

## This Week

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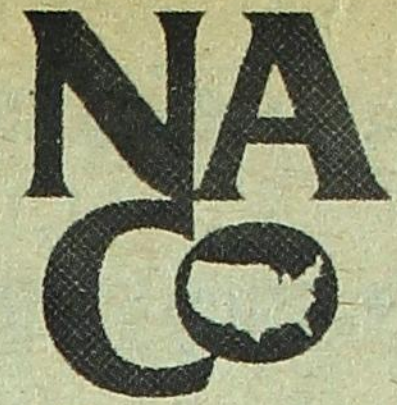
• NACMO Conference in  
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Vol. 10, No. 45

# COUNTY NEWS

"The Wisdom to Know and the Courage to Defend the Public Interest"

Nov. 13, 1978



Washington, D.C.

## Outlook for CETA Given to NACMO

MARICOPA COUNTY, Ariz.—CETA has been a key factor in reducing unemployment by two percentage points, reducing minority and youth unemployment and "launching the largest public service employment program since the New Deal," according to Ernest Green, assistant secretary of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

However, Green warned delegates to the seventh annual conference of the National Association of County Manpower Officials (NACMO), in the future "we will have to devote a lot of attention to the valid public concerns with lower taxes, reduced federal spending and severe fiscal constraints."

Speaking just three days after President Carter signed into law a bill reauthorizing the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), Green outlined the details of the new legislation. The local officials from 47 states were concerned about the effect of the new legislation, a reform bill which significantly changes the CETA program, on citizens in their communities. The current CETA program provides 725,000 public service jobs and was funded in 1978 at \$11.4 billion.

Through tighter eligibility standards, Green pointed out, the new CETA law will more directly target services at the economically disadvantaged—"those who are at the lowest income levels and have been longest out of work."

As part of the increased emphasis on low income families, he explained, the act provides additional funds for Title II public service jobs aimed at the "structurally unemployed" (those who are jobless even in

relatively prosperous times because they lack skills.)

At the same time, less money will be available for the Title VI counter-cyclical jobs program aimed at those who are unemployed because of bad times. It is expected that 100,000 Title VI jobs will be eliminated through attrition in the coming year.

Green pointed out, however, that the reenactment bill includes a new "trigger" to make Title VI jobs "more responsive to the ups-and-downs of the national unemployment rate." Under this trigger, CETA will fund jobs for one-fifth of the unemployed in excess of a 4 percent national unemployment rate. And it will provide jobs for one-fourth of the unemployed when the national unemployment rate hits 7 percent.

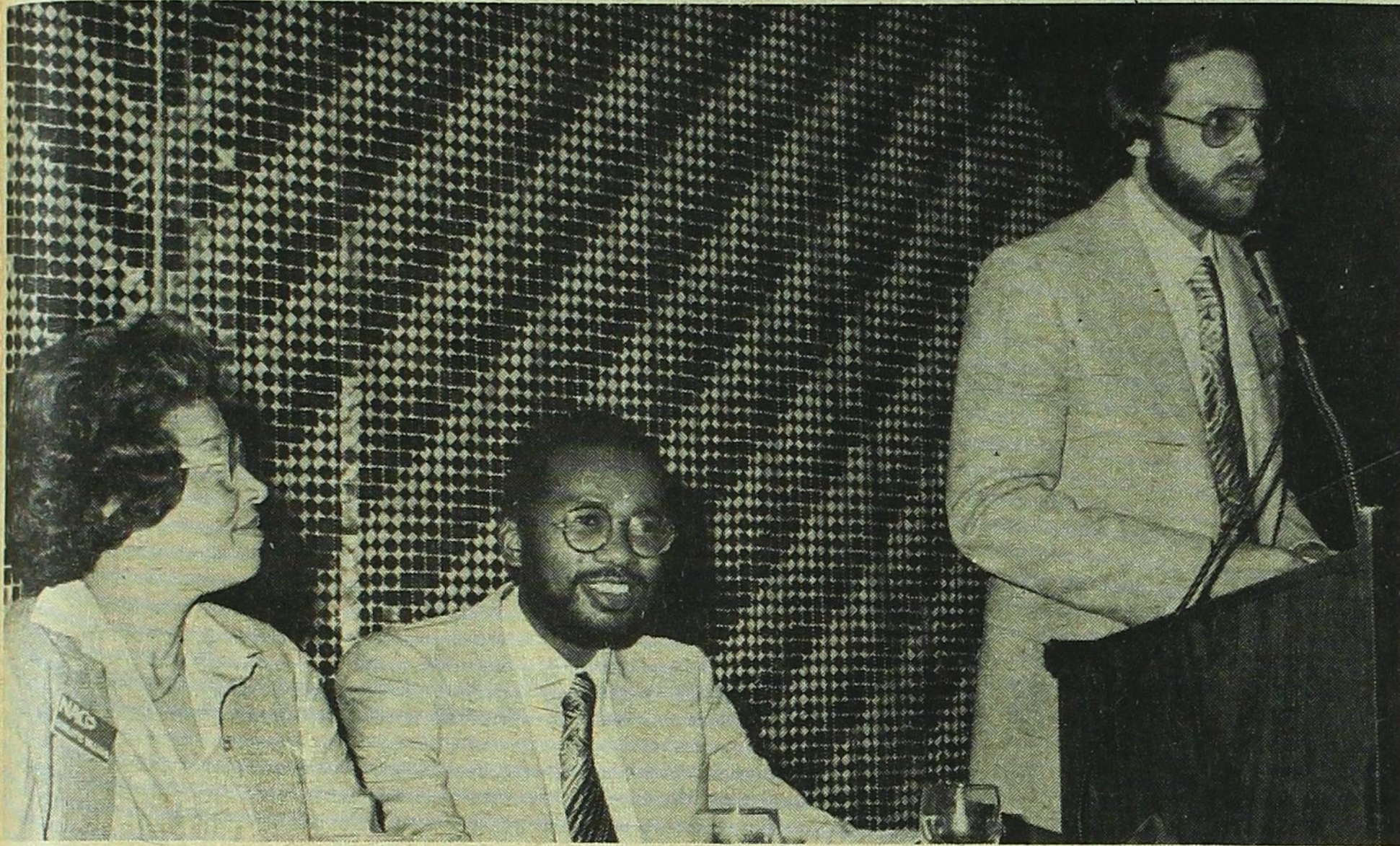
According to Green, the recently signed law takes a "harder line" by imposing new limitations on the length of time individuals can participate in CETA programs, places new restrictions on wages, and gives "new authority for the Secretary of Labor to monitor programs and take corrective action."

Finally, Green said, the CETA legislation contains a new thrust to "energetically market on-the-job training in local businesses" because the overwhelming majority of new jobs "are being created in the private sector."

### POLITICAL FACTORS

At another general session, congressional staff members analyzed the political factors in Congress that shaped the CETA reform bill. James O'Connell of the Senate subcommittee of employment, poverty and migratory

See CETA, page 4



THE LABOR DEPARTMENT VIEW—Presiding at the Monday luncheon of the National Association of County Manpower Officials (NACMO) annual conference, Pat Moore, outgoing NACMO president, introduces NACMO president Charlotte Williams, commissioner, Genesee County, Mich. Ernest Green, center, assistant secretary for employment and training, Department of Labor, addressed the conference delegation on CETA reenactment.

## VOTES IN 12 STATES

# Budget Limits Set

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Last week, voters in 18 states and three counties sent a message to state and local government to slow the rate of government growth and moderate the burden of taxes—but not at the cost of drastic cuts in existing public services.

Of 21 statewide referenda, including three in Michigan and two in Oregon, 12 passed and nine failed. The winners authorized two comprehensive tax cuts, two tax and

spending limitations, six tax ceilings or additional exemptions and two spending limits. The measures that failed would have provided two tax cuts, five additional exemptions and two spending limits.

### PROPOSITION 13 TYPE

The majority of measures which passed were tax and spending limits or tax breaks for certain taxpayers, with only two states, Idaho and

Nevada, passing actual tax rollbacks similar to California's Proposition 13.

In Nevada, the proposed 40 percent cut in property taxes must be approved again in 1980 before it becomes effective, while Idaho's takes effect immediately.

Michigan had three measures on the ballot. The one calling for a 50 percent property tax cut was rejected, but a tax and spending limit passed.

Oregon had two referenda that apparently canceled each other out. However, supporters of the tax cut are seeking to have it put on the ballot again.

See VOTERS, page 3

## EFFECTIVE JAN. 1

# Food Stamp Rules Change

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Food stamp benefits for millions of recipients will be changed on Jan. 1 as new regulations go into effect. The regulations implement the Food Stamp Act of 1977, the most comprehensive and detailed statutory revision of the food stamp program since it began in 1971.

It is estimated that more than 1 million people presently receiving food stamps will no longer be eligible but that several million new participants, mainly elderly persons and low-income working families, will enter the program. In the past, many poor families have been unable to participate because they did not have the cash required to purchase their food stamps. The new law eliminates the food stamp purchase requirement.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The new procedures lower income eligibility levels and change the way

net income is computed. The income eligibility standards are based on the Office of Management and Budget nonfarm income poverty guidelines. For the period ending April, 1979 a family of four may not have a net income of more than \$6,500.

Net income is the amount of income a family has after subtracting deductions. Three allowable deductions have now replaced the numerous itemized deductions. They are:

- A standard deduction applicable to every household. Currently set at \$60, it will be updated twice a year to reflect cost-of-living increases.

- An earned income deduction to make up for taxes and other mandatory reductions, such as Social Security. Working households will be allowed to subtract 20 percent from their total monthly earned income.

- A maximum deduction for ac-

tual dependent care and excess shelter costs of up to \$80. This maximum amount of \$80 will be adjusted annually to reflect changes in the cost of shelter, fuel, and utilities. Dependent care costs include payments for the costs of child care or other dependent care when necessary for a household member to accept or continue employment, seek employment in compliance with job search requirements, or attend training necessary for employment.

Monthly shelter costs in excess of 50 percent of the household's income after all other deductions may also be subtracted from the household's gross income. These allowable costs include rent, mortgage payments, property taxes and utility costs. The accompanying box offers a sample computation of net income using the new deductions.

See NEW, page 8

## Missouri Legislature Gets Tax Rollback Go-Ahead

MISSOURI—The state legislature was granted the authority by the voters to roll back property taxes in individual jurisdictions beginning this next legislative session.

By approving Constitutional Amendment 22, the legislature is authorized to "roll back" property taxes through enactment of a state statute. However, Tony Hiesberger, executive director, Missouri Association of Counties, indicated he did not feel the legislature would actually begin to pass individual jurisdictional rollbacks. "I doubt the legislature would do (that); I see them going by classification (first class cities, counties, etc.), or by special district groups."

According to Hiesberger, the amendment does not place a limit on the amount of a possible rollback in a jurisdiction. The legislature could roll back the tax as much or as little as they want. However, Hiesberger felt there would not be any radical moves by the legislature.

The state association did not oppose the amendment, agreeing with voters and governing board officials that a shift from the property tax to

alternative revenue sources is needed. "We have been working with the legislature on this issue and will continue to," Hiesberger stated.

Some of these sources of revenues are now in existence, and any new ones would be those, according to Hiesberger and others, "that reflect individual earning power." These include increases in the state sales tax, state income tax and the earnings tax. User fees would also be considered but not to the extent of penalizing any one economic group.

Voters have previously indicated they want to get away from the heavy reliance on the property tax and move toward local revenue diversification.

Hiesberger explained, "Voters want their services, but they also want those services funded by other revenue sources." Two years ago, the voters in St. Louis County approved an additional 1 percent increase in the sales tax for countywide use. The governing board was eventually able to cut property taxes because of the increased revenues from the sales tax. "This is the kind of shift the voters have indicated they want," Hiesberger said.



