 1976) \$10.90

WINNING ELECTIONS: A HANDBOOK IN PARTICIPATORY POLITICS by Dick Simpson. (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1972) \$3.95

COMMUNITY ZONING BOARD MANUAL, 1976 by Dick Simpson and Rick Kohnen \$4

Explains basic zoning concepts, how the Community Zoning Board works and some of its accomplishments

WARD ASSEMBLY MANUAL, 1976 by Dick Simpson and Judy Stevens, \$4

Explains how the Ward Assembly works, what kind of issues it has worked on, and how to set up a similar structure.

California continued . . .

The programmatic left is thus faced—if these elections are any guide—with a very difficult task. This task is to build a majority that must, of necessity, include hundreds of thousands of young people who support far-reaching social change but who see little connection between the hope for social reform and the practical realities of politics, while also including vast numbers of working people who see voting as useful primarily as a means of vetoing change that threatens the precarious security of their daily lives. In California, environmental issues have been the key to the creation of such a majority and the programmatic left continues to increase its strength in areas where such issues are highly salient.

In the coming year, the energies generated by the Hayden campaign, the Proposition 13 effort, and other reform movements will be attempting to build an electoral base at a statewide level. Although the November elections statewide don't provide encouragement, they did show rather clearly what the priorities—organizational and programmatic—need to be.

Professor Richard Flacks is Chairman of the Department of Sociology at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He was an active organizer in the Hayden campaign for U.S. Senate and is one of the convenors of the second annual California Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies.

Women in the November Elections

By Jose Anderson

A number of women's groups, including the National Women's Political Caucus, National Women's Education Fund, Women's Campaign Fund, and ERA-America, were asked their opinion on what impact the November elections had on women's issues and the role of women in politics . . .

There was disappointment that the only woman, Gloria Schaffer (D-CT) nominated for the U.S. Senate was defeated, and that although all 16 incumbent women were returned to the U.S. House along with two new congresspersons — there was actually a loss of one seat.

The biggest problem women faced was the lack of major party nominees for seats where an incumbent was not running. Only five women contested for 55 open House seats this year.

So while the major parties nominated 52 women for the House, eight more than in 1974, with 31 of them facing incumbents, very few stood a realistic chance.

On the state level the picture was more encouraging, the number of women state legislators increased by 10.7%, with the major parties nominating 1260 women.

Audrey Colom, chairwoman of the National Women's Political Caucus, pointed out that, "The legislatures are undoubtedly the most important level of government for women right now because of the pending ratification of ERA (Equal Rights Amendment)." The Caucus joined the Women's Campaign Fund in contributing nearly \$100,000 to assist women incumbents who were under attack for their support of ERA, and to help both men and women advocates of ERA get elected.

Most of the support was directed towards the 7 or 8 key states that have not ratified the amendment. Of the candidates

Notes to Note

Alternative Work Schedules Conference Planned

A spring conference on alternative work schedules will provide an in-depth examination of implementing flexible working hours, compressed workweeks, part-time and job sharing programs. It will also look at their implications on public policy, education, management, labor unions, the family, environment, women's and senior citizen's economic needs, transportation and energy use.

The conference is sponsored by the Committee for Alternative Work Patterns and George Washington University. It will be held concurrently with the American Association for Higher Education national conference on "Higher Education and the World of Work," March 20-22 at the Conrad Hilton, Chicago. A single registration fee of \$50 covers attendance at all sessions.

Prominent European experts

who received contributions from the Caucus about 55% were elected (52 out of 95). Two successful candidates, both Democrats, who were targeted for defeat by anti-ERA forces were Kathy Sebo, incumbent in the State Senate of North Carolina, and Harriet Woods, former City Councilmember of University City, MO, who was elected to the Missouri Senate.

Altogether, the above-mentioned organizations share a large amount of the credit for defeating 16 anti-ERA candidates. The women's groups were also cheered by the passage of a state-level ERA in Massachusetts, and the defeat of a move in Colorado to repeal the state's earlier ratification of the Federal amendment.

Jose Anderson is Administrative Assistant to the National Conference. She has been active in the women's health movement and formerly worked for the Center for National Security Studies.

will share their experience with alternative work schedules, and a workshop is planned on the European trade union approach.

The Committee for Alternative Work Patterns is a broadly based coalition representing labor unions, management, government, personnel, senior citizen, women's and other professional groups.

For information about registration, contact Conference Coordinator, American Association for Higher Education, 1 Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 293-6440.

