

California HOMEOWNER

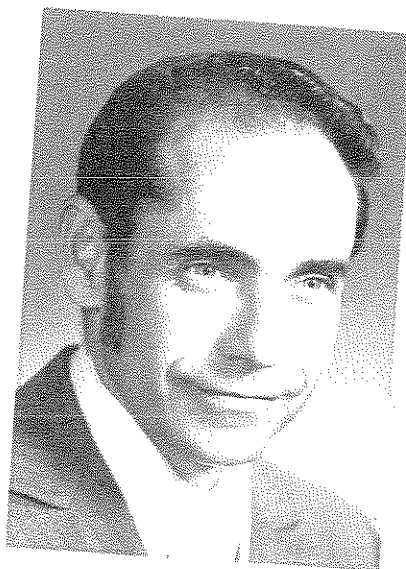
March, 1972

twenty five cents

.....
THE PEOPLE HAVE THEIR SAY
.....

People Petition - Supervisors Listen

by Frank Hughes



*Lou Conde, President
Taxpayers Concerned*

.....
**READ HOW A SAN DIEGO COUNTY TAXPAYERS GROUP FOUGHT
THE SUPERVISORS' PAY RAISE AND WON**
.....

In the early '60's Time Magazine labeled San Diego a bust town. Not long before that it was designated as an All American City by an agency of the Federal Government. In 1970, newspapers throughout the country carried stories on the eight public officials who were indicted by the County Grand Jury in a scandal regarding taxi-cab fare hikes in the city. Most recently, Life Magazine in their March 24, 1972 issue charged that the Nixon Administration seriously tampered with justice in the City of

San Diego.

SUPERVISORS \$9,000 PAY RAISE

With all of the publicity given San Diego in recent years, the most activity created locally has been the \$9,000 pay raise the County Supervisors voted themselves on February 1, 1972. They increased their \$16,000 per year salary to \$25,000, plus cost of living increases over a four year period. The result of that action was

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CALIFORNIA HOMEOWNER MAGAZINE

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Consent to republish any article, with credit, is hereby given.

Ralph Nader

on PROPERTY TAXES

Ralph Nader is a man who usually generates a violent reaction - both pro and con - in all of his activities. CALIFORNIA HOMEOWNER salutes many of his objectives.

The following letter is timely, and for the most part is a keen analysis of the property tax. We disagree with it however, in two areas:

1. It has been our observation that California corporations who manufacture, transport, sell, or otherwise contribute directly to the creation of products (not considering land as a product), suffer as much from bad assessment practices as do homeowners.
2. We do not agree that local control should be surrendered to the state or federal hierarchy. County assessors have all the power needed to do the job - if they genuinely want to do it.

The Honorable Edmund S. Muskie
Chairman
Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations
U. S. Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Muskie:

It has been over one year since you publicly announced that your subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations would hold extensive hearings on the administration and impact of the local property tax. Since your announcement the need for such hearings has become increasingly more urgent. Exposures of illegality and abuse in the administration of the property tax have accelerated, and the magnitude of the tax burden falling as a result on unfavored taxpayers appears even greater than it did before. Local governments face

financial breakdown, and school systems throughout the country are crippled or paralyzed because voters have refused to approve increases in property taxes. Some members of Congress and significant segments of the public have been patiently, and hopefully awaiting your Subcommittee's inquiry, foregoing other possible lines of action. Yet the silence and inaction from your offices seem to have increased in proportion to these alarming disclosures.

POWERFUL INTERESTS BEING FAVORED

The extent to which powerful corporate and local interests have exacted favored treatment from weak property-tax administration, shifting the tax burden regressively and intensifying the outcry for federal revenue assistance, would alone compel Congressional investi-

Neither sales taxes nor the Federal income tax are models of progressivity and equity. And it is clear that one very desirable feature of the property tax is that it begins to plug some major loopholes in the Federal income tax laws, and in the state sales tax laws. For example the property tax makes up, in part, for the 'Reagan Effect'---the astounding phenomenon of exceedingly wealthy citizens with no taxable income. If these tax-return paupers own non-exempt property they at least under a property tax contribute something to the society which protects and enhances their wealth. A well-administered property tax reaches vast concentrations of wealth which the federal income tax touches lightly if at all, such as oil, gas, and other minerals, farming and real estate.

Ralph Nader

gation. On top of the shocking abuses recounted to you last year, such corporate property-tax escapades as the following have surfaced in past months:

1. A very conservative estimate by a former Gary, Indiana city finance advisor reported in the Wall Street Journal (April 5th, 1971), puts the underassessment of U. S. Steel's installation there at \$110 million. The township assessor Mr. Tom Fadell told the Journal that U. S. Steel in effect presents its own tax bill; it refuses to provide information on its capital investments and depreciation schedules, and it even refuses to take out city building permits for fear of revealing what its property is really worth. As a result, Gary, whose schools faced a nine-million dollar deficit this year, loses several millions of dollars in property tax revenues annually, and suffers as well severe constrictions on its bonding capacity.
2. Likewise in Chicago, U. S. Steel and fellow steel producers are illegally escaping millions of dollars in property taxes each year. A citizens group there, Citizens Against Pollution (CAP) has estimated the undertaxation of U. S. Steel at \$16.4 million, and the combined undertaxation of three other steel companies at \$11 million more. CAP also estimated that First National Bank of Chicago is paying only 56% of the property taxes it owes to the people of Cook County. The Chicago schools already confront a \$22.8 million deficit for this year, and the projected budget deficit for 1972 is 125.7 million dollars counting frozen salary increases.
3. The state of Maine has been losing between one-half and one million dollars in badly needed revenues each year through the underassessment of its timberlands. The state recently paid an average of \$125 per acre to acquire timberlands that had been assessed at only \$14 per acre. Moreover, the same firm the state hires to assess this timberland also works under private contract for the timber companies themselves.
4. In Augusta Georgia, a self-appointed industry-boosting Committee of One-hundred contrived a special and illegal tax rate for new industry that was only 12 and 1/2% of the rate borne by others. Soon old Augusta firms as well as new were lining

up for this property tax dole, eroding the tax base and thrusting a still greater burden upon the tax-paying citizens of Augusta. A recent taxpayers' suit won a court order removing all these shelters, and the property tax assessments of thirty-two firms went up as much as 1100%, and there is no way to know how many analogous situations there are in cities and counties across the country.