## COUNTY CLOSEUP

# Community Wars on Toxic Products

MONROE COUNTY, N.Y.—“There’s a time honored adage which suggests an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. In the case of young children who are particularly curious about substances in tubes, bottles and cans, which are too often toxic, no sounder words were ever spoken.”

With these words, Monroe County (N.Y.) Manager Lucien Morin describes the impetus for the county’s new program of poison prevention.

Last year alone, small children’s penchant for tasting and ingesting unfamiliar substances led to more than 5,000 cases of accidental poisoning in Monroe County.

The county Health Department, working with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission which provided \$21,000 in seed money, the state Health Department and more than 60 local organizations, has developed the Monroe County Poison Prevention Demonstration Project.

The project is designed to heighten public awareness of the potential toxicity of many household products and to induce both retailer and consumer to be more careful of the ways these products are used and stored.

For example, project researchers conducted a random survey of 200 homes with children under the age of five years. Household members were asked to show where they kept aspirin, drain cleaner and furniture polish. These products were found to be easily accessible to young children in

more than two-thirds of the homes surveyed and, in almost 20 percent of the homes, toxic products were taken out of their original, usually safety-capped containers and put in unlabeled containers.

In addition to public outreach seminars, school programs and a mass media awareness effort, the project employed seminars and conferences with leaders in the retail community.

As a result three of the largest supermarket chains in Monroe County—Wegmans, Bells and Star Supermarkets—have voluntarily placed toxic products on high selves to serve as an example to customers. Signs in their retail outlets urge that consumers place toxic products in their homes out of the reach of curious small children.

The county has recently acknowledged the example set by the food chains by awarding them commemorative plaques. “It is gratifying to see local merchants voluntarily lending a hand with the poison prevention program and we hope our initiative will encourage more merchants locally, statewide and nationally to follow out example,” Morin said during the presentation.

Despite these positive results, other program elements remain to be implemented. One involves negotiations with area homebuilders and the Monroe County Housing Commission to install Kindergard or similar safety latches in all new housing, both public and private, in Monroe County.



**POISON CONTROL**—Monroe County Manager Lucien Morin, far left, and Monroe County Legislature President J. Richard Wilson, far right, honor local supermarkets for their voluntary participation in a poison prevention program. Holding awards are from left, Joseph Crerand, Star Supermarkets Inc; Patricia Haydanek, Customer Consultant, Wegmans; and David George, president, Bell’s Supermarkets.

## NACRC AWARD PRESENTED

### Clerks Honor Breidenbach

WASHINGTON, D.C.—H. Joseph Breidenbach, Walworth County (Wis.) clerk, has been chosen 1978 Clerk of the Year by the National Association of County Recorders and Clerks (NACRC). The award is presented annually to a clerk, recorder or election official for “constructive service to the county, country and fellow man.”

Breidenbach has been the Walworth County clerk since 1955 and was deputy county clerk for nine

years before that. He has served as president of the Wisconsin County Clerks Association, participated in numerous state and national committees for county government and is currently the second vice president of NACRC.

Besides fulfilling the duties of clerk, which in Wisconsin include not only the budget responsibilities, but elections, marriages and conservation licenses, Breidenbach serves

the county as purchasing agent and generally as the “unofficial” administrative head of Walworth County.

Marjorie Page, clerk and recorder, Arapahoe County, Colo., will be coordinating the 1979 Clerk of the Year activities. She asks NACRC members to begin thinking about nominations for candidates for next year’s Clerk of the Year, since official soliciting for nominations will begin soon.

## Matter and Measure



### HIGHWAY SAFETY AND TRAFFIC STUDY PROGRAM

Approximately 20 grants will be awarded by the Federal Highway Administration to individuals to study highway safety and traffic at Northwestern University for one academic quarter. This is a concentrated graduate-level program addressing all aspects of highway safety. The program is managed by the National Highway Institute.

Candidates must be employees of state or local highway/transportation agencies, state highway safety agencies or the FHWA. Candidates must agree to resume full-time work with their respective agencies following program completion. Grantees employed by state and local highway/transportation agencies, not receiving full salary while studying under the program, will receive a living stipend ranging from \$1,500 to \$3,500 depending on grantee’s salary during the quarter. Students completing the program will earn the equivalent of 16 graduate quarter credits or about one-third of Northwestern’s requirements for a master’s degree in transportation.

Applications may be obtained from your state highway agency or the governor’s highway safety representative, referencing FHWA Notice N 4910.11 dated Oct. 19, 1978. Applications must be submitted to your FHWA Division Office by Feb. 15.

### FHWA ACCIDENT REPORT

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has published the latest annual summary of accident data submitted by the states, entitled “Fatal and Injury Accident Rates on Federal-Aid and Other Highway Systems, 1976.” The report contains data on fatal and injury accidents and fatally and nonfatally injured persons involved in motor vehicle traffic accidents for calendar year 1976. Tables in the report summarize data by state and by the following realigned highway systems: interstate (arterial), other federal-aid primary (arterial), federal-aid urban (arterial and collector), federal-aid secondary (collector), nonfederal-aid (arterial), nonfederal-aid (collector), and nonfederal-aid (local).

Copies of this report are available from: FHWA Office of Highway Safety, HHS-32, 400 Seventh Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590, 202/755-9347.

### UMTA GRANTS

Two county agencies have received sizable grants from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration

(UMTA) to improve their public transportation services.

The Miami-Dade County (Fla.) Transit Agency received a grant of \$18,235,848 to upgrade and expand the county’s fleet of 634 buses. The grant will provide funds for:

- 47-passenger buses;
- 16 new service vehicles;
- Rehabilitation of 100 buses in the existing fleet;
- Purchase of a bus garage;
- Purchase of real estate for the Metropolitan Transit Authority facility.

The Santa Clara County (Calif.) Transit District received a grant of \$21,944,468 to assist with the purchase of 200 new buses accessible to passengers in wheelchairs. The 200 advanced design buses will replace 66 buses and expand the existing fleet by 134 buses. These buses will enable the transit district to reduce waits between buses from 30 to 15 minutes on some routes and from 15 to 7 1/2 minutes on other routes.

The Santa Clara County Transit District, in existence since June 1972, serves a 250-square mile area. The district hopes to offer a 612-bus operation by 1980.

### MOTOR-VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS

According to the Department of Transportation, motor vehicle registrations in the United States reached nearly 149 million during the calendar year 1977. This is an increase of 3.7 percent over 1976.

The total of 148,759,142 includes:

- 113,667,069 automobiles
- 5,015,298 motorcycles
- 492,843 buses
- 29,583,932 trucks

Percentage increases over 1976 are:

- 3.1 for automobiles
- 0.6 for motorcycles
- 3.0 for buses
- 6.5 for trucks

California led all states in registrations, followed by Texas and Pennsylvania.

Tables listing state-by-state 1977 motor vehicle registrations are available, with comparisons to previous years. The Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Highway Statistics Division prepares this information each year. For additional information, contact: W. Johnson Page, FHWA Office of Highway Planning, 202/426-0187.



**FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE**—Joe Breidenbach, Walworth County (Wis.) clerk, receives 1978 Clerk of the Year Award from William F. Huish, member of NACRC Board of Directors, and Utah County (Utah) clerk.

## Recount Process Analyzed

WASHINGTON, D.C.—While 99 percent of the elections scheduled for November 7 will be settled firmly and finally at the end of the day, some 1 percent may well leave election officials with a contested election on their hands. Such formal challenges to the outcome of an election can cause a loss of public confidence in the election process.

To help election officials deal with contested elections, the National Clearinghouse on Election Administration has produced a three-volume report, titled *Contested Elections and Recounts*, which is available free of charge to all state and local election officials.

The project explores how federal elections are contested and resolved under current state and federal laws and procedures. Approaching the contested election process as an administrative problem, the project is concerned with the ability of the state election system to verify its own procedures and tabulations.

Volume I discusses the history of election contests in this country, describes each state’s contest and recount system and makes a series of recommendations aimed at the federal level. Volume II includes specific recommendations for the states.

Volume III is a series of legal memoranda summarizing relevant state laws, arranged on a state-by-state basis. It also includes appropriate code citations updated to Jan. 1978.

After this year’s elections are over, county officials might like to request from the clearinghouse its four-part report, *Ballot Access*, and its three-part report, *Statewide Voter Registration Projects*.

These reports may all be obtained from Gary Greenhalgh, Federal Elections Commission, National Clearinghouse on Election Administration, 1325 K Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20463, 800-424-9530.



# Two Counties Vote Charter Adoptions

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Whatcom County, Wash. and Jackson County, Ore. became the 136th and 137th counties in the United States to adopt charters; three other proposed county charters failed to receive voter approval.

The charters which failed were in Allegheny County, Pa., Palm Beach County, Fla. and Salt Lake County, Utah. All were up for a second time.

Jackson County's charter was a third time try," according to Commissioner Isabel Sickels. She attributed the approval to "the simplicity of the charter, and the county governing board's support and direction to the charter committee." The charter is patterned after the present board structure—the commission form—and keeps such officers as clerk, treasurer and sheriff independently elected. The charter, which takes effect in January, was approved overwhelmingly.

Whatcom County chose to change its form of government from a three-member commission to an elected executive and seven-member council. According to county sources, the charter's successful adoption was due to a major campaign by the charter study commission.

The 21 members of the commission drafted the charter and then actively sought its adoption. They spoke at more than 250 meetings within the month's time between their report and the general election.

Unlike Jackson County, Whatcom County's charter did not retain all independently elected offices; the coroner and clerk are now appointed. Other elected offices retained are: sheriff, auditor, treasurer, assessor and prosecuting attorney. The charter enjoyed the support of prominent state and local officials, the media and business and civic leaders.

THROUGH THE massive education campaign waged by the Jackson County freeholder commission, the traditional arguments against adoption of a charter and the elected executive form of government were overcome.

Opponents of the charter coined the slogan, "If you don't know, vote no." This was countered by the proponents' slogan, "If you don't know, read it."

The "If you don't know, vote no" concept was one of the reasons for the defeat of the charter in

Allegheny County, Pa., according to William Dodge, a member of the charter commission.

"The citizens did not feel the present system needed improving; we did not have any scandal or moral outcry to change the present system."

The arguments against adoption, Dodge added, were the same as those in the first attempt: elimination of jobs (by eliminating some independently elected officers); too much government; too much power for the elected executive; more costly government; and less responsiveness.

These same arguments were levied during the battle over the other two charters: Salt Lake County, Utah and Palm Beach County, Fla. According to Commissioner William Dunn's office, the Salt Lake County charter was defeated because opponents successfully convinced citizens that the proposed elected executive (mayor) would have too much power, that government would increase in size and cost, and that the proposed consolidation with the city of Salt Lake would mean a loss of county power.

Next year the county is planning to adopt one of the alternative forms of government permitted in Utah—the urban county. The urban county form permits a county more powers than one without a charter or one operating under the general laws of the state.

In addition to the five charter attempts, other counties were voting on revisions to their existing charters. In Washington County, Ore., voters approved a package deal which included: creating a full-time three-member board of commissioners, repealing the provision requiring a chief administrative officer, requiring all tax proposals to be submitted to voter approval no later than the next general election, and mandating the complete review of the charter by 1980.

Los Angeles County, Calif. voters rejected an amendment to have an elected executive.

Erie County, N.Y. voters approved an amendment providing that increases in real estate taxes be limited to 1 percent of full valuation of all taxable real estate within the county.

Voters in the state of Iowa approved a home rule constitution amendment. (See story on this page.)

