*The election eye*

# Congressmen back Hansen but voter reaction vital

Sun. July 24, 1983

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The fact that many members of Congress, including the leadership of both parties, are supporting him bolsters the contention of U.S. Rep. George Hansen, R-Idaho, that he has been singled out for prosecution on federal charges of filing false financial statements.

Rep. George Hansen

Also adding to the contention is the fact that some 160 members of Congress have filed amended financial disclosure statements since Hansen was named in federal indictments last March.

The congressmen's wife, Connie Hansen, revealed these developments in a talk and interview here only last Wednesday.

Hansen has never been particularly popular with the moderate wing of either the Democratic and Republican parties. The fact that many of them are now rallying to his defense indicates either they may have something to fear themselves, or the charges are indeed of little consequence.

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**Members of the House leadership of both parties have issued statements in support of Hansen in his present legal difficulties, said Mrs. Hansen.**

U.S. Rep. Thomas Foley, D-Wash., the third ranking Democrat as majority conference chairman, held a press conference recently and questioned whether Hansen deserved to be prosecuted for what he characterized as a "very technical violation of the law."

"On the surface," he was quoted as saying, "it seems to be very technical and very much a malum prohibitum." (This is a Latin term referring to minor infractions — which although technically violate the law — are rarely enforced.)

Noting that Hansen faces a felony charge, Foley said the allegations against the Idaho legislator "do not seem as substantial as an action of this character would require."

**Foley's apparent intention was to minimize the seriousness of the allegations. Perhaps he touched on the real problem — that he and other members of Congress don't see anything wrong about violating the ethics standards set for themselves in 1978.**

Hansen is accused of not reporting a $61,503 loan he and his wife, Connie, received from Texas billionaire Nelson Bunker Hunt; a $87,475 profit on silver futures bought and sold by Mrs. Hansen on advice from a Hunt associate; a $50,000 Hunt-guaranteed loan from a Dallas bank to Mrs. Hansen and $135,000 in loans received from three Virginia residents.

Hansen said he reported the financial disclosures required to the House Ethics Committee. He and Mrs. Hansen said Mrs. Hansen's financial dealings are separate as specified by a legal property separation agreement drafted in 1976.

In the meeting here both Mrs. Hansen and State Republican Chairman Dennis M. Olson made it clear that the deputy attorney general prosecuting the case, A. Lowell Jensen, may have other motives.

They brand him as a Democrat from Alameda County, Calif., and say that he was the losing attorney in attempting to prosecute Idaho farmers for alleged violations in transporting illegal Mexican aliens for farm work some two years ago.

Sen. Steve Symms jumped into the fray to hold up the Senate confirmation of Jensen, explaining he had done so to get more input in the matter.

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**Hansen's most serious problem is not the pending federal case itself — it's the reaction of east Idaho voters to his constant tangle with federal authorities the past eight years and heavy personal debts.**

His opponents say his borrowing sums reported to be upwards of $300,000 — something Hansen has not ever denied — and constant brushes with federal officials indicate something is wrong. His supporters say much of this stems from reprisals against his vigorous efforts to protect the little man from power-hungry federal agencies.

Past election records show the hard realities: There is a crucial 1 to 7 percent of the independent swing voters and how they feel will determine whether Hansen will continue to serve the Idaho Second District.

**In the final analysis, much of Hansen's fate will depend on the political ramifications of his pending federal case, his debts and his jousts with some federal agencies.**

## *Neighboring governors*

**IDAHO GOV. John V. Evans and Utah Gov. Scott Matheson will be attending the National Governors Association Convention at Portland, Maine, July 31-Aug. 2. Evans is chairman of the nuclear subcommittee and plans to outline policies for storage of high level radioactive waste and energency response planning while Matheson is the national chairman. (Post-Register/Ben J. Plastino).**

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## Evans will attend governors meeting

Gov. John V. Evans will leave Saturday for Portland, Maine, to attend the National Governor's Conference the following three days.

He will be accompanied by Jean Tiera, press secretary; Pat Costello, legal counsel and senior assistant; and Barbara Swaczy, assistant for health, welfare and education.

Evans is chairman of the conference nuclear subcommittee.

He plans to submit proposals on high level radioactive waste storage and emergency response planning.

Utah Gov. Scott Matheson is the conference chairman

The conference theme is "Governors and the New Economic Challenges."

Evans' subcommittee is under the Committee on Energy and Environment chaired by West Virginia Gov. Jay Rockefeller which will discuss state energy policies as a key to eco-