

*"Tenth Question"***"URBAN RENEWAL"**

"Shall the Council of the City and County of Denver, by virtue of the authority vested in it by the Constitution of the State of Colorado and the Charter of the City and County of Denver, authorize the issuance of the general obligation bonds of the City and County of Denver in the principal amount of \$8,000,000.00 (to be supplemented by federal funds in the estimated amount of \$18,000,000.00), or so much thereof as may be necessary, to be payable from general ad valorem taxes which may be levied without limitation of rate or amount on all the taxable property within the City and County of Denver for the purpose of providing funds to defray in whole or in part the cost of municipal urban renewal, all as set forth and in accordance with the recitals of Ordinance No. 130, Series of 1964, such bonds to bear interest at a rate not exceeding four per centum (4%) per annum, to be subject to prior redemption at the option of the City and County of Denver at or above par and accrued interest to the redemption date, on and after a date not later than ten years from the date thereof, and to mature serially over a period of not exceeding thirty years?"

You will note that this ordinance did not name specific urban renewal projects nor did it indicate the skyline project by name.

Through studies conducted as a part of our community renewal program we had determined a number of areas which were in need of urban renewal action. A business and civic leader organization known as the Downtown Denver Master Plan Committee, financed chiefly by private funds donated by downtown businessmen, prepared a report entitled "Development Guide for Downtown Denver." This report strongly recommended that an urban renewal project be carried out in the area subsequently designated as the skyline project.

On January 23, 1964, the Board of Commissioners of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority adopted a resolution designating the skyline project area and authorizing an application to the Housing and Home Finance Agency (now Housing and Urban Development) for a survey and planning advance. The city council approved the application on February 23, 1964.

When the bond issue ordinance was being prepared prior to the June 30 election, the board of commissioners of the authority was asked if it wished to have urban renewal included as one of the 10 proposals. The board indicated its concern that no specific urban renewal plans had been completed for additional areas and that it would be difficult to relate specific costs to special projects. However, the board recommended to the mayor and city council that urban renewal be placed on the bond issue ballot.

The urban renewal authority, the Downtown Denver Master Plan Committee, the Downtown Denver Improvement Association, city council, and other groups concerned with the blighted condition of Denver's lower downtown area recognized the need for proceeding with the survey and planning for the skyline project. When the people failed to support the issuance of bonds for urban renewal as well as a new city hall, a city shops system, and the hall of justice complex, these same groups supported the recommendation that the authority proceed with planning.

I did not regard the rejection of the bond issue as a vote against the principles of urban renewal. It is my understanding that Congress authorized urban renewal survey and planning funds to permit cities to prepare plans for urban renewal projects where the elimination of physical and economic blight is necessary. The urban renewal authority, city council, and I have a responsibility to bring about redevelopment of the blighted areas. I do not believe the rejection of the bond issue for urban renewal was an indication by the people that they did not wish to improve their city and make it a better place in which to live. It is for this reason we continued with the planning of the skyline project as well as other urban renewal projects.

3. Question.—Is it your position that the voters did not reject the concept of urban renewal but only the method of paying for it? Why?

Answer.—The results of the election indicate the majority of the voters did not want to issue bonds to defray in whole or in part the cost of a city hall, a city shop system, a hall of justice complex, and urban renewal. The people of Denver, as a whole, are proud of their city and have supported programs for its improvement. They have also shown their astuteness in financial matters. It is my opinion they were reluctant to authorize the expenditure of funds for projects for which there were no definite plans.