## Voters Set Budget Limits

Continued from page 1

Government officials in Oregon and Nevada, however, hope to pass tax cut measures in their state legislatures to head off the movement for future constitutional amendments to cut property taxes.

### TAX AND SPENDING LIMITS

The measure which passed in Michigan limits growth in state taxes and spending to growth in personal income. Illinois voters passed an advisory measure, with no legal authority, which indicates that residents want the state legislature

to set limits on property taxes and spending.

Tax limits were passed in three states, Alabama, South Dakota and Missouri, and additional tax exemptions were granted in Massachusetts, North Dakota and Texas. More tax breaks for businesses and an increased homestead exemption for the elderly in Florida, and an inventory exemption for businesses in West Virginia were rejected.

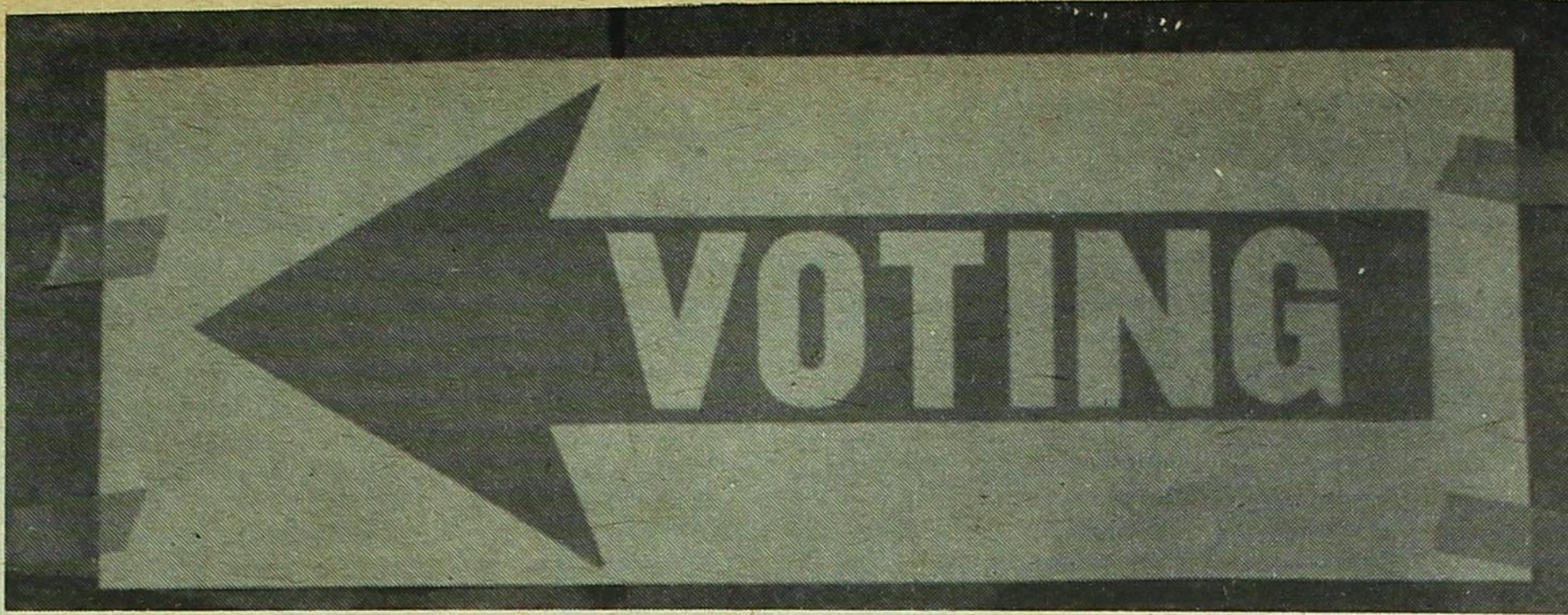
In a similar measure, Arkansas rejected a sales tax exemption for food and medicine.

Arizona and Hawaii passed spending limits but such limits were rejected by Colorado and Nebraska. In Nebraska, the rejected constitutional amendment would have lowered the current 7 percent spending limit to 5 percent.

### COUNTY TAX LIMITATIONS

Prince George's and Talbot counties in Maryland voted to freeze property taxes at current levels, while Harford County placed a ceiling on the growth in taxes. Montgomery County, however, rejected a proposal to cut the property tax rate but did place a stricter limit on annual increases in the county operating budget.

In New York, Erie County placed a limit on the sales tax and limited property taxes to 1 percent of full valuation.



## Iowa Passes Home Rule

IOWA—"It took 110 years to straighten out Justice Dillon's ruling," exclaimed a happy Don Cleveland, executive director of the Iowa Association of Counties, on the passage of the Home Rule Act for all Iowa counties.

County government has been under the influence of Justice John F. Dillon's 1868 ruling in an Iowa case and subsequent writings that "municipal corporations owe their origin to and derive their powers and rights wholly from the legislature."

State legislatures and supreme courts interpreted the ruling during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a restriction on the services counties could perform. Counties could only perform those services and functions specifically included in the state constitution or in state statutes.

Slowly counties began to change state laws and constitutions to provide for greater flexibility in managing their own governments.

Now Iowa joins 27 other states that permit counties home rule in some form.

"It (home rule) is really an emancipation for counties in this state," Cleveland said, adding, "people are now aware that they may approach their county government for a direct solution to their problems without having to wait two or three years for the legislature to act."

The home rule amendment allows a county to adopt any service or function not specifically prohibited by state statutes (the reverse of Dillon's rule). Counties can perform a new service by passing an ordinance and establishing procedures and standards.

The state association has developed a model for drafting ordinances which counties may adopt.

The association is also assisting counties to develop ordinances in specific service areas.

The Home Rule Act does not spell out specific ordinance pro-

cedures, nor does it allow for any increased taxing authority. Cleveland explained the act leaves open the question of funding; for example, "in drafting the ordinance, the county could include the method of funding the service."

The act also authorizes the state legislature to provide procedures for adopting charters and for merging county and municipal governments into a "metropolitan" government (consolidation).

Currently Iowa counties do not have the right to draft a charter or to consolidate with other governments.

The Home Rule Act does not provide for any change in the present governmental structure (commission form).

Information on election results of charter and taxation referenda has been compiled by the following members of NACo's Home Rule and Regional Affairs Team: George Cato, Geri Crawford, Linda Ganschietz, Shelley Kossak, Elizabeth Rott.

## Tax and Spending Limitation Overview

STATE	RESULT	PROPOSAL
<b>Proposition 13 type—Heavy Tax Rollback</b>		
Idaho	Passed	1 percent property tax limit
Michigan	Rejected	40-50 percent property tax cut
Nevada	Passed (must be approved in 1980 also)	1 percent property tax limit
Oregon	Rejected	1.5 percent property tax limit
<b>Tax and Spending Limit</b>		
Illinois	Passed	Tax and spending ceiling (advisory referendum)
Michigan	Passed	Tax and spending (growth limited to personal income growth)
<b>Tax Limits</b>		
Alabama	Passed	Increase limited to 20 percent of base, various types of property classified differently
Missouri	Passed	Legislative authority to impose ceilings or rollbacks
South Dakota	Passed	Two-thirds legislative vote needed to raise taxes
<b>Tax Exemptions</b>		
Arkansas	Rejected	Sales tax exemption for food and drugs
Florida	Rejected	Business exemptions and increased homestead exemption
Massachusetts	Passed	Residential and commercial property taxed at different rates
Michigan	Rejected	Removal of property tax support for education; state payments for education
North Dakota	Passed	Income tax exemptions, higher corporate taxes
Oregon	Rejected	State relief for homeowners and renters
Texas	Passed	Increased property tax exemptions
West Virginia	Rejected	Exemption for business inventories
<b>Spending Limits</b>		
Arizona	Passed	State spending limited to 7 percent of personal income
Colorado	Rejected	Growth in spending limited to Consumer Price Index growth
Hawaii	Passed	Spending increases tied to economic growth
Nebraska	Rejected	Lower limits to increased spending to 5 percent from 7 percent

