

**CAPITOL
MOVE
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1961-1962**

Alaskans' Voting Rights Under Attack

THE OPPONENTS of a capital relocation are again proving to be resourceful and well-heeled.

The lawsuit filed today in Juneau is an attempt to keep the capital relocation initiative off the state election ballot.

This issue, the suit in effect says, is not the type of thing that should be decided by the people. Rather, it says, the capital should remain in Juneau despite what the people of Alaska might say about it at the polls this year.

It is doubtless that the lawsuit was brought with full recognition that a popular election on the issue would result in moving the capital to a point closer and more accessible to the majority of Alaskans. There have been many indications that sentiment in regard to the location of the present capital at Juneau has undergone a substantial change since the last election on the issue. In that election, a margin of fewer than 5,200 votes was chalked up in favor of leaving the capital where it is. There are reasons to speculate that the results would be reversed in another election.

THE LAWSUIT filed today is fraught with political intrigue.

The suit apparently is sponsored by the cities of Juneau and Douglas. Costs of bringing the suit, doubtless are being financed by public monies and tax revenues collected by those cities. Just as the expenses of the last election campaign on this issue were.

Joining in as co-sponsors are prominent political figures, including legislators, from throughout the state, apparently a gesture to show that Juneau isn't fighting the issue alone.

An even more interesting political situation exists in the nature of the suit and the position of the state administration. The suit attempts to enjoin Secretary of State Hugh Wade from placing the issue on the ballot. Wade is the principal election official for the

It could come as a matter of course that the state attorney general will be charged with opposing the suit, despite the open sympathy for Juneau's cause expressed by the state administration through its leader, Gov. William Egan. It might very well be that a state attorney will be "defending" the administration from something it really doesn't want to be defended against.

WHILE THE LEGAL minds of the state toss the issue around in the courts, what happens to the people of Alaska in regard to their seat of government?

It has been made abundantly clear in recent years that Juneau is an undesirable location for the capital. It is inaccessible, costly to visit, remote from the majority of people it is intended to serve.

Time after time during the present administration there have been instances when government coordination between Juneau and western and northern Alaska were all but broken down. The result was misunderstanding, government apathy, inefficiency, and failure of the chosen administration to properly serve all the people.

The problem of long distance government has not been isolated in any one department, but rather has cut through most of the state's functions. Many of the ills are currently being aired in the Legislature in Juneau.

It is altogether fitting and proper that the people of the state—the people who pay the bills and select the leaders—should be given a voice in this important issue.

While it is entirely within the legal rights of the capital relocation opponents to seek their victory in the courts, the issue involved here is of such importance that an expression by the citizens of Alaska through the ballot should not be denied.

The capital is not the private property of a select few Juneau residents. It belongs to all the people of Alaska. Its location is the concern of all the people.

12 Legislators In Sponsoring Action

Fairbanks News-Miner

2/13/62

Taxpayers' Suit Would Restrain Secretary of State from Placing Relocation Initiative on Ballot

JUNEAU, Feb. 13, (AP) — A taxpayers' suit designed to keep the capital relocation initiative off the primary election ballot next Aug. 14 was filed in First District Superior Court today.

Twenty-three individuals, including 12 members of the legislature, joined the cities of Juneau and Douglas in sponsoring the action, which names Secretary of State Hugh J. Wade as defendant.

The suit asked:

1. For a declaratory judgment that the state constitution cannot be amended or revised by means of an initiative; and
2. For a permanent injunction restraining the Secretary of State from taking any action to place the capital relocation initiative on the Aug. 14 primary election ballot.

Individuals Named

The individuals joining in sponsoring the lawsuit with the cities of Juneau and Douglas were:

Dr. Paul Hagglund, Fairbanks; State Sen. Pearse M. Walsh, Nome; State Rep. Peter M. Deveau, Kodiak; State Sen. Frank Peratrovich, Klawock; State Sen. Eben Hopson, Barrow; State Rep. Donald Harris, McGrath;

Helen D. Sheahan, Anchorage; Robert E. Ellis, Ketchikan; Ed Locken, Petersburg; John J. Conway, Sitka; Peter Jorgensen, Alakanuk; State Rep. Marcus Jensen, Douglas; Lauris Parker, Juneau;

State Senator Lester Bronson, Nome; State Sen. James Nolan, Wrangell; Mrs. Allan L. Petersen, Kenai; State Rep. Robert I. Ditman, Valdez; Jack Werner, Seward; Mrs. Edith Bullock, Kotzebue; State Rep. Robert R. Blodgett, Teller; State Rep. Harold Z. Hansen, Cordova; Carl Heinmiller, Haines precinct; and State Rep. Morgan Reed, Skagway.

Relocation Request

The request for a capital relocation petition was filed with Secretary of State Hugh J. Wade last Oct. 10. Wade approved the request 13 days later.

Petitions containing the names of some 7,000 qualified voters were filed with Wade's office the week before the legislature convened, Jan. 22.

In brief, the capital relocation initiative provides that the seat of state government be moved from Juneau to a point west of Yakutat, but not within 30 miles of Anchorage.

A capital site selection committee composed of the senior senators of each senatorial district of the state would pick three potential sites, giving consideration to accessibility by rail, highway and air.

Each site would consist of not less than 6,400 acres of state-owned or state-selected federal lands.

The actual selection of the future capital site, from the three recommended by the selection committee, would be made by the voters of the state.

The suit said that a similar capital relocation initiative was defeated on Aug. 9, 1960, by a vote of 23,972 to 18,417.

"The fact that an election may be held on a proposition for removal of the capital from Juneau irreparably harms Juneau and Douglas and their taxpayers for the reason that the threat of removal of said capital by means of election discourages investors from investing funds in apartments, hotels, motels, dwelling houses, businesses, industries and other improvements needed and desirable . . ." the action stated.

The suit further contends that the proponents of the initiative measure threaten to continue to submit capital relocation initiatives regardless of the outcome of the Aug. 9, 1960, election and the outcome of the vote on the new initiative, if it is submitted to a vote of the people.

Without naming the Anchorage Daily Times directly, the suit said that prior to the Aug. 9, 1960, election the "newspaper with the largest circulation in the state of Alaska had been supporting the campaign to move the capital by devoting news and editorial space to articles advocating the relocation of the capital . . ."

The complaint was drafted by three attorneys, Harold Butcher of Anchorage, State Sen. Robert J. McNealy of Fairbanks and Robert Boochever of Juneau.