5. Local governments in California are losing about one-quarter of a billion dollars in property taxes each year due to a state law supposed to relieve the pressure to develop prime agricultural and open space land but which in large measure has benefitted large corporate landholders, many of whom are holding vast acreages for speculation or future development. The ten largest beneficiaries hold over one fifth of the land protected by this law, and, underscoring their un-needy character, many of these enterprises are high on the list of federal crop-subsidy recipients. For example, the J. G. Boswell Co., which receives a \$298,300 property tax subsidy (fourth largest) under California's "open space" law, garners as well the single largest federal crop subsidy-----\$4,400,000.
6. The underassessment and undertaxation of mineral land, rights, and mining equipment throughout Appalachia continues to be among the most deplorable wrongdoings in American tax history. Just recently citizens in Tennessee's five largest coal producing counties filed a complaint with the State Board of Equalization charging that the state and local assessors have failed to tax the vast coal deposits in these counties, contrary to state law and to the Tennessee and United States Constitutions. The counties had lost still more in property tax revenues, these citizens charged, by assessing nominally or not at all the millions of dollars worth of mining equipment located within them. The citizens estimated the tax loss to the five counties at a minimum of \$350,000 for 1970 alone.

EXAMPLES NOT UNIQUE

Such cases are hardly unique, but merely suggest the magnitude of inequality and illegality which has corroded the integrity of the property tax as administered and has crippled its ability to generate sorely-needed revenues throughout the United States.

MISUSE AND ABUSE

The divergence between property-tax law and practice is especially grim in that the most essential of local government services, such as education and health-care, depend directly upon this revenue source. The fiscal crisis of the public schools stems in large part from the misuse and abuse of the property tax. Last September the National Educational Association surveyed the nation's 103 largest city school districts; 41 out of 63 responding reported they were in financial difficulty. Key programs are being eliminated, and some schools have even closed, especially in the cities which need them most. In Gary, the teachers worked for two weeks without pay, and the Chicago schools forestalled a twelve day closing until June only by borrowing 22.8 million dollars against next year's budget. In many instances the public has voted down bond issues and tax-rate increases that would have kept the schools open, or would have prevented the deep cut-backs, rather than endure further and more inequitable property tax administration.

Due to the school finance costs and for other reasons increasing federal aid to state and local governments seems slated for the years ahead. Leaders of both parties have proposed revenue-sharing schemes which would disperse as much as five billion federal dollars to these units. Yet Congress risks throwing good money after bad and subsidizing unfair and even corrupt local practices, if it does not first look carefully at the tax structures and actualities of these potential recipients, and especially at the property tax.

PROPERTY TAX NEEDS FAIR REVIEW

Most alarming are suggestions beginning to

surface from the Nixon Administration that it may propose a national sales tax, or incentives for increased reliance on 'piggy-backed' state income taxes, under the pretext of property tax relief. The administration is building its case on premises, assumptions and bald assertions which your subcommittee ought already to have probed; and because Congress may be caught unprepared, there is a likelihood that spurious and even deceptive arguments will find support. For example, Deputy Director Mr. Caspar W. Weinberger of the Office of Management and Budget stated recently before the Commonwealth Club of California that the property tax, among other things, is "highly regressive" and that it "takes a larger share of a poor man's income than of someone far better off." The administration's new-found solicitude for the wage-earner, and its endorsement of progressive taxation, deserve applause; but its professed concern that a property tax by its very nature burdens the low and moderate income taxpayer more than the rich begs close attention.

UNIFORM APPLICATION NEEDED

For instance, Mr. Weinberger made no attempt to distinguish the effects of the property tax as now applied from those that would ensue from a competent and truly uniform application with equitable exemptions and deductions. The underassessment of large commercial, industrial, and mineral properties, casting unfair burdens upon taxpayers of lesser means, is just one way the current practice of the property tax, as opposed to basic concept, inflicts regressivity. Promiscuous exemptions, loophole-creating classifications, and excessive depreciation schedules are others. Perhaps the most blatant rigging of the property tax to induce regressivity is the administration of the tax through over 80,000 balkanized local units. Balkanization results in generally weak administration and susceptibility to political pressure and influence; but more specifically it subjects each local unit to the tax blackmail practiced openly by large commercial and industrial firms, which exact legal and illegal property tax concessions by threatening to move to another jurisdiction. Further, a balkanized tax allows

wealthy taxpayers, business and non-business, to ensconce themselves into tax 'enclaves' in which, because of the concentration of wealth and relatively low level of public expenditure, the tax rate can be extremely low. At the same time the cities and communities from which these taxpayers have insulated themselves are left with little wealth, high expenditures, and thus the need to levy excessive rates. But it is the local nature of the property tax as now applied, and not the property-tax as such, which brings this result. An income tax could have similar effects if applied on a local basis.

TAX ALTERNATIVES QUESTIONABLE

Contrary to the blithe assertions starting to come from the administration, it is not at all clear that a national sales tax, or a 'piggy-backed' state income tax, would result in more tax relief for the low and middle income taxpayer, and in a fairer sharing of tax burdens, than would a well-administered, state-wide property tax. Neither sales taxes nor the Federal income tax are models of progressivity and equity. And it is clear that one very desirable feature of the property tax is that it begins to plug some major loopholes in the Federal income tax laws, and in the state sales tax laws. For example the property tax makes up, in part, for the 'Reagan Effect' --- the astounding phenomenon of exceedingly wealthy citizens with no taxable income. If these tax-return paupers own non-exempt property they at least under a property tax contribute something to the society which protects and enhances their wealth. A well-administered property tax reaches vast concentrations of wealth which the federal income tax touches lightly if at all, such as oil, gas, and other minerals, farming and real estate. And the property tax tends to compensate for such sophisticated treasury raids as accelerated depreciation, by taxing the fair market value of capital goods and not the fiction the internal revenue laws allow.

CONSUMER TAX IS REGRESSIVE

It repeatedly has been reported that the Nixon Administration will soon propose a national

sales tax -- technically styled a 'value-added' tax, but more accurately called a 'consumer tax' -- to make up for the over seven and one half billion dollar annual reduction in corporate taxes, averaged over the next ten years, embodied in the administration's Revenue Act of 1971. Reportedly, the administration plans to tie the consumer tax in some way to disincentives for states and localities to employ property taxes. The consumer tax is regressive in impact and complicated to administer. Indeed, some of the administrative complexities, especially the difficulties of insuring compliance from large corporate taxpayers, are hardly an improvement on the alleged administrative defects of the property tax which the administration professes to desire to see corrected.

PUBLIC IS SUSCEPTIBLE

This is not necessarily to espouse the property tax, but to show the necessity of testing any glib assertions about it. The public wishes to be rid of the property tax as now administered, and is susceptible to false promises of relief. It should be of paramount concern to one in your position to expose the falsity of these promises and assertions and effectively to represent the long neglected interests of consumers and small taxpayers. Unless Congress, through your subcommittee, looks carefully now at the potential equity and impact of the property tax, and at its interaction with other taxes, the small taxpayers and consumers of the country may find themselves worse off than they were before, with tax subsidies for the rich merely transferred to the less visible federal level under the false pretense of property tax relief for low and middle-income citizens.