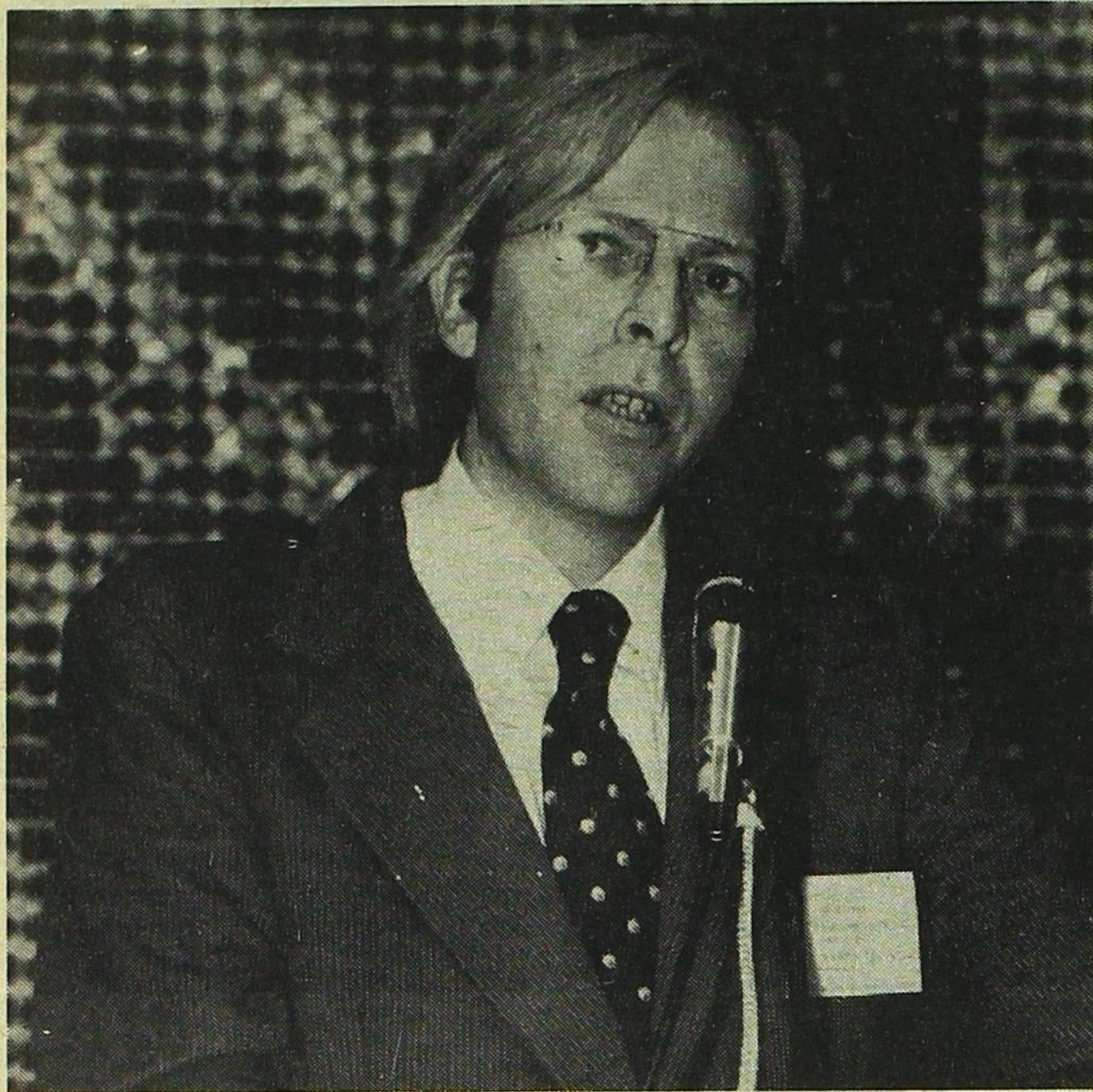
### COUNTY NEWS

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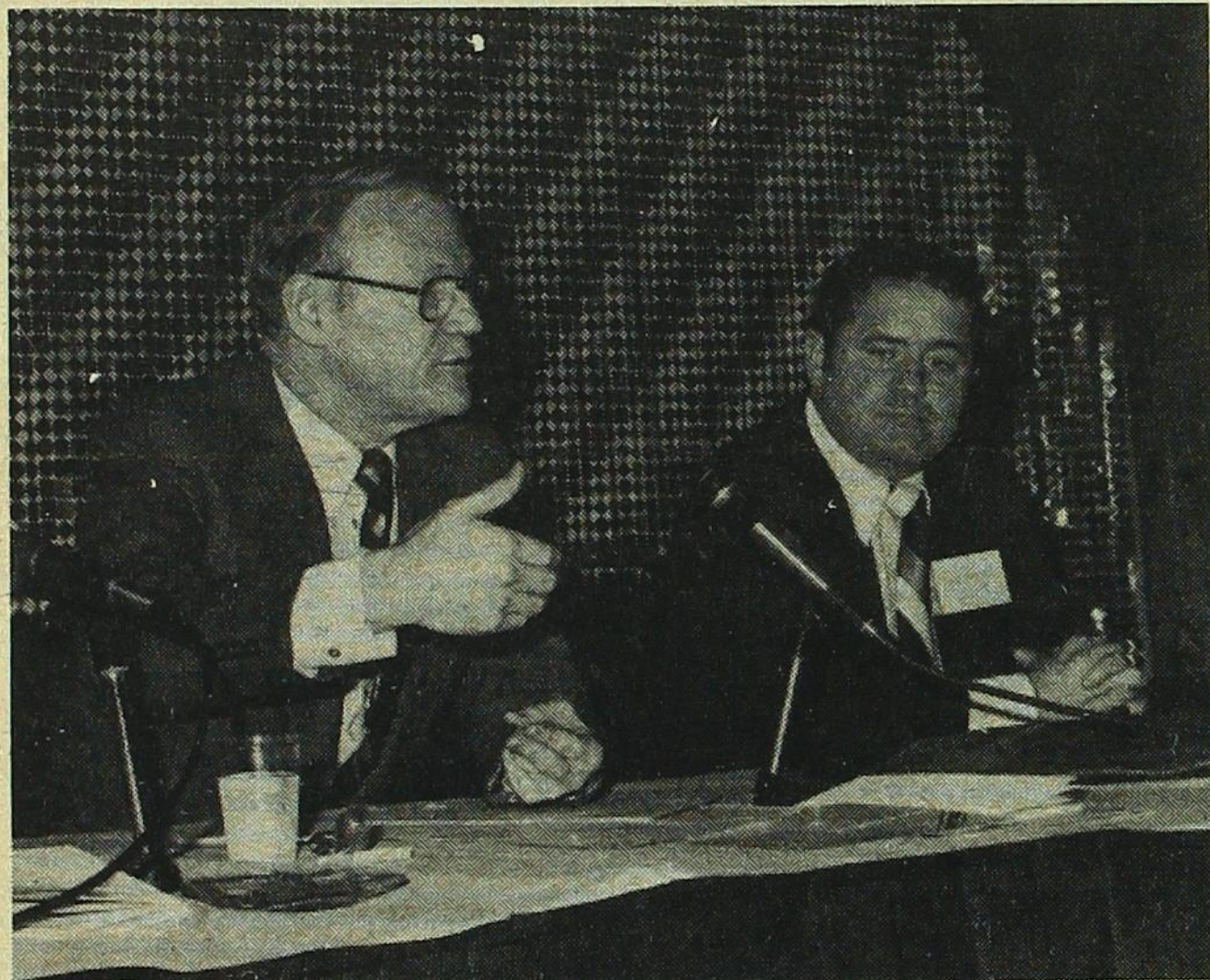
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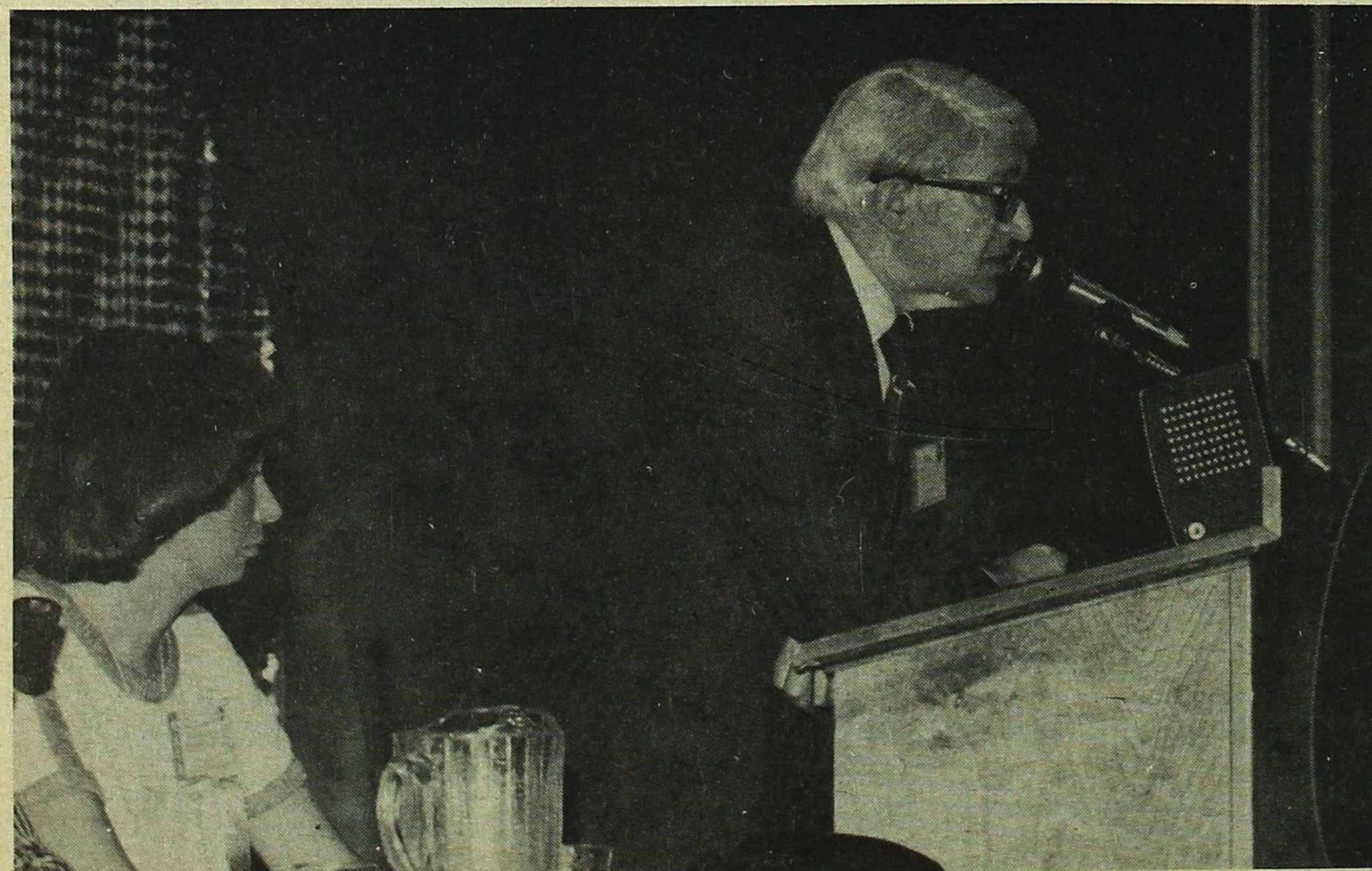
# CETA Ties to EDA and Private Sector



**THE INSIDE STORY**—Martin Jensen, staff, Senate subcommittee on human resources, discusses the congressional debate over CETA reauthorization.



**PRIVATE SECTOR ROLE**—At the Wednesday general session, H. Blair Smith, assistant to the chairman of Reynolds Metals Company, comments on the relationship between private sector employers and CETA prime sponsors. At right is Jack Fitzpatrick, senior vice-president-operations, National Alliance of Business.



**HOW RELIABLE ARE STATISTICS?**—Patricia Bambery, newly elected president of the National Association of County Employment and Training Administrators, listens to Dr. Sar Levitan, chairman of the National Commission on Employment and Unemployment Statistics, at the Tuesday general session.

Continued from page 1

labor told delegates, "In light of Proposition 13 and the President's new inflation program which is going to put a tremendous squeeze on the federal budget in the next year or two, there are going to be limited resources. So it was the feeling in Congress that we should target those resources at people with the greatest need."

Noting that Congress wanted to place an increased emphasis on training, O'Connell said, "Appropriations committees will be looking carefully at whether CETA programs are succeeding in moving the jobless from unemployment and subsidized employment into jobs in the private sector. They're not kidding when they say they want CETA participants to get into the program for a limited period of time and then get out."

O'Connell and the other panelists agreed that CETA faced substantial opposition when it came up for reenactment this year because of criticism of some CETA programs. O'Connell said the "generally greater controls over what local operators do" under the new act were the "price we had to pay to get the bill through."

The panelists also warned that CETA faced further battles in the House and Senate. "CETA has been reauthorized for four years. But it has only been funded for one. In six months, we're going to face another fight over funding. Even the reduced public service employment level of 625,000 jobs is not going to stand without assault," said Martin Jensen of the Senate Committee on Human Resources.

Hugh Duffy of the House Committee on Education and Labor told county officials they have "a tremendous amount of work to do. There are large numbers of congressmen who are not familiar with all the good work that has gone on."

However, Susan Grayson of the House subcommittee on employment opportunities pointed out that Congress also passed the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment legislation which sets a national goal of bringing unemployment down to 4 percent. "The CETA legislation and the Humphrey-Hawkins bill were signed into law at the same time," Grayson said. "This is no surprise. Because what CETA now becomes is the first major legislation to implement full employment policy."

Grayson added that, because of

the stronger emphasis on the economically disadvantaged, the new CETA law lays the groundwork for a welfare jobs program if welfare reform legislation is enacted.

## UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

How unemployment data is gathered and used was the focus of a general session Oct. 31. Sar Levitan, chairman of the President's National Commission on Employment and Unemployment Statistics, warned that state and local unemployment figures are often inaccurate, despite the fact that about \$17 billion in federal funds are allocated to state and local governments based on these statistics. Expressing his personal views, Levitan said that "many local governments may not be receiving their fair share due to inaccurate unemployment statistics."

As Levitan explained it: "The Current Population Survey (CPS) is the kingpin of our statistical system. Every month the Bureau of the Census, for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), collects data from some 56,000 households. ... If BLS tells us that the national unemployment rate in one month was 6 percent, then the chances are 10 to 1 that unemployment in the United States was really within the 5.8 to 6.2 percent range. This is a small degree of sampling error."

But while the error in the national statistics may be small, state and county data are far from adequate. "A national sample of 56,000 is barely enough for the few large states and even fewer large counties that are estimated adequately."

Unfortunately, Levitan pointed out, to expand the sample size would be very expensive. This means that "we are left for the time being with the present way of allocating funds... namely, we will have to rely on the unemployment insurance data, augmented by the procedures known as the '70-step method.'" The problem is that less than half of all the unemployed people qualify to collect unemployment insurance and the proportion varies from state to state, he noted.

