

'Management Team' Approach

Hayner Is GOP's New 'Star' in Senate

By Mike Layton

OLYMPIA— Make a place on the state's political marquee for a new star, State Sen. Jeannette Hayner of Walla Walla, the leader of the Republicans in the Senate.

A slight mother of three who jogs and skis, she looks far younger than her 59 years and far less tough than her record in the Legislature and her leadership of an end-of-session coup would indicate.

Hayner last week joined other Republicans disgruntled with the leadership of Sen. Jim Matson, Selah, and Charles Newchwander, Tacoma, to establish a new "management team" approach to running the Senate. The new leadership's prime objective is to take the majority away from the Democrats in a year and a half.

It was a revolution more technical than ideological, according to sources inside and outside the 19-member Republican caucus.

One senator who preferred not to be identified said the revolt erupted over Matson's failure to shift gears after the collapse of the "conservative coalition" which had run the Senate for several sessions.

Under that alliance, Matson and former Sen. August Mardesich, Everett Democrat, teamed up to run a conservative, pro-business Senate.

When Mardesich went down to defeat in last November's election, so the theory goes, Matson failed to chart a new course. The Senate, in spite of many deviations, was less conservative this session than in years.

Republican conservatives also were irritated that Matson, a practical politician who accepts the fact that a minority party operates within certain limits, had urged the 49 House Republicans to give the 49 House Democrats the 50th vote they needed to pass a Democratic budget so the current Legislature could end.

Matson intended to make what he repeatedly called a "bloated" budget a major issue against Democrats in the 1980 elections. But once the issue had been ground into the record, he saw no need to flail it forever at a cost of \$85,000 a day when the outcome that he believed to be inevitable was a Democrat-molded budget.

So, in that sense, the issue was pragmatism versus fanaticism, many who watched the drama unfold believe. Certainly embarrassing Matson and Newchwander in public rather than waiting a week and dumping them quietly had a tinge of hardline spite to it.

Time will cool the tempers but there still may be fallout from the revolt that could work to the detriment of the Republicans.

Matson had already nearly decided not to run again in 1980. But he does not like Rep. Alex Deccio, R-Yakima, a likely chief contender for his seat. Without Matson's help, or with Matson actively working against him, Deccio could be defeated by a Democrat.

Thus Hayner and her allies, while attempting to cut down the 30-seat majority of the Democrats, could actually lose a key seat in the heart of what they consider Republican territory.

"Yakima is changing," said one observer. "Republicans can't take it for granted any longer." Two of the county's three commissioners are Democrats.



SEN. JEANNETTE HAYNER
Senate majority is the goal

One of Hayner's allies in the overthrow of Matson is Sen. Lois North, Seattle, who plans to run for the King County Council. She's from a swing district and her seat could be lost to the Democrats, too.

One thing that Hayner is happy about is the fact that 17 Democrats are up for re-election next year, many of them, Republicans believe, complacent and ripe for upset against only eight Republicans, most of them seemingly in good political shape.

But most importantly, Hayner said, "in every district there are people who want to contain big government, who want government to be fiscally responsible.

"When people talk to me they say, 'You should repeal some of the laws on the books now. There are too many new laws.'"

She intends to work with the State Republican Committee to "find those kinds of people for candidates. They represent the majority."

Hayner believes the vote on Initiative 62, the spending limits measure on the ballot this fall, will hammer home the public's feelings. She's counting on passage of course.

"It's a Republican issue," she said, "and it will be indicative of what the overwhelming majority of the people want."

Hayner appreciates the irony of her belief in a "citizen Legislature" when she is almost a full-time legislator herself.

"I believe there are enough people out there who will give their time to good government," she said. "Elective office does call for some self sacrifice."

The new Republican "team" in the Senate is not easy to classify. Hayner is as conservative as any member of the Senate — more so than Matson, whose ability to work with Democrats, lobbyists and the press stemmed more from an easy-going, slightly sardonic humor and attention to courtesies than to a moderate ideology.

"He could put you down, but he was civilized about it," said one lobbyist. "He was one of the

few people (legislators) around here who could laugh at himself," said another.

The other members of the "Republican trika," as one lobbyist called it, are Sens. George Scott, Seattle, and Bob Lewis, Spokane.

Scott, who is said by some to have been the instigator of the revolt, is a moderate who sometimes exasperates others with his nitpicking. He has ties to the Dan Evans-Slade Gorton wing, the so-called progressives of the Republican Party.

Lewis also is considered a moderate — for Spokane, anyway. A banker, he is expected to be the liaison to the fat cats, the big contributors that politicians need to finance campaigns to persuade people to vote for them.

The key to upcoming Senate elections may be the ideological bent of the Republican candidates. Democrats are hoping the Senate Republicans will follow their party members in the House and choose hardline right-wingers for the next election.

Although House Republicans came from behind last year to end a Democratic majority (and create a frustrating 49-49 legislative tie), many of the Republican freshmen hold such extreme views on so many issues — and are forever willing to express them — that Democrats are confident they can regain the majority in 1980.

In the Senate races, a lot will depend on Hayner's picking and promotion of the candidates.

Hayner, a lawyer who does not practice now (her husband, H. H. "Dutch" Hayner, and son Jim practice in Walla Walla), has the time to devote to recruiting good candidates.

She will project to potential candidates the image of a strong-minded believer in limited government, one who thinks that most of the country's ailments can be healed by allowing business to operate free of most restraints.

On social issues she is definitely conservative. "I voted for the ERA," she said, "because my district voted for it in 1973, although I personally did not support it."

She is credited, however, with pushing through a major women's lobby-backed issue of the session — a prohibition against embarrassing sexual conduct questions in paternity cases, go.

For several years, Hayner was legal counsel to the Bonneville Power Administration in Portland and, she said, "although I'm more cautious than the governor, I am not opposed to nuclear power."

She shares Gov. Dixy Lee Ray's proclivity toward equating the dangers of nuclear power with other risks of life.

"When 273 people were killed in an airplane crash," she asked, "did anyone say we should eliminate airplanes?"

"I believe we have to live with the 74 nuclear power plants now on line until we can examine the alternatives," she added.

The accident at the Three Mile Island reactor in Pennsylvania, she thinks, will help stiffen plant safety.

A graduate of the University of Oregon and its law school, Hayner was elected to the House in 1972 and to the Senate in 1976. In the Senate, her impact has been felt most in the Education, Energy and Judiciary committees.

"She states her views well," said Sen. Jim McDermott, D-Seattle, Education Committee chairman. "She's a tough one to get around."