

Legalized Gambling Talks To Crusader

By John Gates, Staff Writer

(Ed. Note: This is the first of a series of "Spotlight" articles by John Gates, Crusader staffwriter, in which Mr. Gates will salute various civic, business, social and political leaders in our community.)

This week's 'Spotlight' is on Meyer (Mike) Segal, local business Executive and former President of The Ventnor City Council.

Mr. Segal is currently heading a committee to bring legalized gambling to Atlantic County. If such a movement should become successful, it could quite possibly, in at least some small way, affect the lives and conditions of many county residents.

Recently, The Crusader called on Mr. Segal at his home:

CRUSADER: Why do you feel that there is a need for legalized gambling in Atlantic County?

SEGAL: The rising costs of maintaining municipal government for a resort such as Atlantic County has had a marked effect on taxes, which are now at an all time high, and will continue to rise unless a new source of revenue is found. I and a rapidly growing number of others throughout the State feel that legalized gambling is the best possible solution.

CRUSADER: What would you say is the cause of Atlantic City's decline as a major resort?

SEGAL: Records and receipts



Meyer Segal

show that the resort is losing more than 50% of potential trade to Puerto Rico, Las Vegas and the Bahamas, as well as other world resorts that offer year-round amusements and entertainment. Affluent individuals from nearby areas, such as Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, etc., travel thousands of miles to get the type of entertainment, which is not available in Atlantic City.

CRUSADER: How would legalized gambling affect the local working class?

SEGAL: There is no doubt in my mind that we would go from a three month to a twelve month economy the first year. Certain jobs, such as hotel, restaurant, and related businesses, including the boardwalk, would be able to operate on a 12-month, year-round, full-time basis; thereby boosting the economy for the average working man and woman.

CRUSADER: A question has arisen that legalized gambling might also bring an unsavory element to the populace.

SEGAL: I believe the exact opposite would result. Anything that is legal and controlled by responsible officials serves only as a deterrent to unsavory or corrupt persons who operate best where there is no control over such things as gambling. A typical example is Las Vegas, which has the lowest crime rate in the Country.

CRUSADER: What do you feel your chances of success are?

SEGAL: I feel that there is every reason to believe that, in the not too distant future legalized gambling in Atlantic County will be a reality. We have, in the first months, received letters and calls of support from thousands of miles away. Anyone interested in offering their support should notify their local commissioner or legislator.