

Municipal Assn. Lobbying For Increased Liquor Taxes In '64

By Marion Ellis
Capitol News Service

With the 1964 General Assembly only a month away, organizations and individuals seeking assistance from that body have stepped up their activities designed to win that assistance.

No group in the state seems to have made more elaborate plans than the State Municipal Association who is seeking an increase in state-shared revenues from the taxes collected on the sale of beer, wine and liquor. This organization, representing the 252 cities and towns in South Carolina - despite sentiments to the contrary by Mr. Money in Palmettoville, Sen. Edgar Brown - feel they have a good chance of achieving at least a portion of their goal.

The Association's legislative liaison man, Crawford Cook, says prospects look "pretty good." He cites as the principal reason for his optimism the names of leading legislators in both Houses whom he claims have pledged their support to the cause.

If Cook's claims are valid and men like Joe Rogers, Fred Fuller, Dawson Addis, Hall Yarborough and Hugh Love (all influential members of the House of Representatives' money committee - Ways and Means -) and Marshall Parker, Francis Jones, John West, James Waddell, Earl Morris and Bob Hayes in the Senate are disposed to use their collective influence on behalf of the municipalities, then Senator Brown's opposition notwithstanding, some relief may indeed be in sight for the one

million city folks in South Carolina.

Municipal leaders throughout the state seem to share their "red lands" optimistic views. They point out that last

Carolina T&TC Plans Decrease In Bell Interest

Tarboro—The Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company today announced that it had been advised that the Southern Bell Telephone Company intends to dispose of the stock it owns in Carolina Telephone by distribution to the public over a period of time.

President Dai Holderness said all of Carolina Telephone's approximate 8,000 stockholders have been advised of the proposed stock sale. He said Southern Bell once owned about 31% of the Carolina Telephone stock but that it now owns about 18% of the outstanding stock. He has been informed that Southern Bell also plans to dispose of its investment in the Inter-Mountain Telephone Company which is the only other investment it has in any independent telephone company.

It is our understanding that the Southern Bell expects to offer for sale in the Spring of 1964 about one-third of the stock it owns in the Carolina Company, he added. He said that Southern Bell has no definite plans as to when it will sell the rest of the stock it owns in the Carolina Company.

He said Southern Bell felt the stock sale would be in its best interest because it would allow Southern Bell to use the investment in its own operations.

Mr. Holderness stated that to broaden the ownership of Carolina Telephone stock would be beneficial. In addition, the sale will remove any question as to the Carolina Company's independent status, he added.

In connection with broadening the ownership of its stock, it was stated that Carolina Telephone intends to make application shortly to list its stock on the New York Stock Exchange. This will provide a national market for the stock with published reporting of daily transactions.

Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company, with headquarters in Tarboro, N.C., operates in 41 counties in eastern North Carolina. At the end of October 1963 the company had a plant investment of nearly \$125,000,000 with slightly more than 238,000 telephones in service. This compares with plant investment ten years ago of \$43,500,000 and 112,500 telephones in service.

year they came within one vote of adding their proposal to the General Appropriations Bill and feel certain they can and will hold that voting strength and have a year's work behind them with which they have tried to add to it.

Another fact they point to is the state's economic picture which apparently will be better than ever with a now familiar monthly increase in revenues bolstered by a \$23 million textile pay hike from which large increases can be expected in the areas of sales and income tax.

And then there is the fact that 1964 is an election year with half the Senate - and all of the House Seats up for grabs. These municipal leaders point out that even though there are many counties where the population living outside the municipalities is larger than that residing in them, there are only a few in which the majority of voters live outside the cities.

In a voting year people who need votes must cater to the areas and groups having those votes. For years it has been a foregone conclusion that school teachers and state employees will get a pay increase in an election year. This time, however, it looks as though they may have to share this ideal situation with us city folks. After all there are a lot more city dwellers than there are school teachers and state employees combined.

Probably the biggest asset municipal leaders have today though is their legislative organization set-up. For years solutions have used the argument they had an interest back home from local municipal officials in receiving additional assistance. This year the Association has set up a Regional organization, dividing the 46 counties into 15 Regional with a Chairman for each. In addition there is a county chairman in charge of every city and town in his county and there has already been a noticeable increase in interest with a corresponding increase in reminders to legislators that it has been many years since any financial help has been given to municipalities.

This shapes up as one of the bigger battles of the '64 session and will be an interesting one to watch.

The human heart, at whatever age, opens only to the heart that opens in return.

—Maria Tedgeworth
The future is always a fairy land to the young.
—George Augustus Sala

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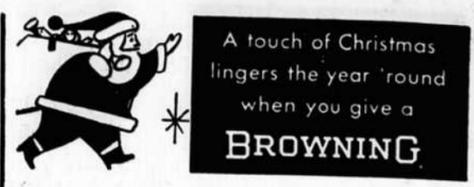
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