Disclosure Information

How To Use the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975, published by the National Training & Information Center, is a valuable resource for community leaders, organizers and elected officials interested in developing neighborhood reinvestment programs. NTIC also conducts one-day workshops on how to interpret, analyze and use the disclosure data. For more information, contact Gale Cincotta or Shel Trapp, NTIC, 121 W. Superior, Chicago, IL 60610.

Pension Funds

Public Pension Funds as a Source of Capital for Job Creation, by Ed Kirshner, is a new study published by the Community Ownership Organizing Project. Available from COOP, 349 62nd St., Oakland, CA. 94618.

Banking Consumers Guide

A consumer's guide to banking services in the Denver metropolitan area was prepared by the Colorado Department of the Treasury. The Guide compares the actual costs of savings and checking accounts and highlights the range of services available to consumers. It was financed by foundation grants. For further information contact Sam Brown, State Treasurer, 140 State Capitol, Denver, CO 80203.

Programs and Proposals

By Harriet Kerwin

State and local governments may be missing out on opportunities to acquire millions of dollars of federal government land and facilities at little or no cost to themselves.

One-third of U.S. land is owned by the U.S. government, much of it by the Department of Defense (DOD). These holdings are far from fixed. Approximately 1,400 military bases have closed since 1968, becoming in effect surplus property, subject to disposal by the General Services Administration (GSA). State and local governments can legally claim these surplus lands and facilities under certain conditions.

GSA is required to determine whether any other federal agency wants the surplus property. If none do, state or local governments are next in line. To get the property free, it must be used for historic monuments, airports or wildlife conservation. If the property is used for public parks, recreation, public health or public education, it can be obtained at a discount of up to 100%.

It is up to the communities, however, to plan creative and pragmatic uses of these federal surplus properties. The federal government will not do it for them. The key is long range planning. The problem is to find out about a proposed closing early enough to plan.

While regulations require that GSA give notice to public agencies, prior to any public advertising, negotiation or other disposal actions, such notices often do not allow sufficient planning time. In fact the laws requiring public announcements of closings are sometimes bypassed. Government-owned plants operated by private companies (GOCO's) are sometimes closed and sold to the operating company without giving the community

a chance to exercise its legal claim to the property. Lockheed, Rockwell, Rohr and other companies often operate plants as tenants in public property. When a GOCO closes, local leaders should be prepared to act quickly, before the operator buys the property.

The Inter-Agency Economic Adjustment Committee (EAC) was set up in 1970 to "help communities help themselves" in the conversion process. The permanent staff of the committee is in the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), under the Secretary of Defense. The EAC can, if requested, provide technical, financial and planning assistance.

In Harrisburg, PA., the closing of Olmsted Air Force Base in 1968 had a severe impact on the area. In response, the Harrisburg Area Industrial Development Corporation (HAIDC), was formed to redevelop and attract new industries to the Olmsted facilities. HAIDC converted Olmsted's airfields into a new local airport. Penn State University established a branch campus in the former administration complex. The large manufacturing warehouse facilities were purchased by HAIDC from GSA and leased for a new van trailer manufacturing facility. Other acreage was purchased, sold to the state, and is now leased to a variety of industrial users. While this successful conversion was coordinated by business groups, it serves as an example for community or public efforts.

Legislation introduced by Rep. O'Neill, H.R. 11830, seeks to amend the Federal Property Act of 1949. This legislation would include 'economic development' as another purpose for which state and local governments could obtain property free or with a discount from GSA. Under current law, most state and local bodies, handicapped by

LABOR PAC #1

A Labor Task Force that would stimulate a communication network about alternative approaches to public employees rights was set up at the June National Conference. Several goals were projected for this year. One was to codify a "Public Employees Bill of Rights and Model Contract." Another was to expand participation of labor representatives in all activities of the Conference. In addition, "Packets" with background reports would be published.

The first, 90 page *LABOR-PAC #1* is now available for \$2.50, from the conference office. The reports show that despite a general atmosphere of fiscal rollback, Supreme Court hostility, and Congressional logjam, a number of notable alternative programs and precedents have emerged. They include:

- 1) a mental health workers union in Austin, TX, which has won NLRB protection against traditional "management prerogatives" for advocating better service conditions; in this case, institutional child abuse;
- 2) new protection guidelines for city employees against political bossism, developed by Chicago Alderman Dick Simpson.
- 3) a national AFSCME internal education program about public employees rights and protections amidst cutbacks.

