

City Chiefs Fear Loss Of Power

By DENNIS PAJOT

Put 150 city mayors, city managers and city assessors in a room. Tell them you're proposing laws which will reduce their

options to exercise authority in their hometowns. Tell them you think county, state or national agencies can do a better job of looking out for the interests of their constituents.

What'll you get? Moelke of Livonia expressed the predictable reaction: "It looks to me like... an attempt to usurp power."

Mayor John Canfield, of Dearborn Heights, speaking to one such proposal, said, "I ever saw a can of worms opened, this is one."

CANFIELD ALSO recommended, as one of the brave proposals suggested for the opposite reason, that the mayors exercise their political power of lobbying with the legislature to tone down the proposals.

Canfield was moderating an annual regional meeting of member municipalities of the Michigan Municipal League (just such a setting) in Plymouth's Mayflower Hotel Thursday.

Centralizing most of the authority for housing codes and property assessments were the proposals, both of which have been introduced to the legislature.

On hand to explain the proposals, and to field the many objections, were members of state governor's commissions which had studied the subjects and formed some of the legislative bills.

As explained, the commission proposals were designed to reserve as much local jurisdictional power as possible while concentrating sufficient

power centrally to assure a sufficient degree of statewide uniformity.

CONVINCING the local officials that the end would justify the means appeared unlikely after more than two hours of explanation, questions and answers.

Donald Henderson, chairman of the governor's commission on housing codes, said a state standard would enable mass production techniques to bring new housing costs down.

Biggest stumbling block to such mass production now is that factorites must regard assemblies to meet differences in local building requirements which otherwise might be considered minor considerations.

He used the example of wall joists required to be 18" apart in some places and 16" apart in others.

THE HOUSING law proposals urge replacement of specification codes with performance codes, local inspections (except for shipping damage and assembly) with state agency at-factory inspections and local determination of acceptable construction with national determination monitored by a state agency.

Under the proposal, he said, the local community would retain the option to refuse acceptance of the state standard code in preference to another conditionally accepted code. But,

once a community adopted the state standard, it could not modify it with local "upgrading."

Prof. L. Hart Wright, U-M chairman of the governor's commission on property assessment, said his commission's proposal is intended for two things: To remove inequities inherent in the present decentralized assessing system and, to remove a conflict of interest inherent in the state tax commission duties.

PROFESSIONALIZATION of assessing functions will be a contingent benefit, he said. It will be possible because a single authority will be able to provide sufficient work for qualified people, whereas individual units could not.

He questioned whether more than two or three municipalities in Michigan have assessors able to properly determine the property values of a company such as General Motors.

The commission's proposal calls for creation of a new state agency to act as the first trial level of tax complaints.

This will remove the current state tax commission from its conflict of trying matters for which it previously set the rules, and from (b) case loads which presently surpass 75 per cent of its time, thus rendering it incapable of properly conducting its administrative

function.

This function, he said, at present includes overseeing some 1,300 local assessing jurisdictions in the state.

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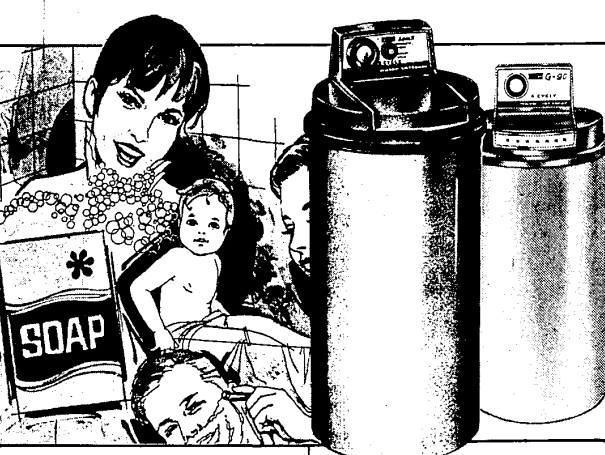
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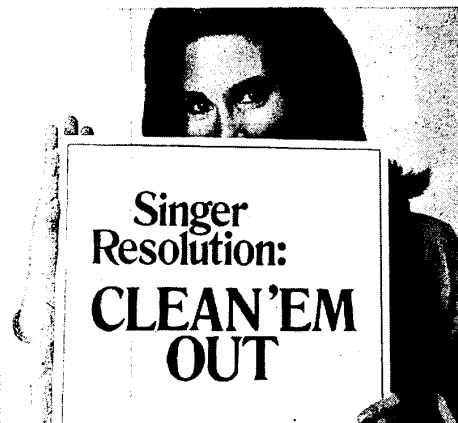
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EDWARD H. LIZOTTE. Funeral services for Mr. Lizotte of 996 E. 10th St. were held Sunday, Jan. 19, at 10 a.m. in the R. H. Harris Funeral Home, 1000 Michigan. Burial was in the R. H. Harris Funeral Home, 1000 Michigan.

Mr. Lizotte died in Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, Jan. 15, at the age of 62. He lived in the area for 50 years and was a well-known resident. He is survived by his wife, Marie, a son, Martin, two daughters, Mrs. Lorraine Foster and Mrs. Eugene M. Foster, four brothers, Alfred, Joseph, Harold, and Emil, a sister, Theodora, and seven grandchildren.

PATRICK O'NEILL. Funeral services for Mr. O'Neill of 6000 Merriman, Westland, were held Sunday, Jan. 19, at 10 a.m. in the R. H. Harris Funeral Home, 1000 Michigan. Burial was in the R. H. Harris Funeral Home, 1000 Michigan.

ANNA SLOVEY. Services for Mrs. Slovey of 124 Helen, Garden City, were held Jan. 17 from the John S. Sweeney & Son Funeral Home with burial in the R. H. Harris Funeral Home.

Mr. Slovey died Jan. 15 in Oakwood Hospital, Detroit, at the age of 68.

She is survived by her husband, Frank, son, Erwin, daughter, Shirley, three sisters, Fanny, Helen, and Eva, and two grandchildren.

Gov. Milliken has announced the approval of grants totaling \$778,294 for 13 economic development projects in northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula.

The grants will be used to supplement other federal, state and local funds necessary to finance the projects which have a total cost of \$10.4 million.

Milliken said: "All of these projects are designed to stimulate the economic development of the 45 northern Michigan and Upper Peninsula counties that are part of the Upper Great Lakes Region."