



Department of Transportation

TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, SALEM, OREGON 97310

June 20, 1984

IN REPLY REFER TO
FILE NO.:

PUB 10-1

The Honorable Victor Atiyeh
Governor of Oregon
254 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97310

Governor, when I had the high honor late last year of receiving the Up-the-Creek-without-a-Paddle Award from you, I was told at that time that I would retain possession of the paddle until another deserving recipient came along. In my view, that time has now arrived. I refer, of course, to Leo Hegstrom.

Actually, there is some indication that Leo so values the award, and covets it so much, that he, with the help of his press aide, Dave Fiskum, has been out campaigning for it, like an Academy Awards nominee.

Certainly, many of us have been led to that conclusion by the recent outbreak of front-page stories about Leo in the Statesman-Journal.

Indeed, the reporter has all but exhausted her entire supply of active verbs and colorful adjectives to describe Leo's exploits.

For example: longest-reigning...heartless tyrant...crackerjack executive...edict sent shudders...slings of criticism...steely determination...rattling complacency...little tin god...subordinates groan...manages by intimidation...critical eye...hard pencil...impatience in staff meetings...time is money...trying to save a buck...characteristic sheepish grin...and no Santa Claus.

These are all direct quotes from a journalist who is renowned for her objective reporting and conservative prose style.

It's obvious Leo has been leaking so much information out of his office, he'll need the paddle to stay afloat at his desk.

You've got to give credit to a guy who is working so hard to dismantle a centralized organization he's devoted his working career to build.

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One of Leo's mottos, I'm told, is--if you can't join 'em, beat 'em. One of his administrators may have taken that too much to heart recently in aggressively pursuing views of the Senior Services Division. That episode did accomplish one thing, however, in giving advance warning to Ways and Means that Leo will literally fight for his budget.

As the son of a butter-maker, Leo knows which side of his bread to put it on. And how to make sure the cream rises to the top... and stays there. Leo's goal is that in two years' time, he and Dave Fiskum will be the only FTEs left in the agency. And there is some doubt about Fiskum.

And he's responsive, too. When you met with your administrators at the Wilsonville Holiday Inn some months ago and urged us to "drive to the tape", Leo and his top staff argued all the way back to Salem over whether you meant adhesive...scotch... or red.

The real problem with that meeting, though, was that when you said "urge", Leo thought you said "purge". And he's been hard at it ever since.

For these and many other reasons, I think he's earned the Paddle Award and--as fond as I've grown of it--I'm now ready to relinquish it to him. I want to give Leo all the help I can in rowing upstream.

Fred

Fred D. Miller
Director