Levitan said his commission is seeking ways to improve labor force statistics, although it may take several years to achieve needed modifications, given the present state of the art. One hope, he explained, was that "beginning with 1985 we will have a quinquennial census (every five years)." The detailed data from a quinquennial census may provide a better base on

which to allocate funds, he said.

Another way to improve force statistics, Levitan suggested, would be to create a "hardship index" that would measure how working people are doing in the economy. "Just because a person employed does not mean that individual is free of economic ship," Levitan pointed out.

## CETA AND EDA

There is a "glaring deficiency" in national employment policy because there is no link between employment programs and economic development programs, Robert Hall, assistant secretary of the Economic Development Administration, told county officials at a luncheon Oct. 31.

"The problem boils down to supply and demand," he said. "CETA increases the supply of workers, but economic development programs help increase the demand for workers through industrial expansion."

However, he pointed out, the being created through economic development programs are always the jobs people are trained to fill through CETA. "Often, we're just interested in the question of who gets the job," he said. "It doesn't make any sense to run sizable economic development programs at the same time without putting them together."

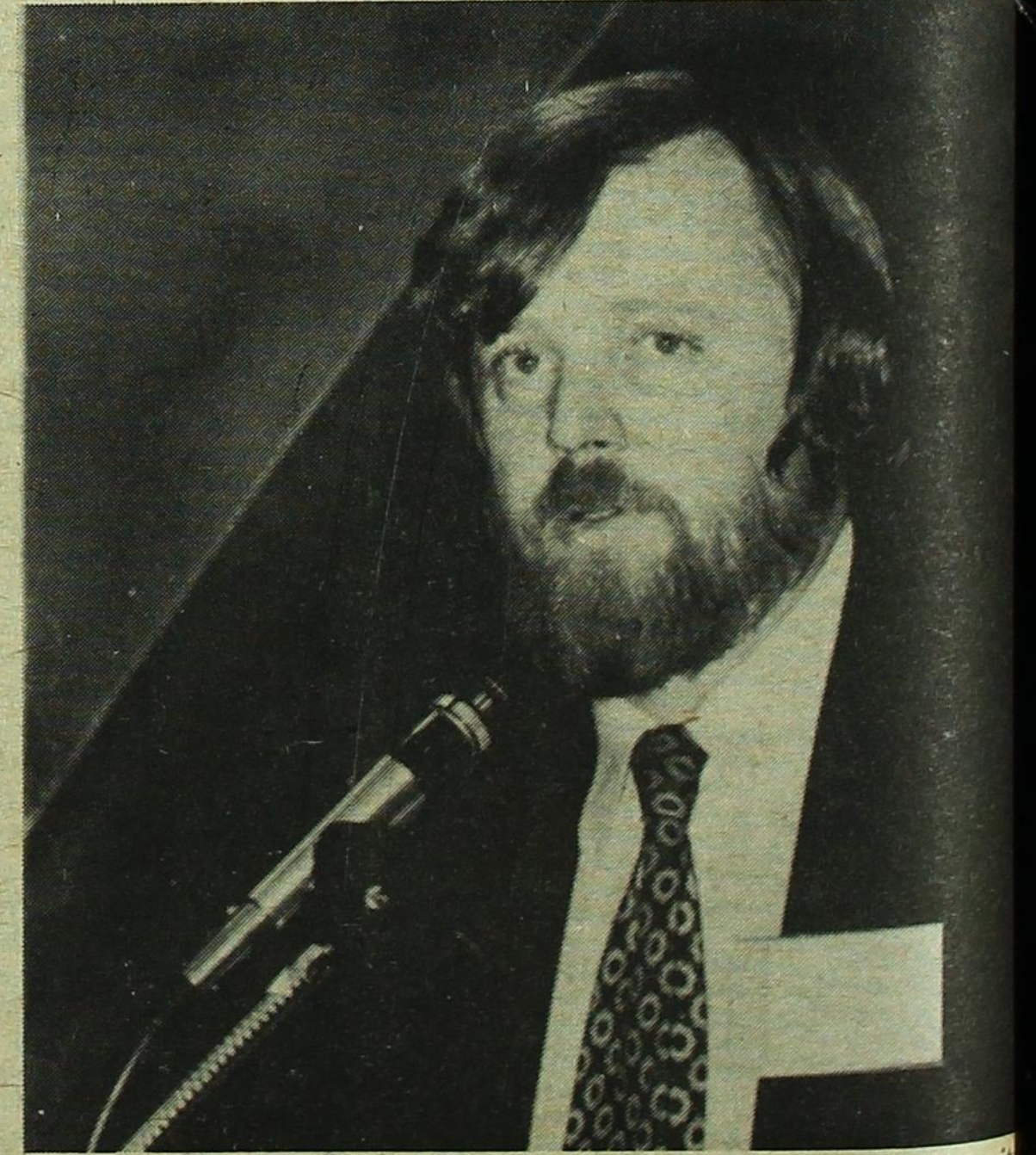
Hall noted that some areas of the country are beginning to link programs. "In Portland, Ore., job training is being used as a locational incentive in the development of an industrial park. Training and hiring commitments being made (by private employers) as part of a program which offers interest loans for business expansion as an incentive."

One section of the reauthorized CETA legislation that may link the employment-economic development connection, he said, is because it will encourage direct involvement by private employers in the planning, employment and training programs.

He also noted that the President's Interagency Coordinating Committee is working on ways to foster between manpower and economic development systems. He pointed out that these ties would be the "new" of manpower and employment in the 1980s.

## THE PRIVATE SECTOR

At the closing general



**CETA DEBATE REVIEWED**—Hugh Duffy, House Committee on Education and Labor, describes the issues that surfaced on the House floor during the CETA debate.



# Touched

ls, he said, improve la tan sugges a "hardship measure how doing in use a perso mean that economic d out.

EDA g deficiency policy bec en employe nic develop Hall, assis nomic Deve told count Oct. 31. down to su d. "CETA is principle is fundametal, he of workers ed, because "five out of six in the business sector and 84 of the people in this country private sector employers."

he said, the private sector program envisions a "true ship" between the business and local government sponsors. "NAB took the that it would be a tragic for the business community operating programs indepen what was already operating in most com and that is the CETA system."

ome areas igh a contract with the ing to link ment of Labor. NAB has a and, Ore. on day in getting private ing used ncils rolling. This includes in the de ing campaign to increase interest in Title VII, a commitme technical assistance pro help establish private in- ncils and a clearinghouse programs in the private sec- an incent provide training for the he reautho unemployed.

President Pat Moore, he said, in of the Mid-Willamette (Ore.) iative prser Consortium, presided encourage the organization's annual meeting where new officers anning... ed. Patricia Bambery, ng program of the Washtenaw County t the Presid Comprehensive Employment ating Coun, was elected 1978-79 o foster the Norman Koehler of the and econo ment of Jobpower in ns. He pres County, Pa. was elected he "new frate president.

employment 0 members at the business also voted to change the son's name to the National n of County Employment ng Administrators.



**TO SHARE EXPERIENCES**—More than 1,100 employment and training officials gathered in Maricopa County (Phoenix), Ariz. for NACo's Seventh Annual Manpower Conference Oct. 29-Nov. 1. At their business meeting, NACMO

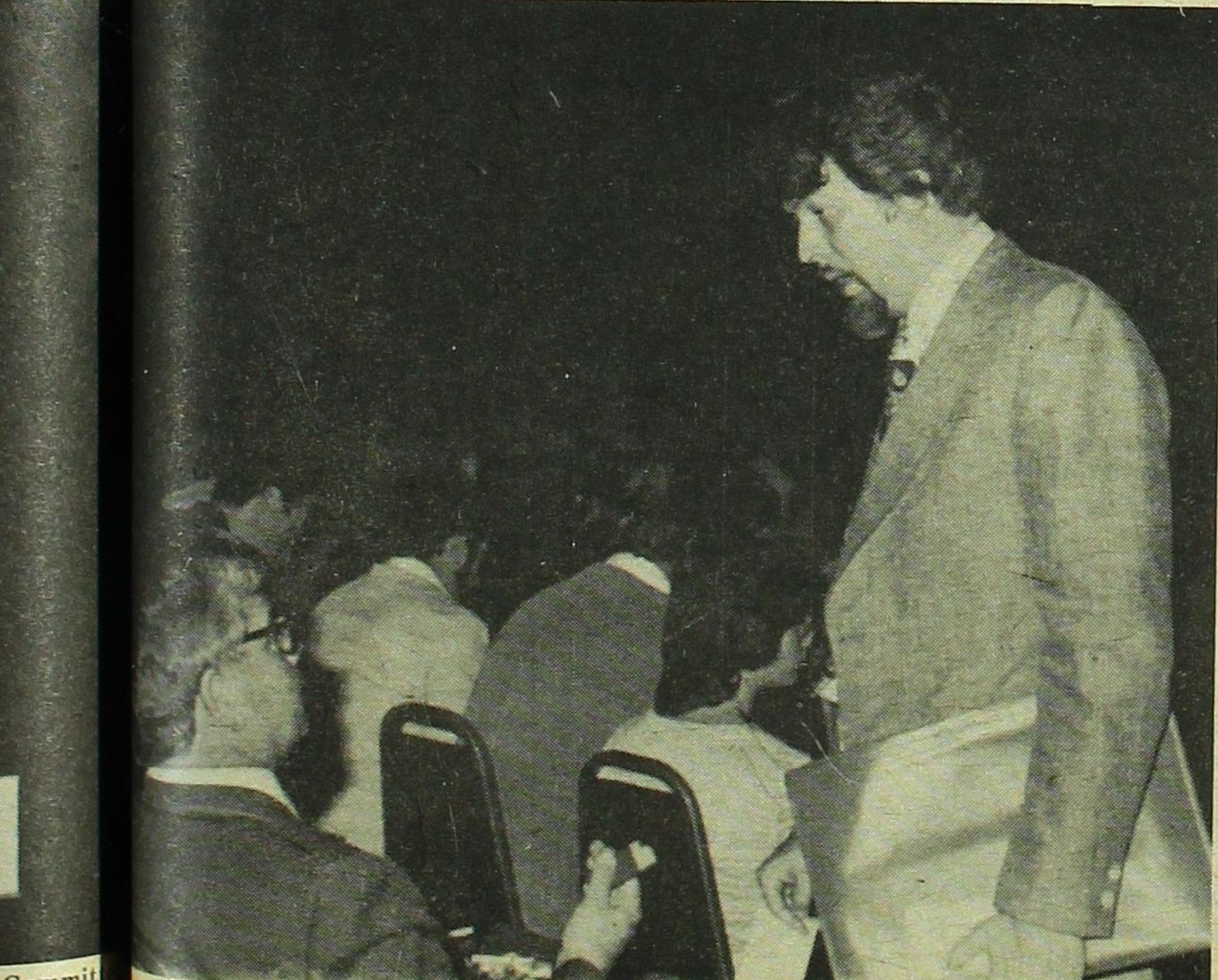
members voted to become the National Association of County Employment and Training Administrators.



