

6 PP (PRDC3) POSITIONAL PLAN PRDC/2/SNELL
OREGON FEDERATION OF WOMAN'S CLUBS --RADIO

MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR SNELL:

With the termination of the war Oregon will be confronted with one of the most gigantic problems in its history--the task of finding employment for the thousands of returning veterans and the other thousands of war workers who, like Othello, may find their occupation gone.

To meet this situation the state and its political subdivisions are preparing public works programs designed to serve as a stop-gap over a period of years until private industry can readjust itself from war activities and stabilize employment.

This program of public works covers a multitude of projects, large and small. For municipalities it means expansion of water systems, sewage systems, improvement of streets, new public buildings and the hundred and one functions which have been held up by the war because of priorities and the necessity of bending all efforts to the winning of the war. Each and every one of the municipal and county projects will be needed and will add to the health and welfare of the community and some of these projects will be self-liquidating.

Recognizing that there must come a period of transition after the war and that preparations should be made at the earliest possible moment--for wars end suddenly--I recommended to the Oregon Legislature in my inaugural address

that a state agency be created for an over-all supervision of projects.

The Legislature established the Commission on Post War Readjustment and Development which has now been functioning for the past nine months.

The initial move of this Commission was to call attention to the impending unemployment and urge political subdivisions to be prepared to meet the situation. In a period when everyone was advertising for help and offering high wages it was difficult to convince the administrative bodies of counties and municipalities that there may be dark days ahead and that inevitably war work would cease and a period of widespread unemployment likely would ensue. The Commission has been hammering on this theme and is now achieving results.

The catalog of potential public works projects already assembled by the Commission has an estimated value in excess of \$300,000,000. This includes the Federal program of highways, reclamation, flood control, navigation and multiple-purpose dams. It includes the State Forestry Program of reforestation, the building program of State Institutions under the State Board of Control, the program of the State Game Commission. Also included are new county courthouses new high schools and grade schools. In municipalities the list embraces new city halls and the long list of miscellaneous requirements.

There is still much to be done. Only 17 of the 36 counties have submitted their projects and out of 192 municipalities in the State only 29 have

replied to requests urging filing of their program.

In most of the smaller municipalities there is no technical consultant who can say whether a project is feasible, estimate the cost and prepare blueprints. The new laws permitting the building up of financial reserves to meet the cost of projects are not being taken advantage of to the extent possible. There is ample and able leadership in every community if it will only assert itself. Brains are not confined to metropolitan areas. Good, sound, constructive minds can be found at the cross-roads as well as on Broadway.

These three factors which are holding back can be readily overcome. Leadership can assert itself; budget committees can prepare their financial program, and competent engineers can perform the practical planning.

It should be remembered that the Post War Readjustment and Development Commission is not a dictatorial agency telling the political subdivisions that they must make a project of some particular sort. It has no authority nor desire to impose its will upon anyone. Every community is the captain of its own destiny and can select any type of public works it finds suitable, beneficial and desirable and within its financial capacity.

That is democracy and is as it should be. No one knows better than the residents of a municipality or a county what its needs are.

There are numerous sub-committees of the Post War Readjustment and Development Commission which are making studies of special phases of the development of the State.

Each of these sub-committees has as chairman a member of the Commission and the chairman is surrounded by a small but efficient group of citizens who are versed in the particular subject assigned to them. These sub-committees deal with stream purification, mineral resources, reclamation, industries, flood control, public works and similar studies, all affecting the long-range development of Oregon, in the post war era.

The Commission is not interested alone in finding employment in the immediate period after the duration but in utilizing the natural resources and determining how best these resources can be applied with the objective of providing permanent payrolls.

In the confidential files of the Commission are dozens of private enterprises planned for the post war period and these remain confidential until announcement is made by the projectors. It can be stated, however, that at no other time have so many eastern industries displayed such a desire to locate in Oregon.

The war has made them familiar with the possibilities of Oregon, with the potential market for the disposal of their product across the Pacific Ocean. Negotiations are now in progress for the acquiring of sites suitable for their planned operations. At least two nationally known concerns which heretofore have considered Oregon in the light of a consumer only, intend establishing manufacturing industries to produce as well as sell to the people of Oregon.

There has practically been no large buildings erected in the State for 15 or more years, but the confidential files list a building program calculated to draw heavily upon the artisans of the building trades and all financed from private resources with not a dollar of public money involved. This is one of the healthiest signs that has come to the attention of the Commission at a time when the so-called "venture capital" is supposed to be non-existent.

Naturally, these public and private projects cannot start until the materials are available. Until the existing priorities are abolished it will be impossible to obtain machinery, tools and raw materials, all of which, however, may be well timed with the post-war potential unemployment period.

When the War Production Board unfreezes priorities there will not be sufficient materials available to meet the immediate demands for reconstruction throughout the United States and a lapse of time will be necessary before the

supply can equal the demand.

This of course, means that not all of the municipalities, counties and private enterprises will be able to begin work at once and many will be delayed in prosecuting planned work for months and in some instances for a year.

This prospective delay should not prevent political sub-divisions from proceeding with their planning, arranging their finances and having everything in the blueprint stage and ready for letting contracts. Projects which are ready to go when priorities are cancelled will have the best chance to acquire materials.

This is why it is so important that the municipalities and counties take time by the forelock. Private enterprise, as disclosed in the confidential file, is not waiting and the blueprint plans are now on the drafting board.

In the reports from the 17 counties, all state that 100 per cent of the cost of projects will be met from county funds, with the proviso that if federal aid is offered not more than 50 percent will be accepted and this will enable the counties to expand their programs. But with or without federal assistance the counties intend to fly with their own wings and retain control of the projects and not permit dictation from some bureau in Washington, D. C.