



Battle to Reduce Special Funds Of State May Lead to Fireworks

By VINCENT THOMAS Assemblyman, 68th District Some colorful fireworks will probably be set off during our 1961 session by proposals to eliminate the many "special funds" which have been set up in our state fiscal operations. Use of such funds to control expenditures from certain rev-enues has been increasing, though the practice has been criticized by many. expenditures from certain rev-enues has been increasing, though the practice has been criticized by many. Recently the Assembly ways and means committee held a hearing for the brave purpose of abolishing some of these special funds, and diverting their revenues to the general fund. The committee was re-minded that about two-thirds

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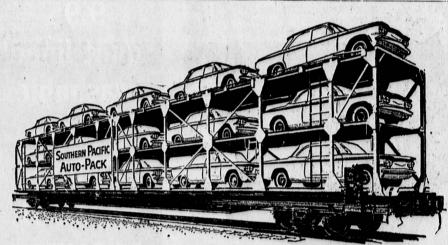
THE BEACHES and parks fund, which is derived from the State's royalties on oil and gas leases, was picked as the committee's first target. Much evidence was presented to demonstrate that the beaches minded that about two-thirds of the state budget, which may approximate \$2.7 billion for the and parks program can and should be financed through the general fund. Also, the parks division is known to favor the next fiscal year, is in special funds or allocations such as those for welfare and education which the Legislature cannot change.

When the subject of profes-When the subject of proces-sional license fees came up for discussion, one Legislator ob-served that such fees should be used to improve the various professions. The group was in-formed that the purpose of licensing is primarily to protect the public against incompetents or charlatans. JUST HOW much money is JUST HOW much money is in these various funds was never accurately established, but the concensus seemed to be that at least two or three hun-dreds of million dollars are involved. Some of the funds, like those for the licensing of certain prefactions

like those for the licensing of certain professions, have only a few thousands of dollars in reserve. Others, like the high-way fund, have many millions. As the hearing progressed it became very apparent that the task of eliminating special funds would be no easy one. The committee's own consult-ant started out boldly enough by suggesting that all highway revonues and fish and game money be put in the general fund. THE FAIRS and expositions fund, into which goes the State's revenues from horse racing, was also reviewed at length. From the discussion, it length. From the discussion, it was apparent this will be one of the last special funds to be attacked by the committee. The group plans to investigate the possibility of merging into the general fund most of the special funds around which not so much controversy will be so much controversy will be

fund. AT THE PRESENT, our State Constitution provides that high-way money can be used only for highway needs, and fish and game revenues only for the gander. It was announced the group has in mind conservation and propagation, so it would require at least two constitutional amendments to change the situation. The consultant was closely questioned by committee mem-

raised



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