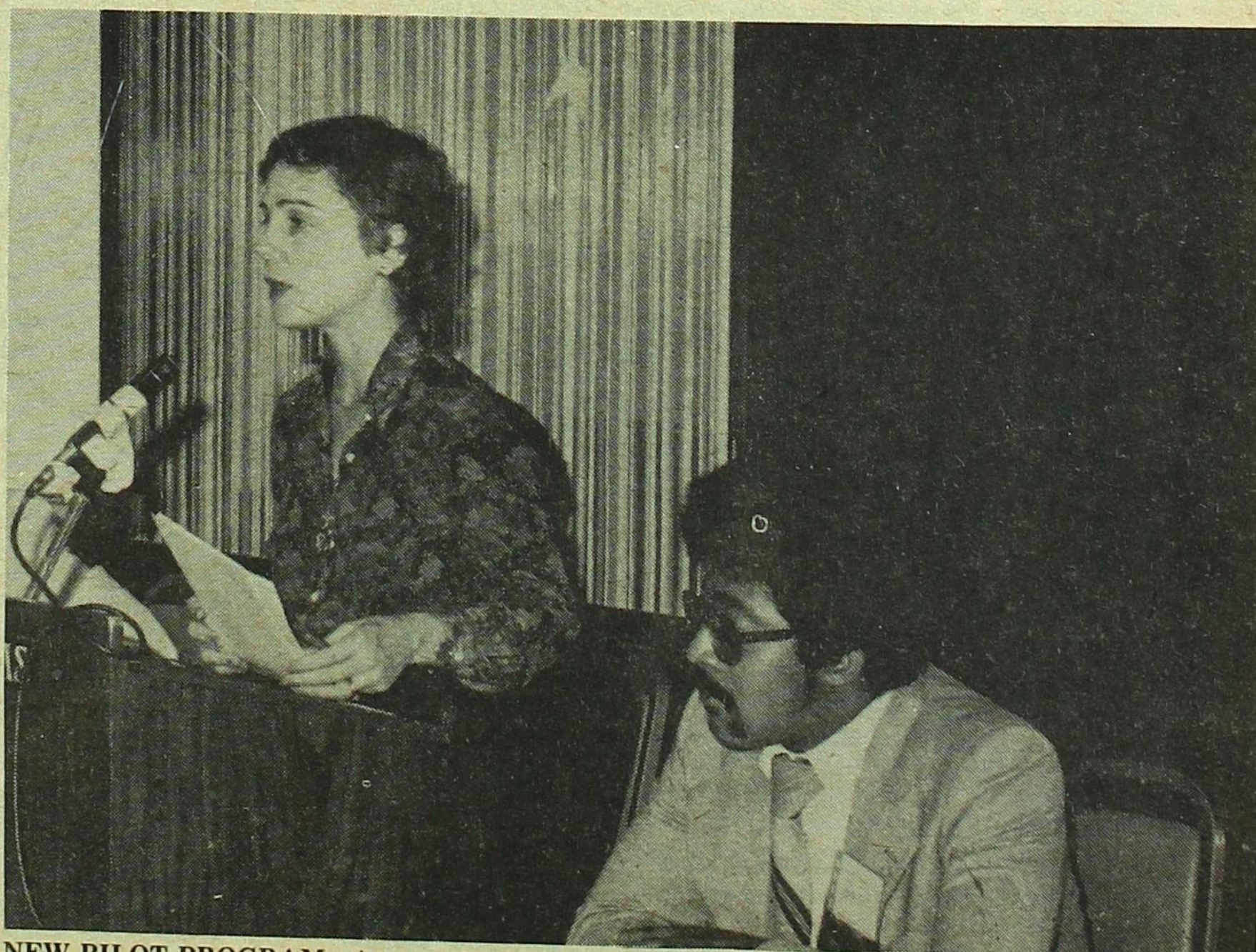
**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**—At the opening general session, Susan Grayson, staff director, House subcommittee on employment opportunities, highlights changes in the new CETA law.



**CETA AND EDA**—Robert Hall, assistant secretary for economic development, Department of Commerce, discusses the need for improved links between employment/training programs and economic development at the Tuesday luncheon.



**GOING AHEAD**—Norman Koehler, newly elected vice president of the National Association of County Employment and Training Administrators, chats with conference delegates.



**NEW PILOT PROGRAM**—At one of the 75 conference workshops, Jodie Allen, special assistant on welfare reform to the Secretary of Labor presents the history and background of the Employment Opportunities Pilot Program while Larry Lockhart, acting chairman of the NACETA Minority Caucus, looks on.



# WIR Faces Public Lands Issues

MARICOPA COUNTY, Ariz.—Delegates to NACo's Western Interstate Region (WIR) public lands meeting here last week heard Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.) pledge his continuing support for payments-in-lieu of taxes (PILT). Sen. DeConcini, co-chairman of the Western Coalition of Senators, was instrumental in obtaining a full appropriation for the PILT program this year. He told county officials representing all 13 WIR states plus Arkansas and Minnesota that he favors programs like PILT and general revenue sharing which return federal tax dollars to the states where they are collected, with "as few strings as possible."

Wayne Aspinall, former representative from Colorado, also addressed the meeting. Aspinall, as chairman of the Public Lands Law Review Commission and former chairman of the House Interior Committee, played a large role in the development of payments-in-lieu and other public lands legislation.

WIR President John Carlson, borough mayor, Fairbanks-North Star Borough, Alaska, and George Buzianis, commissioner, Tooele County, Utah and chairman of NACo's Public Lands Steering Committee, which cosponsored the meeting, announced plans for a similar gathering in the fall. Carlson, who chaired the meeting, presented to the Western Interstate Region a perpetual gavel fashioned from an Alaskan oosik.

## PUBLIC LANDS STEERING COMMITTEE

During the two and one-half day meeting, the NACo Public Lands Steering Committee reviewed NACo policy on public lands issues.

During workshops Dr. Tom Nelson, U.S. Forest Service, and Terry Sopher, Bureau of Land Management, presented status reports on federal agency studies of roadless and wilderness areas. Chairman Buzianis indicated that NACo must make sure the county viewpoint on wilderness proposals is not buried in these massive federal studies.

The steering committee adopted the following policy proposal which will go to the Western Interstate Region in February and to the NACo membership in July.

"The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 provides for protection of lands of unique resource or wilderness value. FLPMA also requires an extensive public involvement and intergovernmental approach for the affected state and county governments in this process.

"NACo supports this approach to the creation and protection of wilderness areas.

"NACo supports congressional designation of wilderness areas, including those of multistate scope, only when endorsed by the affected state and county governments

within which the proposed wilderness areas are located.

"NACo will oppose any wilderness proposal which does not have the views of the affected local governments clearly expressed."

In response to the concerns of Barbara Crowley, supervisor, Tehama County, Calif. and Frank Long, supervisor, Mariposa County, Calif., the committee adopted a position advocating county involvement in issues which affect the private landowners within national parks.

Approval was also given to a proposal by George Carlon, commissioner, Lake County, Ore., to require local government approval before a federal agency can acquire more than 25 percent of the tax base of a county.

The committee also discussed proposals by Mike Fitzgerald, commissioner, Curry County, Ore., on a program for public service advertising on the benefits of multiple use of the national forests, and by Byron Mock, former counsel for the Interstate Association of Public Land Counties, for a mineral and mining records microfilm service.

## 1979 WIR CONFERENCE

A program for the 1979 NACo Western Interstate Region Conference was adopted by the WIR Board. The conference will be held Feb. 5-9 in Lihue, Kauai County, Hawaii.

President Carlson urged that a representative from each western county attend to ensure that WIR and NACo represent all western county viewpoints on national issues.

"This conference gives county officials from throughout the country an opportunity to meet in the West and exchange views on national issues," he said.

General revenue sharing renewal, payments-in-lieu of taxes, water and energy issues, wilderness policy, CETA, community development, highways and bridge funding, new tax laws and many other issues facing county government will be addressed at workshops and general sessions at the conference.

A special session will deal with pending sugar legislation.

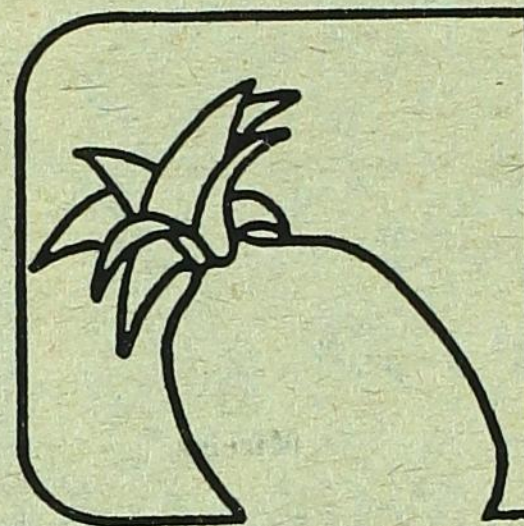
White House and congressional representatives will bring the delegates a preview of expected priorities in the 96th Congress.

The NACo board and many of NACo's policy steering committees will be developing policy and legislative proposals for the next congressional session.

The Western Interstate Region, which is a district of the National Association of Counties, will be holding its annual business meeting and elections at the conference. For more information, write or call: Western Region Conference Registration Center, P.O. Box 17413, Washington, D.C. 20041, 703/471-6180.



THE SENATE SIDE OF IT—Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.) talks about public lands issues before a joint meeting of the NACo Western Interstate Region Board and the NACo Public Lands Steering Committee.



## 1979 Western Interstate Region Conference

Kauai Surf Hotel, Kauai, Hawaii, Feb. 5-9, 1979

Sponsored by the NACo Western Interstate Region

The NACo Western Interstate Region Conference is held annually to give county officials an opportunity to meet in the West to discuss national issues of common concern. A series of workshops and general sessions will be

held concerning federal programs and legislation that affect county governments.

In addition, the Conference will allow county officials to participate directly in the national policy setting process of the National Association of Counties.

## Conference Program Outline

### Monday, February 5

#### Tuesday, February 6

9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

#### Wednesday, February 7

9:00 a.m.-12 noon

2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

#### Thursday, February 8

9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

2:15 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

#### Friday, February 9

9:00 a.m.-10:45 a.m.

11:00 a.m.-12 noon

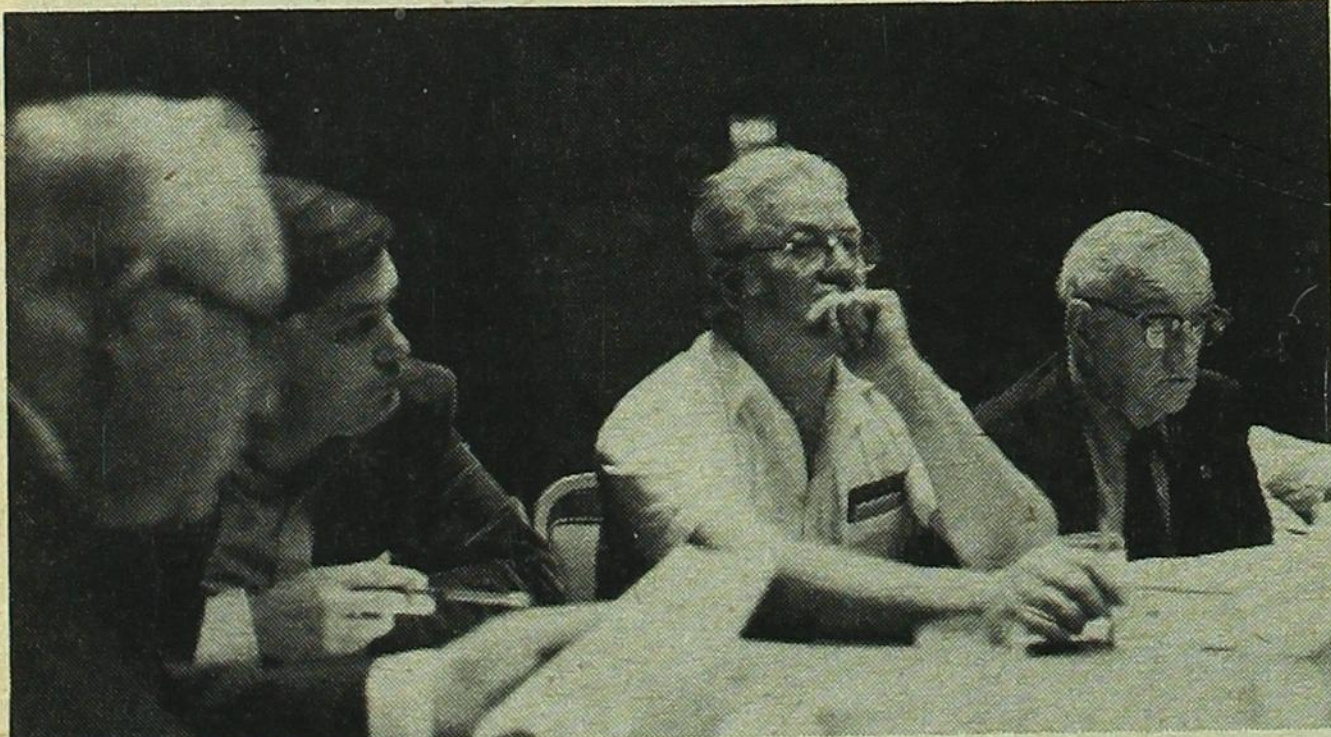
### Arrival

NACo Steering Committee Meetings  
WIR Board Meeting

NACo Steering Committee Meetings  
WIR Resolutions Committee  
Affiliate Meetings and Workshops  
NACo Board Meeting  
Opening General Session  
WIR President's Reception

