

# Port of Seattle critic wins a round

By RICHARD W. LARSEN  
Times Political Writer

OLYMPIA — With a little help from his friends, Representative King Lysen, Seattle Democrat, landed some blows yesterday on his favorite target: the Seattle Port Commission.

Lysen, a continuing critic of the powerful port, almost considers himself a David taking on Goliath.

Yesterday, as a Lysen port-reform bill came before a House committee, some of his slinged shots landed smack on the port's political nerve endings.

Committee members from the Tri-Cities, Vancouver, Spokane and elsewhere, listened intently as a series of witnesses criticized the port as big, wealthy and oppressive.

At issue was Lysen's bill which would change the method of electing port commissioners. Instead of five commissioners running at-large, there would be nine commissioners, each running from a county-commissioner district.

Port commissioners have been "unresponsive to the people," Lysen charged. If forced to run in one district, each commissioner would have to be accountable — and thus responsive — to a

district of constituents, Lysen said.

**LYSEN HAS BEEN** ruffled by the jet noise from the Seattle-Tacoma Airport. That's hurting citizens in his South End district, he testified, and the port commissioners have not been sensitive.

Representative Helen Sommers, Democrat representing the Queen Anne-Magnolia district, lobbed some shots onto the port's north flank.

The port's grain elevator is a blight on her district, she said. She told fellow legislators that the Port of Seattle is the only one in the state that elects its commissioners by vote of the whole county.

"All the others are elected by district," she said.

Lysen earlier had talked about the port's favorable taxing position and its untaxed land holdings, which, he said involves "\$2 billion of property (which is) off the tax rolls."

Mrs. Sommers emphasized the financial scope of the port: "The Port of Seattle's budget exceeds the budget of the City of Seattle."

King County Councilman Ed Heavey got in his licks, too. "There is a great deal

of sympathy (for Lysen's election-law change) on the County Council," Heavey said.

Heavey charged that port commissioners are insensitive to such public needs as recreation boating areas around Elliot Bay and from Alki Point southward.

"Four of the five commissioners are millionaires," Heavey declared.

Harold MacIsaac, resident of the Sea-Tac jet-noise zone, and Dan Fieves, a brigetender, joined in the criticism.

**TWO PORT** commissioners, Paul Friedlander and Frank Kitchell, testified in defense of the port. They urged no change in the election process.

A five-member board "is ample," Friedlander said.

"The system is working." He said the port has 40,000 employees, a \$160 million cash flow, \$44 million in revenue. He said work of the port has meant payrolls and, Friedlander added defensively, "we are responsible."

A major survey of the Sea-Tac noise problem is being carried out, he said. Kitchell recalled how the Legislature set up the at-large election system for King County. At one time there was a commissioner

to alter his legislation to keep the five commissioner posts, but have each commissioner run in a given district of King County.

Lysen hadn't expected passage of his bill in this Legislature.

However, the verbal action had whetted interest within the committee. Acting chairman Representative Doris Johnson, Richmond Democrat, suggested there might be a follow-up hearing.

## G. O. P. offers reform plan

OLYMPIA — (AP) — A legislative-reform plan calling for increased budgetary powers for the legislature was disclosed today by Senate Republicans.

