

# Mayor Backs P-S Stand Against 'El' Highway

Mayor Anthony A. Henninger last night declared that he was opposed to any plans for an elevated highway running north and south through the heart of city.

At the same time, he praised the editorial campaign of The Post-Standard. In recent editorials—and this morning's Post-Standard, too,—this newspaper has brought to light the fact that the state has been developing plans for an elevated highway for the city.

Mayor Henninger said the

editorials "were very good, and very timely."

He said he discussed the situation with Earl Towlson, acting district engineer for the State Department of Public Works, three weeks ago.

Henninger said he was surprised at how far the plans had gone.

However, Mayor Henninger believes that he learned of the situation in time to make necessary changes. He described the local officials of the state DPW as "very cooperative." He said

he is certain that the state will agree to changes in plans.

Mayor Henninger added he has learned that such elevated highways "have ruined other cities."

The mayor said he has met with his own executive committee and will meet with the committee again this week to discuss the situation fully.

Meanwhile, Towlson is away for two weeks on active duty. Towlson is a high-ranking officer in the Naval Reserve.

Both Towlson and Henninger

are relatively new to their jobs.

The only official information that had been released relative to the expressway from the downtown south to Nedrow was based on plans three or four years old. Without any word to the public, these plans have been changed.

The mayor is certain that he will be able to stop any thinking along the lines of elevated highways. He said the state officials have agreed to "review the situation."

It was, of course, clear from

the interview with the mayor that the state definitely planned for elevated structures in the heart of the town.

This would have completely "imprisoned" the valuable downtown district and would have prevented any future growth, the mayor said.

The mayor also pointed out that he and his administration would "have to move fast. We are on top of this and we will keep after it."

The city engineer and other influential civic and government

leaders also are "definitely opposed to such a plan."

The Post-Standard yesterday contacted several of these leaders and asked for their opinions on plans for an elevated highway.

Each one was against an elevated highway. Those contacted said they had seen earlier state plans for a highway, running from James St. south to Nedrow.

The highway would be part of the Empire Stateway, or Penn

Can Expressway, as most persons still call it.

The highway through the city would serve two primary purposes. The first is to carry traffic from the Pennsylvania border to the Canadian border.

The second is carry local traffic to and from the heart of the city. In the beginning, a decade ago, the state planned an "arterial route." However, after 10 years of stalling, the federal government came up with the idea for a vast super-highway system.

New York State already had plans for a superhighway from the Binghamton area to the Thousand Islands area. The federal government has gone along with these plans and will pay 90 per cent of the costs involved.

It was too late for the city to get under the plans for the Oswego Boulevard Arterial, so the city has to pay half the costs of land acquisition. The state

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# THE POST-STANDARD

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III

SYRACUSE, N. Y., SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 1958

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must pay for the construction  
 costs.  
 Potter W. Kelly, city engineer  
 who must approve state high-  
 way plans when those plans  
 concern construction in the city  
 said, "Anything elevated is bad.  
 I would oppose such plans."  
 Kelly said he doubted that  
 there would be any more ex-  
 pense in constructing a  
 depressed highway. And the  
 technical problems would be no  
 greater.  
 M. Leonard Shapero, 15th  
 Ward supervisor, said, "I very  
 definitely object to that kind  
 of plan (for an elevated high-  
 way). Clear thinking in any  
 community is opposed to eleva-  
 tion, except where it is abso-  
 lutely necessary."  
 Shapero said that the civic  
 trend is more toward eliminat-  
 ing elevated structures than  
 adding new ones in the heart  
 of business districts.  
 The veteran lawmaker indi-  
 cated that he would probably  
 write to Albany in a few days  
 to ask if there are any definite  
 plans for the superhighway.  
 Roy D. Simmons, president of  
 the Common Council said, "I'm  
 definitely opposed to such a  
 highway plan. It defaces the ap-  
 pearance of the city. We have  
 enough elevated structures now."  
 Simmons said that other coun-  
 cil members to whom he has  
 talked about the subject are also  
 opposed to the elevated highway.  
 He said he doubted if the state  
 would or could jam an elevated  
 highway plan down the throats  
 of Syracusans.  
 He also emphasized that state  
 officials have not as yet briefed  
 the Council—a new one this year  
 —on plans for the highway.