Concurrent County Workshops  
Concurrent County Workshops  
WIR Business Meeting  
Annual WIR Banquet

Concurrent County Workshops  
Closing General Session



WHAT'S AHEAD FOR PUBLIC LANDS?—O. G. "Clem" Clemons, NACo chairman for payments-in-lieu and commissioner, Stevens County, Wash., ponders payments-in-lieu of taxes policy during NACo's public lands meeting in Maricopa County, Ariz. Nov. 2-4. From left are Don Gilman, mayor, Kenai-Peninsula Borough, Alaska; Bill McCuen, judge, Garland County, Ark.; Clemons; and T. A. "Tabby" Grant, NACo public lands consultant, American Fork, Utah.

To request conference, travel and reservation information complete this form:

.....

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Residence(\_\_\_\_\_) Office(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes, rush me information of the 1979 Western Interstate Region Conference. This coupon to be returned to Western Region Conference Registration Center

P.O. Box 17413  
Washington, D.C. 20041  
703/471-6180



## DON'T SHOOT THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

## Bringing Debate to a Close Gracefully

Fourth in a series

In previous columns we considered the importance of giving every question the discussion time it deserves. But once this has been accomplished, how do you bring debate to a close? Two subsidiary motions have this effect: to modify debate and the previous question.

Actually, debate may be modified in either direction—extended as well as limited. Since this motion may interfere with the right of members to make their views known, and since it suspends the usual rules, it takes a 2/3 vote for passage. Because its aim is to keep things flowing, it is not debatable. You may limit or extend the total time for debate on an issue or a motion, the time allotted to each speaker, or the time allowed to a single speaker.

One thing to keep in mind: In the

absence of a particular rule to the contrary, each member may speak twice on each question on each day for 10 minutes each time. This sounds pretty exhausting, so most organizations set their own limits—perhaps two minutes instead of 10, perhaps one speech per member. In either case, changes may be made by limiting or extending the limits of debate.

Whenever debate is dragging on and the presiding officer doesn't take the initiative and call for a vote, the previous question is in order. Despite the way this motion is sometimes handled, moving the previous question does not mean that a vote is taken immediately on the substantive issue. "I move the previous question," really means, "I move to end debate." (You can actually say that if you want to.)

It must be moved and seconded to

end debate and approved by a 2/3 vote. Then, and only then, may you vote on the issue. I can't emphasize too strongly that one member cannot bring debate to a close simply by shouting out, "Question!" After all we've said about the rights of members, you can see that this would be very unfair.

**THERE IS ONLY** one situation in which a single member can halt debate. This is by making the incidental motion, "I object to the consideration of the question." This can only be done after the main motion is made and before any debate at all has taken place. This unusual motion needs no second and cannot be amended or debated. Immediately, the presiding officer must say, "There is objection to the consideration of the question. Shall the question be considered?" If 2/3 of

those present and voting vote "no," the presiding officer moves on to new business.

You may think that using this motion would be like postponing indefinitely a motion on which the members would rather not take a stand. (You remember in an earlier discussion we used the example of a civic association's endorsing one of its group for public office.) However, postponing something indefinitely only lets you waffle on the final decision. Wide-ranging debate would be allowed on the merits of the proposed candidate as well as on the propriety of the endorsement.

By objecting to the consideration of the whole question, you avoid aggravating the bad feelings inherent in such a situation. Any question involving personalities or where the benefits of a decision would be outweighed by the

resultant split in the membership might well be objected to.

This is also one situation where the chair can take the initiative. Although the presiding officer is usually expected to keep his feelings to himself, he can object to the consideration when he thinks debate on an issue would hurt the organization. (Besides, he's probably the only one present who's ever heard of such a motion.)

And speaking of the presiding officer, there are ways in which he can watch out for the rights of the members, conduct a spirited meeting and still not get bogged down in unnecessary motions. More about general consent next time.

Joan Amico

Registered Parliamentarian

## Municipal Securities Repository Set Up

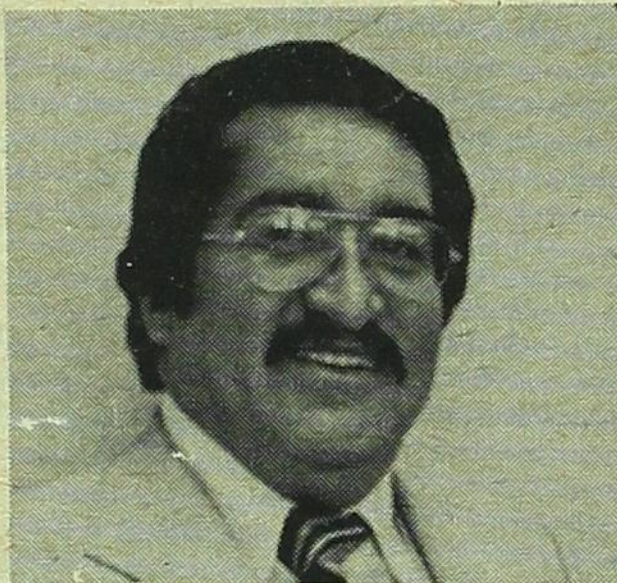
WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Municipal Finance Officers Association (MFOA) has announced an exciting development for the municipal securities market: the establishment of a Municipal Securities Information Document Central Repository. The repository is an important step in the completion of the voluntary disclosure system for the municipal market. County issuers are expected to benefit as bond prices improve due to increased dissemination of information to investors.

The repository will, at no charge, receive final documents issued by state and local government issuers. The documents will then be organized by states and be placed on microfiche by a subcontractor for dissemination to investors and other interested parties.

Investors may obtain single copies of documents or may subscribe to the entire collection of documents or portions thereof.

Issuers may receive one free microfiche copy of those documents they submit, subject to an agreement not to reproduce the microfiche for external use. In addition, a public reading room will be maintained for walk-in service in the Washington metropolitan area.

NACo recognizes the need for full disclosure of all relevant information about a county's financial condition to potential investors in municipal bonds. NACo supports the disclosure guidelines developed by the MFOA in cooperation with public interest groups and urges county governments to submit official statements, annual reports and other disclosure material to the repository at the MFOA offices, 1750 K St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. This alternative to mandatory proposals which have surfaced lately deserves county participation. For further information, contact George Cato, Research Associate, NACoR.



Mirelez

## Counties Heard by Health Panel

WASHINGTON, D.C.—As the only elected official on the National Council on Health Planning and Development, Pete M. Mirelez, chairman, Adams County (Colo.) Board of Commissioners has been making the council aware of county priorities in the health field.

Recently appointed as a consumer representative to the council, Mirelez, NACo's chairman for national health insurance, said at his first meeting that his main interests are cost containment and the need for a national program that takes into account the ramifications of health costs to local government for the underinsured and uninsured groups like migrant farm workers.

Mirelez has been named to the planning committee which sets the agenda, and placed on the subcommittee for the development of national guidelines and the role of consumers on health planning bodies. His term on the council expires July 31, 1984.

The 15-member council, chaired by Sally Berger, a Chicago community leader, is authorized under the National Health Planning and Resources Development Act of 1974. It advises the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare on the development of national health planning guidelines, the establishment of a nationwide health planning program, and the implications of new medical technology for organizing and delivering health services.

According to HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano Jr., "The Council has already been extremely helpful in their advice on the development of a proper balance among the levels of government and the major private interests who together are shaping improvements in the health care system."

"The expertise and the concerned opinions obtained from the consumer representatives, health professionals and executives who comprise the council are essential to the development of health planning policies that will improve services and help restrain the rising costs of health care."

## Census Asks County Input

WASHINGTON, D.C.—In preparation for the 1980 Census, the Bureau of Census has asked for county input in two areas—the need for statistics on population and housing characteristics in the unincorporated areas of counties and preliminary population and housing estimates.

At present, a county which needs to demonstrate to federal and state officials a social or economic situation needing attention must put together data from minor civil divisions, census tracts, enumeration districts or total county figures. County officials have asked that data for these unincorporated county balances be published in the printed 1980 Census reports.

Since this approach would increase 1980 printing requirements and might mean some reduction in the publication of other data, the Bureau of Census has suggested an alternative: that summary statistics be tabulated for these areas and made available on user computer tapes and microfiche. Comments on the need for such data and on the means for disseminating it should be sent to: Marshall Turner, Bureau of Census, U.S. Department of Commerce,

Washington, D.C. 20233.

**THE BUREAU OF CENSUS** will also provide county officials with an opportunity to review preliminary population and housing estimates for the 1980 Census. A mailout to the chief elected official of each of the participating local governments is planned for January 1979, to inform them in detail of pre-Census estimates and allow them to contribute to the accuracy and success of the 1980 Census.

Known as the Local Review Program, this "preenumeration local review" will be prepared for those entities included in the mail-out/mail-back Census only. (A pre-Census address list will not be available where the door-to-door method of census will be used.)

Each governmental unit will receive a count of addresses from the Census address list for the unit totals, along with a set of Census maps, about mid-January.

A "post-enumeration local review" is also planned. In this phase, population and housing counts derived from field operations will be provided to local governments for review.

Announcing  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's  
Water Conservation and Municipal  
Wastewater Flow Reduction  
November 28-29, 1978 at the  
Ramada O'Hare Inn, Chicago, Illinois



**Costs of supplying water and waste treatment are soaring in your community. Demand for water threatens to outstrip supply. Sound familiar? Water conservation measures are being examined in communities across the country as part of a solution.**

**This two-day conference** will be of interest to anyone who uses water. If you also happen to an elected official, land use planner, or water resource manager, the information on water management, federal-state-local regulation, technology, education, and the economics of water conservation will be of special significance.

There is no fee for this conference, except for an optional luncheon, but space is limited. For full agenda and registration information, contact Mary Reardon, Water Project, NACoR.

## Regional Guide Published

by William O. Beach  
President, National Association of  
Regional Councils  
Immediate Past President,  
National Association of Counties

County officials throughout the nation are facing increasing challenges to provide more and better services with fewer and fewer tax dollars.

One resource which is already helping to make local governments stronger and more effective instruments of service to constituents is the regional council—known variously as substate development district, area planning and development commission, regional planning board, etc.

Although the relationship between counties and regional councils is, by and large, already very strong and positive, there may be some skepticism, and there is sometimes inadequate knowledge of what a regional council really is and what its role is. Regional councils are made up of county and city governments, and they serve as vehicles for cooperation and coordination among autonomous local governments.