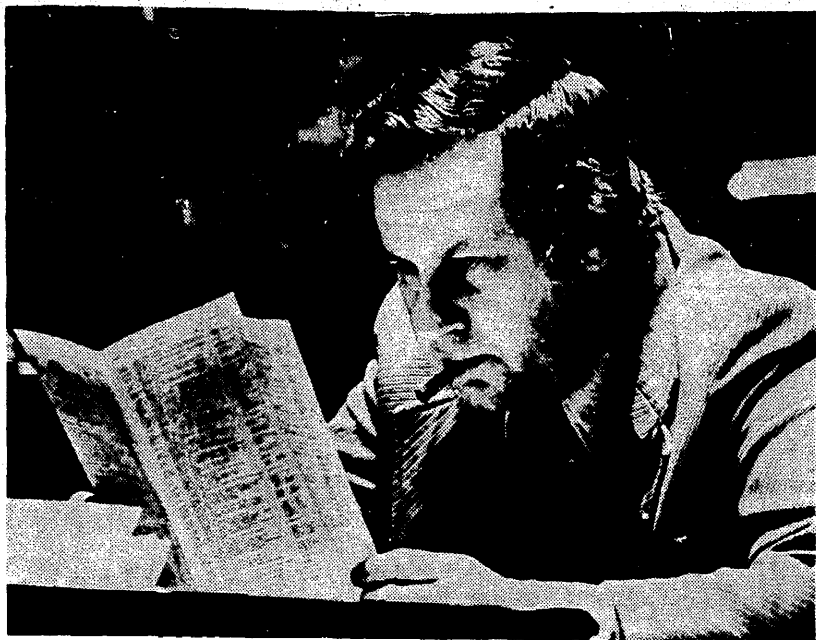
Gov. Dan Evans is spending millions of dollars in "unanticipated funds" such as federal grants without the approval of the Legislature, the G. O. P. chairman, R. Frank Atwood of Bellingham, said.

The plan outlined by Atwood calls for a constitutional amendment for annual sessions of 60 days in odd-numbered years and 45

days in even-numbered years. The governor or two thirds of the Legislature could call special sessions of 30 days.

Pending a vote on the constitutional amendment, the House and Senate would pass a joint rule limiting extra sessions to 30 days and allowing the governor to restrict the subject matter to be considered.

A separate constitutional amendment would give the Legislative Budget Committee power to act during the interim on emergency budgetary problems.



## Concentration

Representative Gordon L. Walgren bit down on the top of his pen as he studied a document in the House Chamber in Olympia. Walgren is a Bremerton Democrat.—Staff photo by Jerry Gay.

# Federal cuts can be absorbed, says Evans

OLYMPIA — (AP) — Unless Congress balks, the presidential budget knife will cut \$60.5 million in projected federal revenues from the state's next budget, Gov. Dan Evans said yesterday.

"The cuts may seem large, but they can be absorbed or the budget changed and we can get along," Evans told a news conference. "The direct effect will be minimal."

Despite the reductions, the state is slated to receive \$50 million more in the 1973-75 biennium than it did during the present fiscal year. How serious the cut-backs are on the local level remained to be seen, Evans said.

Hardest hit by the federal belt-tightening would be social and health services programs, where the total loss in anticipated revenue was put at \$25 million.

"There's no danger of any immediate layoffs or loss of jobs in the near future," the governor said, but he indicated that as many as 300 jobs could be phased out through attrition.

Community social service programs would lose \$16.6 million in matching funds, while vocational rehabilitation grants would be reduced \$3.4 million and Hill Burton Hospital construction grants \$4 million.

After a meeting in Washington, D. C., Friday be-

### Digest of bills

The digest of bills filed in the Legislature is on page F 6.

tween White House and state officials, the Legislature "has about all the information it's likely to get from the President" concerning his budget, Evans said.

Uncertainty about impacted federal funds has been cited by legislative leaders as a major stumbling block to the session's progress.

"I think we can write a budget in the normal scheme of things," the governor added, but a special session will be needed.

Highway construction funds totaling \$17 million were withheld and "will simply result in a slowdown to the planned construction program," he said. Evans placed the blame on Congress' failure to release the funds.

Education programs stand to lose \$13.8 million in projected revenues, \$10.4 million of it slashed from the superintendent of public instruction's office and local school districts.

However, Mr. Nixon plans to propose a special education revenue sharing act to Congress "in the next few months" that would offset some of the loss to school districts, Evans said.

Programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington will lose \$13.4 million in the next biennium, but the effect on the state budget will be small, Evans said. He estimated the state O. E. O. program would lose \$508,000 in direct federal aid.

### \$67.5 million cut in Social Services budget

OLYMPIA — (AP) — In an effort to create a cushion against federal-budget uncertainties, at least for a year, the Senate Ways and Means Committee has agreed to chop \$67.5 million from the Department of Social and Health Services budget, mainly in public-assistance funds.