Coming in this context, the decision of the California Supreme Court in *Serrano v. Priest* has clearly mandated a prompt and thorough nation-wide inquiry into the practice, validity, and potentiality of the property tax as a means of raising public revenues. Contrary to widespread belief, the *Serrano* decision expressed no judicial view whatsoever about the property tax per se; rather it declared unconstitutional any method of financing public edu-

cation, property-tax or otherwise, that makes the amount of dollars available for any particular child a function of local wealth. Thus a regional or state-wide property tax remains legally a very viable alternative. Federal courts in Texas and Minnesota have already reached similar holdings and unless the Supreme Court overturns these decisions, virtually every state may have to alter in some way its means of paying for public education, and possibly for other essential governmental services as well. The country is looking for the information, guidance, and leadership in this area of tax policy which only a full Congressional investigation can provide.

LEADERSHIP NEEDED NOW

It was an act of leadership and foresight for you to have recognized the imperative of such an investigation over one year ago, and to have announced your intention to hold extensive public hearings. But because of the inexplicable delay between your promise and performance, the crisis has boiled and events may bypass your subcommittee and hence, Congress without the enlightenment which can be accorded these developments. This outcome would represent an abdication not only of your subcommittee's jurisdiction and duty, but also of an opportunity to introduce integrity and equity into the whole structure of state and local financing and thereby to revivify the entire federal system. In view of these pressing problems so long documented by the advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, of which you are a member, and in view of the several and somewhat specious proposals for federal interventions and remedies, the time could not more clearly demand the exercise of your Senate Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations' mandate to study 'intergovernmental relationships between the United States and municipalities' and 'the operations of Government activities at all levels with a view to determining its economy and efficiency,' as they relate to the property tax.

Sincerely,

Ralph Nader

Impeding Progress

by JOHN NAGY

One of the major problems which has perennially plagued business and industry is the acquisition of usable and desirable real estate to invest in and from which to conduct their affairs.

This article is a clear cut example of how our present tax structure does not put pressure on under-developed property. Therefore it creates no incentive to use or sell and contributes to the ever growing slums in the core areas.

If proper taxes were levied against the land value the owner of a run-down structure like the Pravda Building on such valuable land would be either improving it himself or looking for a buyer who would more properly use the site.

In the middle of the block, between 45th and 46th Streets, on the Avenue of the Americas in New York City, reposes a dusty, ancient, five story building. Apparently the owner feels that it sits on hallowed ground because fifteen months ago he reportedly refused \$1,350,000 for the property knowing the potential buyer planned to demolish the building.

Tishman Realty and Construction Co. put together 26 parcels, except for one, to obtain a square block, with plans to erect a 44-story skyscraper on the site.

For two years the Tishman Co. negotiated with Barnard and Alfred Pravda, the brothers who owned the property, and then gave up. During these negotiations, according to Tishman, offers and counter-offers were made, tentatively agreed to, and then revoked. Property exchanges and combinations were proposed during endless discussions, phone calls and meetings. Negotiations came to an end with an all night session, aptly enough on Halloween of 1969.

Barnard Pravda now claims that the Tishman interests were the ones who did not bargain in good faith. Says the 50 year old investor, "I'm willing to negotiate."

Thus a 100-million dollar development is compromised by one minor but key piece of land which apparently is just not available.

According to an article in the NEW YORK TIMES, Mr. Pravda was strangely reticent to go on record as to what was offered in terms of money, including the \$1,350,000 figure reported by Tishman. He doesn't admit to having blown a golden opportunity since he claims that the negotiations never got beyond preliminary stages anyway.

Mr. Pravda is an investor in jewelry, clothing, and the securities business. He owns several buildings in Manhattan, and has been a real estate investor for 20 years.

According to Henry J. Kassis, the Tishman



"The New York Times"

Sitting forlornly in the path of progress, the Pravda Building will seem like a relic out of the past in the midst of a large, modern skyscraper.

real estate broker, this is a chronological account of the negotiations:

AUGUST, 1967

Mr. Kassis approached Bernard Pravda with an offer to buy the property. Mr. Pravda asked \$170,000 which was accepted. Later, Pravda cancelled the agreement saying he had decided to rent the ground floor to a restaurant.

OCTOBER, 1967

Pravda's asking price had increased to \$225,000. The increase was, he claimed, to cover the cost of remodeling for the restaurant.

NOVEMBER, 1967

The \$225,000 price was accepted subject to leaseholds on the property.

Again, Mr. Pravda upped the price to \$386,000, and co-incidentally a person called from Florida claiming he was the restaurant leaseholder and asked \$125,000 for his lease. There were sincere doubts among the Tishman faction that this "leaseholder" was genuine. A short time later the asking price rose to \$450,000 for the property with the \$125,000 lease price layer-caked on top.

JUNE, 1968

Mr. Kassis offered \$450,000 for the package, but Mr. Pravda said that another party had offered \$350,000 just for the building. Later in June Kassis offered \$350,000 for the property and the Tishmans would take their chances on buying up the restaurant lease after they acquired title. On top of this, Tishman would make an exchange --tax-free-- for one of the buildings they owned, or for one of Mr. Pravda's choice that they would buy

for him. Mr. Kassis was under the impression that this offer was acceptable.

JULY, 1968

A phone call to the Pravda attorneys revealed that the agreement was to be drawn up at \$400,000 -- not \$350,000.

AUGUST, 1968

The price rose to \$450,000 plus one year's free rent for a Pravda operated clothing store in the new building. This offer was accepted by Kassis.

SEPTEMBER, 1968

The price was now \$505,000.

OCTOBER, 1968

A demand for \$1,000,000 was made, although Pravda indicated he might be willing to accept \$770,000.

MARCH, 1969

Mr. Kassis offered two office buildings which his clients had recently acquired for \$700,000 plus \$70,000 cash. Pravda tentatively accepted, then three days later asked for \$150,000 cash to cover an \$80,000 mortgage on the building. This was accepted, but negotiations dragged until:

SEPTEMBER, 1969

In a telephone conversation Mr. Pravda asked for \$1,250,000. He claimed he knew from the start who was behind the offers, but Kassis suspected he found out just prior to this latest demand.

OCTOBER 31st, 1969

After assurances by Mr. Pravda that he was ready to deal, Kassis and Pravda had lunch where Pravda asked \$1,340,000 with the buyer paying the brokerage fee. The Tishmans accepted.

At 6:00 p.m. that evening the principals and

their attorneys met in the Tishman offices. A contract had been drawn for \$1,340,000 plus \$9,000 for fees and expenses.

Mr. Pravda then stated that he wanted a guarantee that none of the new building would be on the property he was selling. Otherwise, he wanted an extra \$500,000. Since the planned structure already met this requirement the buyers lawyers agreed. Mr. Pravda then wanted the extra \$500,000 even if they only made a plaza out of his property. That straw broke the camels back. The Tishman attorneys said no, and at 5:30 the next morning the meeting broke up.

Two days later the Tishmans received the first signed contract from Mr. Pravda. It was for \$2,066,000. It went back to Mr. Pravda ---unsigned.

Since that time there have been sporadic offers at lower levels, and various phone calls offering help to get the two sides together again.

Mr. Pravda brought suit against the Tishmans to make them protect his building against the effects of excavating and blasting adjacent to it. This the Tishman's had already begun doing.

