

Auditor Mary Hull Caballero

Promoting open and accountable government

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J.E. Bennett Recall Effort

1952 Commissioner J. E. Bennett

Recall Attempt Succeeded (88,558 Yes votes 63,846 No Votes)

Reasons for demanding recall (as printed on ballot):

From his position as a member of the City Council he has been discourteous, abusive, uncouth, insulting, with personal, scandalous attacks, insults, riddicule and abuse toward respectable citizens of the City of Portland attempting to conduct city affairs; he has expressed personal prejudice and hatred for certain of our law-abiding citizens and certain businesses lawfully authorized by Oregon law, and endeavored by unfair and unlawful means to destroy them; he has accused the Courts of Oregon of being corrupt and their officers as contemptible and ridiculous; he has caused Portland to be disliked and unpopular with the citizens of the rest of the State by vicious, personal attacks upon the law-making and law-enforcing officers, including the Governor, there-by injuring Portland's business goodwill and its position of leadership and influence in the State; he has directed ridicule and contempt against the officers of the State and County and has maligned his fellow officers of the City and threatened and attempted to oust them from office; he has attempted to supplant law by his own personal whims.

Commissioner J.E. Bennett's justification of his course in office (as printed on ballot):

Portland's City Council is a legislative body. It would be unnatural and dangerous to have all Commissioners of one mind or to deny them or the public the right of free speech. Hasty legislation is dangerous. I have opposed it. Honesty of purpose, independence of judgement, and openly conducted City business are the safeguards against corruption. It is the duty of government to protect the interests of the people as a whole. That is the aim of democracy.

It follows that when a government performs this duty, some groups will lose what they consider rights, but which are in fact illegal or detrimental to the general welfare. This has happened to some local groups, and they are exceedingly angry. Beware of propoganda and name-calling when only one side of the story is told. Their charges against me are untrue and meant to mislead honest persons.

I have practiced the open-door policy. My departments of city government have been efficiently and economically operated. I have respected my oath of office, followed the dictates of my conscience, and fought for what appeared to me to be in the best interests of the public. I will continue to do so.