The packet also includes a summary chart of public sector labor-management relations provisions for all the states.

Labor representatives, state and local officials, and policy analysts are urged to send reports and news to the Task Force. They are especially interested in information about the rights, responsibilities, and participation of state and local public employees in public program management.

Task Force Co-conveners are Debe L. Hillary, Acting Executive Director, Local 449, AFSCME, Tucson, AR, and Leonel Castillo, Controller, City of Houston, TX. Robb Burlage, of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, is Coordinator.

lack of capital, cannot compete with private bidders for surplus government property.

Senate Bill 1745, introduced by Sen. McGovern, seeks to facilitate the economic adjustment of communities and workers affected by the reduction in DOD contracts and facilities. Both bills were written many years ago; annually they have been introduced and shelved. The time is right for local and state governments to make their concerns known to the executive branch and to press for passage in Congress.

Local and state governments

can utilize the public's wealth for the public's economic benefit, by the acquisition and conversion of federal surplus property into the civilian economy. Military installation closures can be productive to the public, if the public asserts itself and takes the lead.

Harriet Kerwin is a staff member of the Military Audit Project (MAP). She was a former intern for the National Conference, and was one of the editors of The Austin Conference Report.

Northeast Cities Conference Held

A hugely successful Northeast Cities Conference held in Hartford, CT, December 10-12 brought together over 450 elected or appointed officials, policy planners and representatives of unions and community organizations, who are looking for alternative solutions to the urban crisis.

Three documents — including a strong statement to the Governors of the Northeastern Coalition — were prepared, debated and approved by the participants. The challenging statement to the Governors declared that the Governors Coalition, formed to cooperate on regional concerns and an agenda for federal action, has not yet focused on the real cause of the Northeast's difficulties. The cities are struggling for their social and economic survival because of the way the present economic system works and in the misplaced priorities of the federal government. While the Governors argue for more equitable regional distribution of federal economic and social measures, the policies they call for will not automatically assist the cities. The same economic logic that transfers resources from the Northeast to the Sun Belt will continue to move resources from the central cities to the suburbs.

While the Conference insisted that federal bailouts was not the issue, there was a demand for NO TAX CUTS, federalized welfare, federal assumption of health expenditures, and general revenue sharing. However, the emphasis, in all of the statements, plenary sessions, and workshops was on specific, programmatic changes in the way wealth is produced, distributed, and controlled.

A limited number of copies of the 280-page *Northeast Cities Reader*, which was prepared for the Conference, is available for \$6.50. For information write to: Robin Pearson, Hartford City Institute, 7th Floor, 100 Constitution Plaza, Hartford CT. 06103

Second California Conference Planned

The second California Conference on Alternative Public Policy will be held in Santa Barbara, February 18-19, 1977. It will focus on the following three concerns:

- 1) A state legislative agenda for 1977 of bills which provide resources to local communities,
- 2) the political experience of local groups which work around issues, and
- 3) A statewide organization or network.

An organizer for the conference described the politics of the conference as, "grounded in a belief in participatory democracy in all institutions of American society. This especially means the economy. A truly democratic society would be one in which democracy did not cease when a person went off to work or to shop. Workers and consumers would participate in and, as much as possible, have control over economic decision-making. Citizens would have more control over the government, which for many services would be decentralized to the neighborhood level."

For more information on the California conference, write to Marc Beyeler, 35 Arlington Ave., Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