After a morning in court both sides went to lunch and Mr. Pravda intimated he would settle for \$1,000,000, and wanted to be friends. For Mr. Pravda, however, time has apparently run out. Tishman's Architects have revised the plans of the complex to exclude the Pravda property and now their standing offer is just what they claim he paid for it, \$140,000 ----period!

As previously stated, during all this time Mr. Pravda has been strangely silent about the negotiations, prices offered, or his goals, except to discount most of the Tishman offers as "frivolous". He did say "Its just another piece of property. It might be strategically located---but thats another story."

As far as STATEWIDE HOMEOWNERS is concerned, that is the story! FND

THEY CAME in PEACE

A BOOK REVIEW by Lloyd Maxwell



Ann Watson

Ann Watson, remembering so well the complacency of the Austrians at the time when saboteurs were undermining the country, is amazed and alarmed because the Americans seem to be so apathetic toward government here.

Ann Watson is a native of Austria and emigrated from there after World War II. The material for her book is based on her actual experiences and knowledge as a citizen of a captive nation under enemy dictatorship.

She is currently teaching languages at the San Diego Community Colleges.

Written mainly in the form of a diary, depicting the experiences and observations of a teen-age Austrian girl during the occupation of Vienna by the Nazis and the Russians, this book is a chronicle of violence, duplicity and anti-social design by revolutionaries. The Austrian people, living in their detached "intellectual climate," going to church, to the theatre, enjoying music, strolling in the parks, and living the happy lives of free and independent citizens, were shocked into unbelieving surprise when the German army had crossed their frontier in March 1938. Suddenly the secret agents and saboteurs who had undermined the government were shrieking "Heil, Hitler! The old oppressive Austrian regime has resigned. The German army is here in peace to liberate the Austrians from a corrupt, do-nothing government. We bring better living conditions to the working man, full employment and peace to all citizens. We will build a better, stronger nation together. Unite! Join with us! Heil, Hitler!"

A few foresighted Austrians had seen the catastrophe coming and had warned that something must be done to stop the Nazi underground activity. Yet the indifferent populace did not listen, did not organize, did not prepare for defense. "Premiers and diplomats, professors and businessmen, journalists, labor leaders and politicians - some wittingly and some unwittingly - spread Hitler's poison....."

THANKS TO THE DIARY

Fortunately, the author, who was 16 years of age in 1938, had a record of day by day events - a complete and dependable diary. She remained in Austria all through World War II and for a few years afterward. "Her mother, caught assisting children of political exiles, was put in a concentration camp" by the Nazis, and was driven to insanity. Her father, a lawyer who had been an officer in

the Austrian army, was "drafted into the German army's 'Brigade of the Condemned.' Their home was commandeered, their possessions confiscated."

Friends provided shelter for the girl who was well on the way to a brilliant career in music. Although compelled by the Nazis to drop music and work in an army hospital, she graduated from the University of Vienna and the International School for Interpreters. After World War II ended the United States, England, France and Russia divided Vienna into four districts or zones with each of the four nations exercising jurisdiction over one zone. She happened to be in the Russian zone, where she found Russian rule to be intolerable, so she managed to escape to the American sector and applied for a job. Her speaking ability in English, German, French and Russian enabled her to become an official translator for the Criminal Investigation Department of the U. S. Forces.

Having lived for some six or seven years under Nazi domination and a few months under the Russians, she at last attained a status of personal freedom with the Americans, where she could think, talk, write, perform useful service and enjoy being alive. Later she married her boss, the chief agent of the department, and he brought her to the United States in 1949.

QUOTES FROM THE FOREWORD

"Today she cites documents and speeches by Soviet leaders outlining step by step the plan for conquering the world and bringing about a Communist final victory.

"She is appalled that, though many of these documents are publicly available, few Americans have bothered to read them.

"In 1916, (Premier Nikita) Khrushchev stated that the Soviet Union would aid revolutions

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arising from universities and other sectors of Western society," she said.

"The time is much nearer than many Americans think.

"Soviet Russia is spending three billion dollars a year on propaganda in the United States -- first, by making Americans look at their country in disgust and say 'I'm confused. I don't like what I see. This is a rotten country, we have to change it.' No one, of course, makes any suggestion on how to improve things. Well, I knew a Mr. Goebbels in Germany who did the same thing."

TEACHER AND AUTHOR IN U. S. A.

In the United States, Ann Watson became a teacher - beginning by teaching German for the San Diego Community Colleges. Her program expanded into lecturing, and her hearers began urging her to write a book.

Now she has written a book - one which deserves quickly to become a best seller. It is an attempt to show exactly what happened in Europe under the Nazis and the Communists. Many vital parts of it consist of excerpts from the diary. She says: "Through the eyes of a young and innocent girl, the heroic but hopeless struggle to survive is seen as the bits and pieces of a kaleidoscope. By the end of the book the reader has lived through months and years packed with human suffering; and the pages of history books become explicit and real."

THE STORY IN DETAIL

Here she begins the story in detail, starting with beautiful springtime in Vienna in 1937, everyone enjoying life and completely oblivious of what was happening in Germany, and it is the heroine, Liza von Feldegrube, doing the talking. "One political party in Austria, however, was united and extremely active. It was the national Socialist Party which operated in secret and was well financed by the German government. It was the goal and determination of this underground party to destroy Austria from within. In the spring of 1937, Nazi activities in Vienna

had reached a feverish pace."

Austria boasted of being a peaceful nation, having a treaty with Italy and with strong allies - France, Great Britain and the United States. Under such circumstances, what was there to fear?

The few persons who sensed danger and tried to sound a warning were laughed at, and were accused of seeing ghosts. So the undermining by secret agents progressed without opposition and catastrophe struck.

In February 1938 a friend had given to the heroine a thick diary "to write down all the events of my career as a concert pianist.... This first entry in my diary will be short because there is nothing interesting to write about, only school, tennis, an evening at the symphony.... So I shall put my diary away. Some day it will be read by many. Autobiographies of famous musicians are read by everyone."

Beginning on March 12, 1938, there was plenty to write about. The German army had arrived. The Austrian people were helpless; their government had deceived them, and it was too late to protest. The Austrian flag was taboo, many of the leading citizens were arrested, and the Gestapo was intimidating everybody.

Within a couple of months the schools had been reopened, but numbers of the old teachers were not there. The diary says:

MAY 5, 1938

"Our new teachers express nothing but contempt for our former way of life; they make our old way of life sound so trivial that I guess you have to wonder sometimes. But I do get sick of nothing but political slogans.

"One thing I don't like is the way our new teachers are always maligning our parents. They tell us that those parents who are opposed to the 'New Order' are not to be taken seriously, that they are enemies of the state and must be reported to the authorities. They say it is up to us, the young, to help

build a new and better world.

