



Thinking it over

BOISE — WILLIAM F. WHITTOM, Rupert mayor and Idaho Farm Bureau Federation information director, was at Boise recently and is shown here seated in the Senate minority leader office to check on to his support for a possible 2nd District Congress race and also to see what can be done about solving the Washington Public Power System nuclear power problems.

Post-Register/Ben J. Plastino

Whittom still eyes Congress race *Sun Feb 28 1982*

BY BEN J. PLASTINO
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BOISE — William F. "Bill" Whittom, Rupert mayor and Idaho Farm Bureau public information director, was at the Statehouse much of last week for two primary reasons: to discuss whether he still might run for Congress and what the cities can do about Northwest nuclear power.

Whittom, who describes himself as a conservative Democrat, said he has received a number of letters and telephone calls from leaders of both parties to enter the contest against the incumbent Republican, George V. Hansen.

Whittom earlier indicated some interest, then later all but closed the door to a possible entry.

Now it appears he is back on square one and is giving the race prospects a second thought.

Whittom conferred with Democratic leaders at the Statehouse, Senate Minority Leader Ron Twilegar, Boise; Assistant Minority Leader Kermit Kiebert, Hope; Gov. John V. Evans

and many other influential legislators and politicians.

Money problem

"Money is a problem and I don't feel with the present depressed cattle prices I'm in a position to personally finance a campaign at this time," he said.

At the same time, he has indicated if someone came to him and gave assurance for adequate money support he could be persuaded.

Whittom said there are many leaders of both parties who are interested in seeing Hansen replaced, feeling that he has been largely ineffective in Congress and is doing more damage than good for Idaho because of lack of support from his colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats.

Whittom, only 38, added he has had considerable public exposure over television and other news media in his discussion on farm and stock problems, including serving as the farm spokesman in the Terretton rabbit drives.

Can wait

He pointed out he can wait before testing the political waters in future years.

Right now, however, he is even more interested in doing something about the proposed mothballing of the two nuclear plants of the Washington Public Power System.

Whittom, member of the Association of Idaho Cities legislative committee, was at the Legislature to discuss drafting a resolution to authorize the Legislative Council to launch an investigation leading up to and including actions centering on growth, financing, forecasting, construction and termination of the WPPS plants 4 and 5.

He also is interested in having a legislative memorial sent to Congress asking the federal government to get involved in a fact-finding mission on why utilities "were forced to buy a dead horse."