Simmons said that based on  
 the original plans the city went  
 ahead and expended money on  
 an addition to the Croton-Mont-  
 gomery School. In addition, the  
 City Planning Commission has  
 approved plans for construction  
 of an addition to the New York  
 Telephone Co. main buildings at  
 S. State and E. Fayette Sts.  
 Thus any unusual changes for  
 the original plans would prove  
 very costly.  
 Carl H. Maar, president of the  
 Chamber of Commerce, speaking  
 for himself only, said that a  
 highway at grade would prove  
 best. He pointed out that the  
 downtown district already is re-  
 stricted in growth to the west  
 because of elevated railroad  
 tracks. In fact these elevated  
 tracks hem in the business dis-  
 trict on three sides.  
 "We don't want another  
 Chinese Wall," Maar said.

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## Woman, 62, Attack Victim

A 62-year-old woman was at-  
 tacked in the hallway of her  
 home early yesterday morning,  
 but managed to fight off her as-  
 sailant who fled when she  
 threatened to call police.  
 Patrolman Earl Hennessey said  
 Catherine O'Dell, of 613 Tully  
 St., told him the man first spoke  
 to her when she passed him on  
 the street about 1 a.m. and then  
 followed her to her home where  
 he attacked her.  
 She said the man grabbed her  
 as she was unlocking the door  
 and pushed her to the steps,  
 but she managed to fight him  
 off and ran into the house where  
 she called for her sister to help.  
 The sister, Mrs. Grace Dittma,  
 threatened to call police. The in-

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## Elevation Blight Issue

# Governor Harriman Can Stop It

SYRACUSE can well ask the co-operation of Governor Harriman in protecting the interests of Syracuse.

He will certainly not approve, permit or condone any action or project that would hurt the city.

He certainly would never agree to an elevated highway that would bisect a large area Syracuse has set aside for urban renewal at a high level.

Yet the State Department of Public Works under his jurisdiction has strongly indicated that it prefers elevation of the S. Townsend St. arterial highway, south from James St., to any other course.

THE GOVERNOR will agree, we are certain, that elevation along this route would deal a deadly blow to Syracuse plans for restoring and beautifying the city.

Just as bad, it would wreck plans of the city to improve the approach to the State Medical Center and hospitals by building a wide, landscaped avenue to it from the downtown area.

This drive, or mall, could prove to be the heart of the restoration program by providing space for civic and cultural buildings, with adjacent off-street parking lots. Its charm and utility would be the center of a large section of the city devoted to office and service buildings, apartments and modern stores.

The widened street would assure quick and convenient access to it, as well as to the Medical Center, Syracuse University and the whole eastern residential area.

IT REQUIRES little exercise of the imagination to realize what endless damage would be done to a worthwhile and forward-looking plan like this by an offensive Chinese Wall shutting off the section from the city.

By shutting off light and air, by depressing property values and by their ugliness, these gruesome barriers cause and spread blight.

Syracuse does not want any more Chinese Walls. They are deadly to harmonious and attractive civic development.

The city has a wonderful opportunity to make a double-barreled success of its planning for the near east side, cleaning out its blighted housing and then developing it into a place of beauty and much greater usefulness.

IN THE LAST few years, governors of the state have supported strongly measures to maintain the scenic charm and value of New York.

The Department of Public Works when building or relocating highways along streams of the state is required to consult with conservation officials to make sure fishing values will not be destroyed.

They are called upon to consult with the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets when buying rights of way through good farm land to make sure that sound farming values are not destroyed.

Governor Harriman took a direct and personal interest in the case of a farmer in the southern tier who believes his rights had been abused.

The issue in Syracuse is far greater in importance because the future of the whole city is involved.

ELEVATION OF the big expressway along S. Townsend St. would be a calamitous blow to the city, making a shambles of its plans for getting rid of slums and restoring it so successfully that we could take genuine pride in it.

Governor Harriman can and should make sure that Syracuse is not injured by any scheme for an elevated highway in Syracuse.

He has shown frequently that he has the interest of the state communities at heart. His interest in the Syracuse issue would be warmly welcomed; it would prevent a grave blow to the city and the future.



Drew Pearson

## Teacher

WASHINGTON—versed in the court recently surrendered, mitted them to deduct their income taxes from the expense of extra collection to improve their

## ★ ★ ★ New Litterbug Law

A bill signed by Governor Harriman

## ★ ★ ★ Battleship Humbled

The mighty battleship, once the pride