"Taking lecture notes is much simpler now. There is only one way to think. And so I am adjusting....as we all must do....Lots of the students like it though. They are joining the Hitler Youth Organizations by the hundreds. We all sing the new Nazi songs. We march in endless parades and listen to endless speeches by the Youth Leaders. It is no longer necessary to be home after dark or to tell our parents where we are going or what we are doing. We are 'free' now.

"Some parents do not permit their children to join the new youth organization or to participate in their activities, but I know lots of students who sneak out of the house after dark to take part in the fun. Johann reported his parents to the authorities, they were arrested and have disappeared. I think that is horrible, but Johann is mean and I never liked him anyway. Lena told us all yesterday about the terrible thing that happened to her brother in school. He had refused to take part in an outing and then a horde of boys began to throw stones at him until he was bleeding all over. They beat him up so badly that he was unconscious when Lena found him.

"I am so glad this is my last year in school. Next year I will go to the University and I am sure things will be different there."

SOVIET-NAZI PACT

"On August 23rd, 1939, A Soviet-Nazi pact was announced. Stalin smiled at Ribbentrop; Molotov assured Hitler of the strength of the blood ties between Germany and Russia; the Red army stands at the Polish border."

AUGUST 23, 1939

"I have not written very much because life has been very disappointing these last few months and I was too depressed. I practiced so hard all spring for the semi-annual recital that ends the school year, but the program was changed a few days before for a Jugend musical presentation...Professor Neuburger

was furious. Half of his pupils do not belong to the Youth Organization, so we were not allowed to participate. I did not feel so bad, because the program did not include any Austrian composers - only the popular songs of the German State. It was still unfair to change our recital. I still feel robbed of what I hold most dear.

"There is talk of war again. Poland is Hitler's next victim. I keep wondering when all of this will end.

"This evening my mother came home upset from a visit to Professor Edelstein's house. Mitzi was serving dinner, but mother interrupted her and told us with tears in her eyes, 'I tried to make Marianne understand. I told her that the GESTAPO is watching every Jewish family and that she, her husband and the children must leave Vienna immediately. I begged her to come to our office for directions. I pointed out the dangers they were in, every minute they remained in their home.' My father stared silently into space and said nothing.

" 'Marianne refused to understand,' Mother continued. 'With a sweeping gesture she pointed to the crystal chandeliers, the beautiful rugs, the walls lined with expensive books, all the tasteful and lovely things in that beautiful place and shook her head crying. You know what she told me? Marianne said: Professor Edelstein, my husband, is a scientist. He is special. The GESTAPO would not dare to harm him. We have friends in America, in France. They would find out and they would never permit it. How can we leave all this? This has been our home for generations. It is our children's home. We cannot leave Austria; our place is here.'"

DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER 1, 1939

"Professor Hugo Edelstein and his wife Marianne were both arrested at two o'clock this morning. Their children were also taken away....I am so afraid for my parents. With this new directive from Berlin about death to those who give aid to the Jews, my parents must stop helping people or they will be

arrested too. Almost every day one or two children walk into Father's office all in tears. Their parents told them to come to my Father for help in case something happens to them. Many times a Father or Mother or both are arrested, and there is no one to take care of the children. Sometimes the Nazis send the children to a home, but often they are left to their own fate. My parents and others gladly open their homes to as many children as possible. Who cares about being crowded or uncomfortable if an innocent child can be saved from hunger and misery.

Activities continued in similar vein for six more years. In May 1941 Liza's mother was arrested - taken from the family law office in mid-day and sent to a concentration camp. When Liza was told of this her "world looked hopelessly dark." A partner in the law firm primed her on what to do and say in the short time before the Gestapo would visit her. She was to go home immediately and destroy everything that might look suspicious, and her experience in burning papers in the fireplace was a real nightmare.

MAY 7, 1941

"They came to our apartment at two o'clock this morning. When the doorbell rang, I was awake in an instant. I opened the door without a moment's hesitation and turned on all the lights in the house.

" 'Liza von Feldesruhe?' a fat, heavy man in Party Uniform questioned. I nodded calmly.

" 'Your Mother has been arrested and charged with a number of crimes against the National-Socialist State,' his voice formally announced. 'We are ordered to search the apartment. All of this property now belongs to the German State, so you are ordered to leave these premises - immediately!'

"I waited silently while they searched everything from top to bottom. They made a terrible mess, throwing clothes, books, pictures and all sorts of objects on the floor. In my heart was a warm feeling of gratitude for Dr. Hillman, who had prepared me so well for

this dreadful day...."

"When they were finished they allowed me to take a few personal belongings. I took my small suitcase and picked up my heavy winter coat. After we walked out the door I saw them seal the lock and post a Gestapo notice on the door for all the world to see. I hardly had time to look back for a last glance at the place where I had spent all the happy years of my life."

AFTER THE GESTAPO CAME

During the next four years Liza had one frightful time after another, even though she had a guardian protector and friends who tried to give her cautious assistance. Soon after being ejected from her home she waited one evening for Dr. Hillman in his office. He said to her: 'Liza....I have made arrangements at the local courts to become your legal guardian. I will be in a better position to provide for you and to protect you from harm. Since your Father is at the front and your Mother in prison, you are now all alone. The State has confiscated all of your parents' properties, not only the apartment and everything in it, but also all your funds in the bank and your Mother's jewelry.'

....'He opened a large drawer of the desk and pulled out a folder. In it was a gold wrist watch, a wedding ring and a few ornaments of gold and precious stones that I recognized as belonging to my Mother.

" 'I was able to salvage these,' Dr. Hillman said. 'They belong to you and I will find a way to keep them safe for you and your Mother. You are now very poor and without any kind of financial support. However, as your legal guardian I will have the right to provide for you....I will make arrangements for a room in this building on the second floor where I will be able to watch over youyou will have to continue to work at the hospital in order to get ration cards. There is no reason to suspect at the moment that anyone will interfere there.'

"I took a deep breath and asked the question

that had been on the tip of my tongue ever since he began talking to me. 'What about school?'

"Dr. Hillman looked at me with a wandering smile and began to rummage through another desk drawer. 'Here it is,' he said and handed me an official looking paper.

"I read in silence: 'Liza von Feldegrube is herewith expelled from attendance at the Academy of Fine Arts due to political reasons.'"

LIZA ON HER OWN

Liza tried to visit her mother at the Gestapo prison, but was snubbed by an attendant, after waiting several hours, and was told to leave. Subsequently she traveled to Berlin on a night train, using a pass obtained for her by Dr. Hillman, to intercede for her mother. There were several people whom she was advised to see at Gestapo headquarters. Finally the chief called her in, resented one of her statements, and burned her to unconsciousness with the end of a cigarette. After regaining her composure, having accomplished nothing except to learn that her mother would be sent to a concentration camp, she found herself aboard the midnight train returning to Vienna.

NOVEMBER 15, 1941

Liza received permission to visit her mother at the Gestapo prison, was allowed 10 minutes with her, and during part of that time they sat in silence with arms around each other, too helpless and terrified to speak. When the guard ended their meeting Liza slipped a letter from her father into the pocket of her mother's dress.