Committee Chairman Martin Durkan, Issaquah Democrat, said at a meeting yesterday he will try to put the department's \$1 billion segment of Gov. Dan Evans' budget on the Senate floor by Saturday.

In spite of a cut of \$51.9 million in the public-assistance appropriation, Durkan said the intention is not to cut welfare grants to individuals. Instead, the manner of cutting, he said, is to give the department the flexibility it needs to meet the uncertainties of cuts and impoundments of federal funds in the coming year.

"This way, they can come back next year and ask for more," Durkan said.

# Lower-drinking-age bill stalled in Senate committee

Times Olympia Bureau

OLYMPIA — A measure which would lower the legal drinking age to 18 remained in the Senate Rules Committee today, at least temporarily mired in lethargy.

A second effort was made to bring it out of that committee yesterday — to put it to the floor of the Senate for debate. It failed.

Senator Al Henry, White Salmon Democrat and a key member of that com-

mittee, said there appears to be little push behind the bill.

Senator Pete Francis, Seattle Democrat and one of the bill's sponsors, agreed there seems to be little excitement for it.

Henry hinted its fate in the Senate may turn on the willingness of supporters to compromise — to change the lower age limit to 19 years, instead of 18.

"A lot of guys feel that 18 is too low," Henry said. "The reason for 19 was that they were trying to get it (legal drinking) out of the high schools."

The first time the rules committee considered the measure, there was talk about reports that other states experienced a rise in youthful drunken driving after the drinking age was lowered.

The measure — Senate Bill 2216 — had been given effervescent support in its public hearing before Francis Senate Judiciary Committee.

Among other backers is Gov. Dan Evans, who says the lowered drinking age would conform to the whole new range of legal rights for 18-year-olds.

The measure came out of that committee easily, with only some negative words from Senator Ted Bottiger, Tacoma Democrat, who also is a member of the Rules Committee.

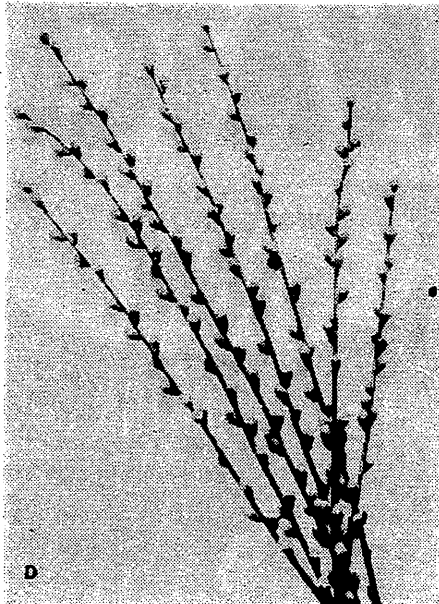
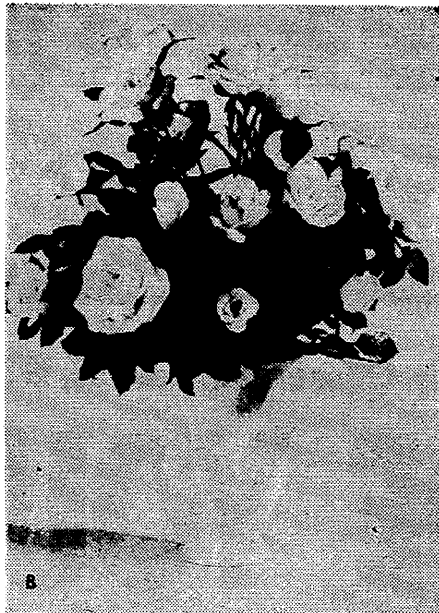
Bottiger said at that time he thought 19 was a better age to fix as the legal drinking age.

Yesterday it was Senator Gordon Herr, Seattle Democrat, who tried to have the measure "pulled" from the rules committee. That committee has authority to send bills to the Senate floor for final consideration.

Only five senators supported it. It needed almost twice that many. So the bill was kept in that committee.

Henry indicated its foes may accept an agreement to compromise the measure if it reaches the floor, but so far no bargaining has gone on.

The proposal has never been conspicuously alive in the House of Representatives.



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