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) serves regional councils around the country.

One of its highest priorities is to provide educational resources to local officials to help them and their councils serve their member local governments and their regions more effectively.

**AS PART OF THIS** effort, NARC has just published *Your Regional Council: A Guide for the New Policy Maker*. Although designed primarily for elected officials serving on the board of a regional council, the new guide should be high priority reading for every county official. It will give county officials an excellent general understanding of their regional council and how it can help the county serve its residents.

It is one of a series of five new NARC booklets published with a grant from the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Other titles in the series are: *Evaluating Your Regional Council*; *Managing Your Regional Council—Techniques for the Director*; *Working with Your State—A Guide for Regional Councils*; and *Evaluating Your Staff—A Guide for Regional Council Directors*.

They are available through regional councils or may be purchased from NARC at 1700 K Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.



# New Food Stamp Regs Explained

Continued from page 1

The new system of deductions sets a limit of \$10,225 a year or \$852 a month on the gross income of a food stamp household.

The maximum allowable resources, including both liquid and nonliquid assets, of all household members must not exceed \$1,750. (Households of two or more members where at least one member is over age 60 are allowed assets of \$3,000.)

A home and surrounding property, household goods and personal effects, licensed vehicles used for income producing purposes, and other specified items are not counted in a household's resources. However, the owner of a car, not used for self-employment, with a Blue Book value exceeding \$4,500, must count the value over \$4,500 as an asset.

In general, all able-bodied unemployed household members between ages 18 and 60 must register to work. Students who do not register for work half-time will be eliminated. No student will be eligible who is 18 years or older, enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education and is or could be claimed as a dependent by his parent.

## THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

To determine eligibility, a household member or its authorized representative must be interviewed and verify certain information on the application. All households must have a face-to-face interview with a qualified eligibility worker prior to initial certification and recertification.

The office interview may be waived if a household has no member able to come to the food stamp office

because they are 65 years of age or older or are mentally or physically handicapped. The agency may waive the office interview on a case-by-case basis for households with transportation difficulties or similar hardships. When the office interview is waived, mail or telephone contacts or home visits may be used.

Households are allowed to apply for food stamp benefits at the same time they apply for public assistance benefits. A single interview will determine whether or not people are eligible for both Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and food stamps, and recertifications for both programs will coincide. People who apply for Supplementary Security Income (SSI) will be able to submit applications for food stamp benefits at the same office.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) will be providing states with a new and simple form for applicants to complete. States are required to distribute instructions for completing the application and details on the kinds of documentation needed. Should a household fail to cooperate with the state agency in completing the process, the application will be denied.

The law requires states to use bilingual caseworkers and materials in areas where there are substantial numbers of non-English speaking people. Outreach will be an important part of the new program.

Once a household is determined to be eligible for food stamps, benefits will be retroactive to the first day of the month of application filing. Certified households are required to

report changes in circumstances, such as changes in gross monthly income of more than \$25, to state agencies.

## SIMPLIFIED ADMINISTRATION

Besides making food stamps available to more eligible people, eliminating the purchase requirement will have other benefits. It will reduce by \$3 billion the amount of food stamps in circulation and eliminate opportunities for abuse by vendors. It is also expected to save 50 million staff hours a year.

By simplifying calculations, the new system of deduction will reduce the risk of errors.

As an incentive for agencies to improve administration further USDA will pay an extra 10 percent of a state's administrative costs if it reduces its error rate to below 5 percent. Federal money will be withheld from states failing to meet program standards without good cause.

States will also be given more money to investigate and prosecute fraud. States will now be reimbursed for 75 percent of these costs, an increase of 25 percent over the old law. People found guilty of fraud by an administrative hearing or by the courts will be dropped from the program for three months.

USDA will be proposing additional provisions based on the new law in future months. These provisions will deal with state plans of operation, accessibility of services, special procedures for use in disasters, and the operation of the food stamp and commodity distribution programs on Indian reservations.

—Diane Shust

## How to Figure Net Income Using the New Deductions

Under the new food stamp procedures, there are three deductions:

A standard \$60 deduction for all households.

A deduction of 20 percent of earned income.

An \$80 maximum deduction for actual dependent care and excess shelter costs.

Here is a case example of a family of four:

The family's gross monthly income includes the following:  
\$200 in wages (earned income)  
\$205 in public assistance

Their monthly expenses include:  
\$150 in housing costs  
\$40 in child care

To figure the family's net income:

1 Subtract 20 percent from their earned income: \$200  
—40  
160

2 Add in their other income (public assistance): \$160  
+205  
365

3 Subtract the \$60 standard deduction: \$365  
—60  
305

4 Subtract their child care costs (Remember, there is an \$80 maximum for child care and housing costs. So, if the family were to claim \$80 for child care, they would have reached the maximum for this deduction.): \$305  
—40  
265 adjusted income

5 To figure how much can be deducted for excess shelter costs take the adjusted income mentioned above and divide it in half: \$265 ÷ 2 = \$132.50

6 Then subtract that figure from the household's total housing costs: \$150  
—132.50  
17.50 excess shelter costs

7 Finally, subtract the excess shelter costs from the adjusted income: \$265  
—17.50  
\$247.50 net income

The household's net income is \$247.50 after all the deductions have been made from their gross income. The household's net income would then be compared to the income guidelines to see if the household qualifies for food stamps.

## Changes in Food Stamp Program

### Old Regulations

In most cases, **purchase requirement** in effect

Burdensome **certification** involving eight possible deductions; enabled certain higher-income households to gain eligibility:

- Taxes and mandatory payroll withholding
- Work-related expenses up to \$30 per month
- Medical costs
- Tuition and fees
- Child care costs to allow household member to work
- Court-ordered alimony or support payments
- Unusual disaster or casualty expenses
- Shelter costs that exceed 30 percent of net income

**Income limits** set by Secretary of Agriculture; people whose only income was public assistance or Supplemental Security Income automatically eligible

**Household assets** limit was \$1,500; did not apply to households receiving public assistance or Supplemental Security Income

First **vehicle** not counted, regardless of cost

States could determine penalties for **fraud**

**Students** not eligible if claimed as dependents by parents who were ineligible; no work requirement

**Separate interviews** to determine eligibility for various government benefits

States had to determine eligibility of households within 30 days

Benefits began upon determination of eligibility

States required to ensure participation of eligible households

No standards for **training staff** or providing **bilingual** workers

Households had to have access to **cooking facilities**

### New Law and Regulation

No **purchase requirement**; expected to add up to 3 million low-income people

Simplified **certification** with three possible deductions:

- Standard: adjusted to Consumer Price Index
- Earned income: subtract 20 percent
- Dependent care and excess shelter costs

**Income limits** bases on federal nonfarm poverty level; no automatic eligibility; expected to result in over 1 million higher-income people being dropped

**Household assets** limit is \$1,750; \$3,000 for households with one person over 60; applies to households receiving public assistance or Supplemental Security Income

Fair market value over \$4,500 of **vehicle** counted unless used for self-employment

Tougher penalties for **fraud** required by federal law

**Students** not eligible if are or could be claimed as dependents by ineligible households; may have to register for 20 hours work per week

**Single interview** will determine eligibility for food stamps and Aid to Families with Dependent Children

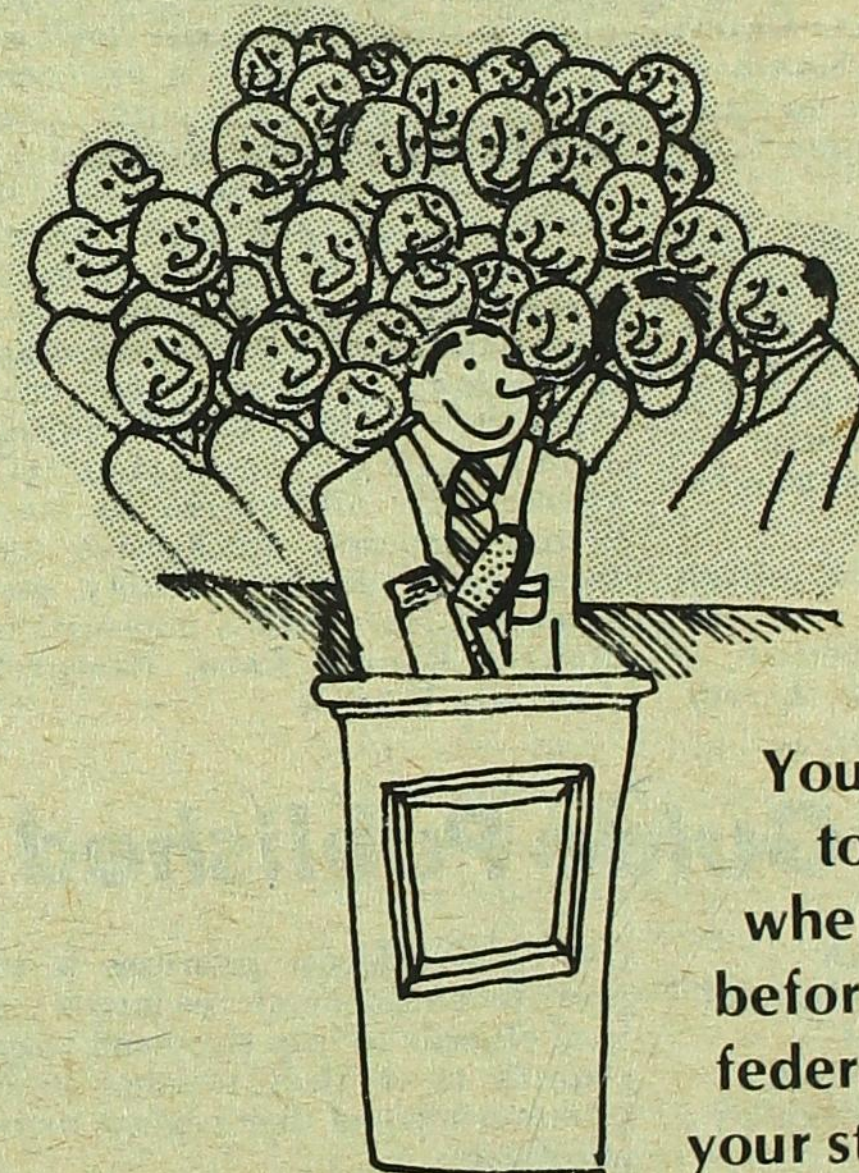
States must furnish **food stamps** to eligible households **within 30 days** of application filing

**Benefits retroactive** to first day of month of application

States required to **notify** people receiving public assistance, unemployment compensation and Supplemental Security Income about availability of food stamps

State agencies' responsibility for **training** eligibility staff increased; **bilingual workers** must be hired in certain localities; states must train hearing officials and other reviewers

Households do not need access to **cooking facilities** to qualify



**You don't have to be alone when you testify before Congress—federal agencies—your state legislature**

## Backup is as close as the American County Platform and Resolutions.

Adopted as the official policy statement of the National Association of Counties each year at NACo's annual conference, this document expresses the views of 3,104 counties in the U.S. in the areas of:

- community development
- criminal justice
- employment
- environment and energy
- health and education
- home rule and regional affairs
- labor-management relations
- land use
- public lands
- taxation and finance
- transportation
- welfare and social services

When you quote from the **American County Platform**, you know you have the support of other county officials across the country.

Available free to member counties, \$1 to nonmember counties from: Publications Desk, National Association of Counties, 1735 New York Ave. N.W., Washington D.C. 20006.

\*Copies are being sent to the chief elected official of every NACo member county and to members of NACo's board and steering committees.