A SAD, SAD WORLD

The diary continues for four more years, but the book tells the story better than the review. Liza was notified of the death of Kurt, her sweetheart, then that her mother was in a concentration camp near Krems on

the Danube - fortunately still in Austria. Often she thought of the years before 1939 when everybody refused to understand and now it was too late. She worked and cried at the hospital, guarded her diary - her dearest treasure and her death warrant if it should fall into the hands of the enemy. She stood in bread lines, trying to get food. She assumed the death of her father when the Russians surrounded a large part of the German army at Stalingrad. Nothing ever was heard from him after that date. She hid in a bomb shelter and later in an attic when the Russian soldiers - even more bestial than the Nazis - overran Vienna. At last she found her mother, released from concentration camp but hopelessly insane, and had the sad privilege of trying to comfort her until she died.

RUSSIANS SACKED VIENNA

Liza saw the Russians moving everything of value out of the city, saw the results of the soldiers' acts of barbarism, saw the empty office after Dr. Hillman disappeared never to be seen again. And still the looting and raping continued. The hospital was filled with syphilis victims, and there was no medicine.

Then as a final shocker, after the American Red Cross had come to bring food and medicine to the hospital, a Russian staff car with an NKVD captain and four security soldiers drew up in front of the building. The callers entered, called for the one and only doctor, questioned him at length, then took away the doctor and everything the American Red Cross had donated.

Soon Liza received warning from a friend that the NKVD was preparing to question her. Therefore she made plans to walk out of the hospital that night in the rain, taking along only her precious diary, in an effort to evade the Russian guards and escape to the American zone.

Luckily, the diary was saved. Ann Watson was welcomed by the American forces and has written this valuable book. END

Democracy can work--this article proves it. The success of Lou Conde and his TAXPAYERS CONCERNED is a culmination of long years of dissatisfaction and frustration with government.

It is also a case in point for retaining control of government on the local level. A city or county petition of this kind represents a lot of work. On the state level it is a monumental task, and on the federal level it is virtually impossible.

(continued from front cover)

the collection of more than 69,000 signatures against the raise in a seven week period.

While many groups were active in their opposition to the raise, TAXPAYERS CONCERNED spearheaded the drive to collect the necessary 42,150 qualified names to repeal the pay raise by a referendum petition. To allow for those signatures which could be judged invalid by the Registrar of Voters it was estimated that approximately 50,000 would be needed.

LOU CONDE, PRESIDENT

The president of TAXPAYERS CONCERNED is a local businessman named Lou Conde, who is a hard working activist for better and less costly government. The organization has members throughout the county and their main concern is to put the brakes on the cost of government.

An early effort of Conde's group was to consider recalling Supervisors Jack Walsh, Harry Scheidle and William Cravens in 1970 after the supervisors had voted themselves a \$3,000 pay increase which they later recinded.

YELLOW CAB SCANDAL

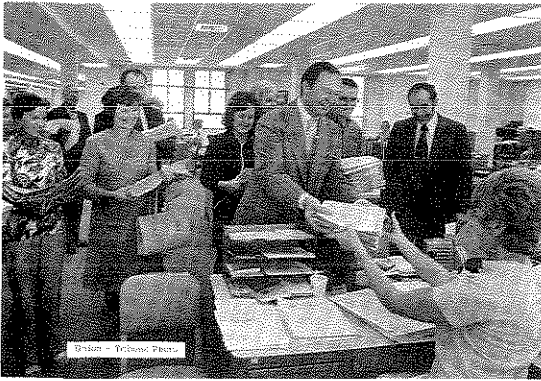
At that time, Walsh and Scheidle, along with San Diego City Councilmen Allen Hitch, Mike Schaefer, Floyd Morrow, Helen Cobb, and State Assemblyman Tom Hom, were under indictment by the County Grand Jury in the Yellow Cab case. Later, they all were either acquitted, or the charges were dropped after the then Mayor,

Frank Curran was found innocent. The recent article in Life Magazine made reference to that trial on page 30 as follows: "When San Diego's Democratic Mayor, Frank Curran, was indicted in 1970 for taking a bribe from the president of the San Diego Yellow Cab Company to help raise taxi fares, the administration refused to let a federal investigator - a key witness - testify for the prosecution." Both Walsh and Scheidle were members of the City Council when the fare rates were hiked.

Another organization, the San Diego County Co-ordinating Republican Assembly, also hinted of a recall movement against Walsh, Scheidle and Cravens. Their representative, Mrs. Joseph Marsh told a reporter that there is a "very strong possibility" when asked about the recall. Her group was incensed both by the pay raise try as well as the indictments.

VOTERS HAVE OWN OPINION

Since the courts have declared the eight officials innocent none have won an election. The first victim was Assemblyman Tom Hom, who was facing re-election in November of 1970. On October 13, 1970 Governor Reagan, at an impromptu news conference after a campaign speech at the Hughes Aircraft Plant in Culver City, was asked if he planned to campaign for Hom, whose re-election was considered crucial to Republican hopes of controlling the State Assembly. He replied: "There are no plans for me to go into his district. He happens to be in a district where he is strong and well thought of." Later, Reagan did participate in Hom's campaign, but Hom still lost in his re-



Lou Conde, right, watches as petitioners turn in their petitions to a deputy in the office of the Clerk of the Board.

election bid.

The second victim was Mayor Frank Curran. In his re-election bid for mayor in 1971, after eight years in that seat and eight years as a councilman prior to that, Curran didn't even make it through the primary.

Today, Curran is executive vice president of the San Diego Downtown Association, the group which managed to have the city adopt for their benefit the "Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1965" which replaced about \$60,000 to \$70,000 of private contributions by city imposed assessments of two and three times the business license fees in the downtown areas. (See "Minority Rule in San Diego," in December, 1970 issue of California Homeowner.)

None of the other six have made re-election bids since the indictments. The next test will be in the June primary when Walsh and Scheidle will seek another term as Supervisors.

Several have sought other offices however, but none have succeeded. Hitch ran for County Recorder in 1970 and lost. Mike Schaefer ran for District Attorney in 1970 and lost, then gave up his bid for re-election to the Council in 1971 by running for Mayor and lost again. Floyd Morrow, who ran for D. A. in 1970 also lost. Tom Hom and Jack Walsh ran for Mayor in 1971 and neither survived the primary. Helen Cobb resigned from the Council in 1971 and is doing public relations work for a local

hotel chain.

VOTERS REMEMBER

The voters have quietly, but surely, been rejecting bids for re-election to present seats as well as election to any new seats sought by the indicted officials. At no time during this period did any organized opposition appear. It seems as though the voters just made up their minds to show the politicians that they remember.

Their losses by no means was a result of poor campaigns. Curran and Walsh both made serious efforts in the Mayor's race. Hitch was a big spender in the race for Recorder and Schaefer was a real charger in his bid for District Attorney.