Publications Available From the National Conference

Public Policy Series - See Back Page

Alternative Legislation Series — \$1.00 each

- ☐ Nuclear Safeguards Packet. A compendium of nuclear safeguards moratorium initiative measures from seven states.
- ☐ Capital Gains Tax. Vermont tax on land speculation and District of Columbia proposed tax on real estate speculation. Analysis by Jonathan Rowe.
- ☐ Disclosure Legislation. The Chicago municipal ordinance plus Illinois and Alaska state legislation for financial disclosure by banks. Analysis by David Smith.
- ☐ Displaced Homemakers. Bill to establish multipurpose centers to provide counseling, training, skills and referral services to displaced homemakers.
- ☐ Citizen Bill of Rights relating to law enforcement intelligence information.
- ☐ South Dakota Homestead bill. Model legislation for establishment of a homestead lands commission designed to strengthen family farm system of agriculture.
- ☐ A compendium of public power authority bills. Summary and analysis by Lee Webb.
- ☐ Neighborhood Government. Washington, D.C. Act to Establish Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.
- ☐ Senate bill S2631, the National Consumer Cooperative Bank bill. Proposes a bank that will make loans directly to consumer coops.
- ☐ Model State Public Utility Commission Act. Includes recommendations in all areas of electric utility regulation: commission structure, procedure, jurisdiction, enforcement, etc. By Lee Webb & Jack Chesson.
- ☐ Model State Energy Act. A draft Bill for a democratically controlled, publicly owned state energy system. By Lee Webb & Jeff Faux.
- ☐ National Community Health Service bill. Model legislation for a community-based, nationally funded health service. By the IPS Community Health Alternatives Project.
- ☐ Lifeline Packet. The most innovative "lifeline" electric utility rate structure proposals introduced in various state legislatures.
- ☐ Louisiana Automobile Insurance Corporation Act. Model legislation establishing a universal, compulsory auto insurance plan, with the state corporation the exclusive underwriter.
- ☐ Community Development Finance Corporation. The legislation provides equity and venture capital to finance businesses and create jobs in specifically targeted areas where economic conditions are most severe.

**Please check those you want
and fill in order on back page.**

Publications available from the National Office

Alternative Legislation Series (\$1 each) - See Page 11

Public Policy Series

- ☐ **Legislative Handbook on Women's Issues** by Kathy Rhodes and Ann Beaudry. A collection of legislation on economic issues affecting women, including the best, most innovative proposals, and a detailed bibliography. Price: \$2.50, \$5 to institutions.
- ☐ **The Cities' Wealth: Programs for Community Economic Control** in Berkeley, California, compiled by the Community Ownership Organizing Project. This report outlines in detail the programs and organizing strategies of the Berkeley Coalition over the seven years of its political work with the Berkeley City Council. Price: \$2.50, \$5 to institutions.
- ☐ **The Austin Conference Report.** Proceedings of the Second Annual Conference on Alternative State and Public Policies. Contains summaries and highlights of the conference which was attended by elective and appointive progressive public officials from around the country. Price: \$2.50, \$5 to institutions.
- ☐ **Public Control of Public Money: Should States and Cities Have Their Own Banks?** by Derek Shearer. Analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of state and city-owned banks. Includes descriptions of the state-owned Bank of North Dakota, and recently proposed state banks in New York, Washington, Oregon, and California. Price: \$1.50 - \$3 to institutions.
- ☐ **The Manitoba Auto Insurance Plan**, by Sherman Bernard. A report on the operation, costs, and social and economic considerations of providing auto insurance through a public corporation. Price: \$1, \$2 to institutions.

- ☐ **LABOR-PAC #1.** From Conference Labor Task Force. Toward a "Public Employees Bill of Rights and Model Contract": Background materials on legal framework; data; resources; reports and letters on alternative local developments. Price: \$2.50, \$5 to institutions.
- ☐ **The Political and Economic Crisis of the Northeast Cities**, edited by Leonard Rodberg. Proceedings of a Seminar on alternative urban policies held April 23-27, 1976. Includes discussion by Hartford, CT. City Councilman Nick Carbone, Washington DC City Councilman Marion Barry, and others. \$1.50, \$3 to institutions.
- ☐ **State Bank for Co-Ops**, by Lee Webb. A proposal to establish a state bank for cooperatives and a state cooperative development agency. The bill was prepared for the Department of Employment Development, State of California. \$2.50, \$5 to institutions.
- ☐ **National Conference NEWSLETTER.** The newsletter reports on the activities and plans of the new movement/network of state and local activist elected officials, and on the work of the organizers and planners who are part of the National Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies. Six issues per year. \$5, \$10 to institutions.

1977 PRICE — \$5

- ☐ **Public Policy Reader, Second Edition.** Prepared for the Austin Conference. The Reader is a unique collection of model legislation and ordinance, articles, analyses, and proposals on such issues as energy, tax reform, controlling corporations, and long range program development. Over 650 pages. NEW 1977 PRICE: \$5, \$10 to institutions.

I have enclosed \$ _____ for the publications checked above and on page 11. (Please inquire about bulk rates for 10 or more copies.)

Name _____
No. & Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____ Position/Organization _____

National Conference Newsletter
Institute for Policy Studies
1901 Que Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

STAFF OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

LEE WEBB
DIRECTOR
BARBARA BICK
COORDINATOR
ANN WISE BEAUDRY
LEGISLATIVE CLEARINGHOUSE
JOSE ANDERSON
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit 45748
Washington, D.C.