ORGANIZED OPPOSITION TO PAY RAISE

The only organized opposition to elected officials in the past few years has been TAXPAYERS CONCERNED headed by Conde. This organization probably reached its peak during the signature gathering period against the pay raise. Conde was visiting groups all over the county with boxes full of petitions for them to circulate.

MANY PROBLEMS ARISE

Processing, handling and co-ordinating a petition is a herculean task and problems came up from the very start. To begin with, only two months were allowed from the beginning to the end of the campaign. Many people suspected the petitions were for, instead of against the pay raise, and some confused the Supervisors with the City Councilman. Also, some circulators neglected to sign the bottom of the petition and they had to be returned for their signature.

PRECINCTING

Another problem came as precincting began. At first it appeared that a tremendous number of workers would be needed to correctly identify the precinct number for each address. Eventually a manual system was worked out by dividing the precinct book into cities and spreading the

divisions among all the available people. In this way the petitions went from group to group until each address was precincted. This method proved to be much too slow.

KEY PUNCHING

At this point the thought of key punching the addresses was suggested and tried. It really speeded up the process since the punched cards could be machine sorted into street sequence by cities for precincting, then sorted back into the sequence of the pre-numbered petitions for easy transfer of the precinct number off the card to the petition itself. Once that problem was solved the precincting was kept up on a day to day schedule.

NEWSPAPER PETITIONS

Since the precincting was no longer a drag on the operation, methods were discussed to increase the flow of petitions. One suggestion was to buy advertising space in the newspapers. Conde said, "We'll try it". Ads were first placed in the daily papers along with an appeal for funds to offset the advertising costs. The response was fantastic. Then full page ads were placed in the Chula Vista, National City and Imperial Beach papers, and double page spreads in a shopping news delivered to every home in San Ysidro, Imperial Beach and Coronado. Later, ads were also placed in the North Shores and Escondido papers.

PETITION PROCESSING WENT SMOOTHLY

Petitions were coming in by the hundreds via mail, messengers and by personal delivery. Key punching was taken care of during the night by professional key punch operators and sorting into street sequence by cities was done early the next morning. The cards were then precincted during that same day at the Conde home, sometimes until 1:00 a.m. They were then sorted back into petition sequence the next morning and taken back to the Conde home and to homes of volunteers for the transfer of precinct numbers from the cards to the petitions.

As smooth as everything was going, it still looked doubtful with only ten days left to the deadline, so another advertisement was placed in the daily papers. That, and news stories brought

another flood of petitions which overwhelmingly exceeded the required number. A week later Mr. Conde was still getting hundreds of signatures daily. "More than 56,000 signatures were turned over to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors office in the morning of the last day. About 3,000 more were turned in later that same day. During the following week hundreds more have come in", Conde said.

SUPERVISORS REPEAL PAY RAISE

Lou Conde and TAXPAYERS CONCERNED had their V-Day on April 4, when the Supervisors repealed their pay raise. The vote was 4 to 1 with Supervisor Harry Scheidle opposing the move, insisting that the referendum question be placed on the Nov. ballot. "Your choice really is to repeal the ordinance or submit it to the voters," County Counsel Robert Berry told the Board.

FRINGE BENEFITS

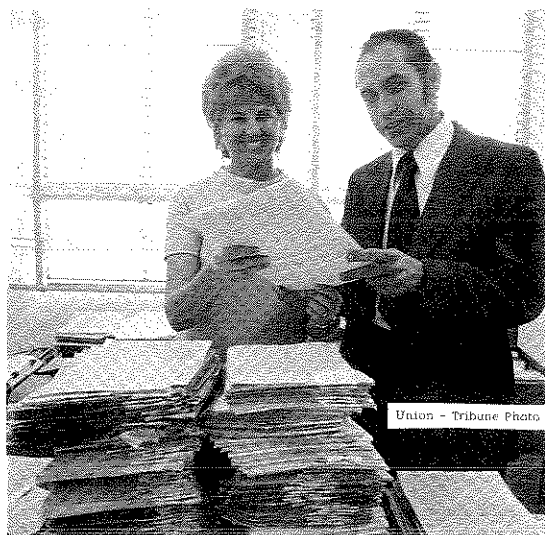
The \$9,000 pay raise isn't the only thorn in the side of the voters. Recently a reporter for the San Diego Evening Tribune ran a story about the fringe benefits Supervisors take for themselves. Excerpts from this lengthy article read as follows:

Lunches for secretaries, side trips while in Hawaii, double claims for the same meal and a bar tab and meals for people who didn't have their own expense accounts are among items county supervisors have on their expense accounts.

They came to light in a check of supervisors' expense accounts and travel claims during the last fiscal year, July 1970 through June 1971, and the first half of the current fiscal year through December 31, 1971.

Each supervisor was interviewed--Jack Walsh three times--and during these discussions other things concerning their activities turned up.

Jack Walsh's nephew who was his campaign coordinator during his un-



Stella Wenderlich, a deputy Clerk of the Board, and Conde pose with petitions.

successful bid for the mayor's office, worked in Walsh's office and was on the county payroll. He quit effective June 30, 1971, two weeks after Walsh announced his candidacy....

Some of the things which showed up during interviews are mistakes in claims, occasional poor memories as to why something was done, inconsistencies in claiming certain items like hotel bar bills, meals for relatives and a common belief that each supervisor must be allowed to judge for himself what is proper or not....

Walsh and Harry Scheidle were the biggest spenders and in the time period checked, with each spending more than the other three---Craven, Bear and Henry Boney---combined on non-travel expenses.

In 1970-71, Scheidle spent \$1,090 on non-travel expenses, Walsh \$897, Craven \$278, Bonney \$235 and Bear \$112....

In terms of travel expenses, Walsh

traveled and spent the most in the 1970-71 fiscal year, with 23 trips costing \$4,517. Boney had 15 trips costing \$1,448, Scheidle had nine costing \$692, Bear had eight trips costing \$1,164 and Craven had three trips costing \$518. . . .

One of the major differences between Walsh's spending and the others is that he often puts in non-travel claims for entertaining while on trips while the others generally do not.

For example, a week after he returned from the March 1971 National Assn. of Counties (NACO) conference in Hawaii, and before he submitted the actual travel claim, Walsh put in for \$197 in non-travel expenses incurred while in Hawaii.

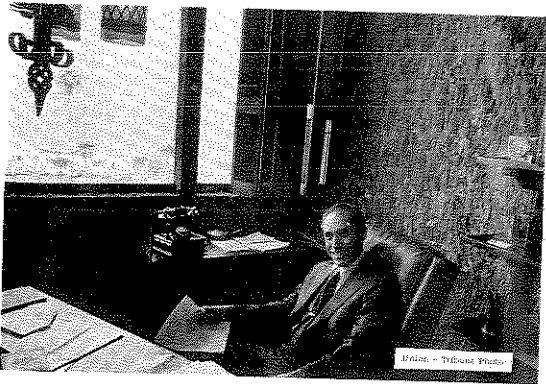
This \$197 includes \$84 for two dinner parties at which his wife was present and \$30 for hors d'oeuvres on two successive days. The other supervisors who went to Hawaii---Bear and Boney---did not put in entertainment chits and were not listed among the attendees at the Walsh dinners. . . .

Here, as outlined in their claim forms and described in more than six hours of tape recorded interviews, are details concerning supervisors expenses:

Only two supervisors, Walsh and Scheidle, have taken their secretaries to lunch and charged the bill to the county.

One of Walsh's claims was \$17.50 at the Westgate Plaza on Nov. 12, 1971. Walsh said it was for her birthday. On Dec. 6, 1971, the bill was \$6 at Miyako's and it has gone as low as \$1.83 at Calabrese's. Except for the Westgate Plaza, Walsh said all the lunches were working lunches.

Scheidle said that all of his lunches with his secretary were for business



Conde, a candidate for Supervisor, tries out Scheidle's seat for size.

purposes. A typical claim was one for \$7.25 at Filippi's on July 21, 1971.

The subject of taking secretaries to lunch is an example of how supervisors can disagree among themselves on what is a proper expense.

Craven is the only supervisor who thinks that a secretary's lunches are not a proper expense for the county to pay at any time but on the subject of birthday lunches Scheidle and Boney join Craven in saying the county should not pick up the tab....

In regard to Walsh's nephew Richard "Duke" Pekin, working for the county, Walsh said he asked that the county hire him but said he did not ask for Pekin to be assigned to his office.

Walsh said he told the chief administrative officer's staff that Pekin was available and "is there an opportunity?"

"They said fine, we take interns on and I said I also am interested in an intern in my office," but, Walsh said he did not ask for Pekin to be that intern.

Walsh took Pekin to lunch at least three times along with other staff and

charged it to the county on his expense account. Asked if he thought this was nepotism, Walsh said no....

Walsh was not alone on the Hawaii trip. It cost the county \$3,429 to send Walsh, Bear and Boney and three administrative assistants, Anderson, William Dominguez, who is Craven's administrative assistant, and Harlan Torkelson, at the time, Bear's assistant....

The conference, according to the program, was in Hilo, Hawaii from March 1 - 4, 1971. Sunday, Feb. 28, there was no program although one could register. ...

Here, according to his travel claims and interviews, is what Walsh charged to the county in the way of meals and hotel bills while in Hawaii.

He arrived in Hawaii with his wife Feb. 24 and went to the island of Maui until the 28th when he went to Hilo on the island of Hawaii for the convention. On the 27th however, he began charging his hotel and meals on Maui to the county. They amounted to \$34 of which \$19 was for the hotel.

On the 5th, the day after the convention ended, Walsh again moved back to Maui and charged his hotel bill that night---\$16.62 and \$14.50 for meals on the 6th to the county.

Walsh said he had checked with the auditor before he went to Hawaii and asked what he could legitimately claim.

"I said I'm taking my wife, I make no bones about it, and I'm paying all of her expenses and so on. What can I claim for my own hotel and so on. He said a day before and a day after is a reasonable type of request."

The auditor, Gerald J. Lonergan, said in an interview that it is not unusual for someone to go to a conference the

day before and leave the day after but that is strictly a matter of judgement as to whether, in each particular case, it is reasonable.

"I couldn't make a hard and fast rule like that," Loneragan said....

The only claims involving wives were Walsh's two dinner parties costing a total of \$84. His wife was present at both and Mrs. Torkelson at one. Both parties involved county staff....

For the night Mrs. Torkelson was present, Torkelson put in a claim for dinner on his travel form but said in an interview it was a mistake. "I don't know how that happened."

Dominguez, who filed his claim after Walsh's, put in a claim for two meals for the nights of Walsh's dinner party but the auditor's office dis-allowed them.

Dominguez said "I would have to defer to Jack (Walsh)" when questioned about the claims. He said Jack usually picked up tabs. "He picked up all the drinks, I know."...

To summarize Walsh's activities, he charged the county \$775 for eight days in Hawaii during which he attended a convention for four days.

Of the \$775, \$85 was spent on a different island before and after the convention....

The mistakes that crop up in the claim forms and whether they are worth worrying about because of the amounts are a matter of dispute among the supervisors.

For example Walsh claimed \$29.69 for a dinner in Sacramento on Jan. 14, 1971 with Scheidle. Scheidle, on his claim form, put in for \$9 for dinner on that same night....



Dog,----- "I'll buy the drinks."
Friend,--- "Don't be silly, I'll put it on
my expense account."

Walsh said several times he felt the county spent too much money watching expense accounts....

Lou Conde, president of the San Diego group, TAXPAYERS CONCERNED was in the auditor's office checking expense accounts at the same time as the Evening Tribune.

He agreed with Craven's philosophy and said "if an individual in public service has so little regard for the little expenses he will have equal disregard for the larger expenditures."....

Walsh and his family took a five-and-a-half day trip to Mammoth Lakes, Sacramento and San Francisco, charging the county \$310 on his travel account and \$67.91 for entertainment, including \$24.39 for other people's expenses.

There were conventions on three of the days. Walsh cannot remember the purpose of the San Francisco portion of the trip for which he charged the county \$26.50, later refunding \$10 of that which he had claimed for lodging.

Walsh's claims and bookkeeping are not well organized, a factor he cited as causing some of the errors on his forms.

On one occasion he put in a claim eight months after a luncheon occurred. He said, "I find more important things to do."

Walsh believes the county should go to a straight per diem instead of detailed expense statements while traveling and believes the county spends too much time looking at expenses. . . .

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF OFFICIALS?

In San Diego, people seem to be telling elected officials that:

1. We want our representatives to work for us, not special interests.
2. Mr. Official, you knew what the job paid when you ran for the office, so forget about pay raises, unless we vote for it.
3. We care about how officials are spending our taxes, so you better take a second look at your spending policies.

HOW MUCH PAY IS FAIR?

A fair pay scale for elected officials is sometimes difficult to determine. For example, during the petitioning many signers in the City of San Diego said they thought the Councilmen should get more than the present \$5,000 per year. To determine how much pay is fair, one must ask how much time is necessary to do the job. In small cities and counties very little time outside regular business meetings is required.

In these cases, councilmen and supervisors, as well as school board officials can carry on their regular private business activities and still do an adequate job as elected officials. As a matter of fact, in many instances it is obvious that being an elected official enhances that person's business.

However, other so-called part time officials contribute more than 40 hours per week in the discharge of their public duties. If it is necessary to spend 40 hours or more per week on their e-

lected job, their private businesses (and incomes) could very well suffer.

The people must make a determination whether they do, or do not, want full time officials. If the answer is yes, then restrict them to their public job and pay them equitably. An elected official is not the place to look for a bargain. Beware of the person who will serve for nothing or for token amounts. Voters should elect intelligent candidates for office and pay them to do a good job for the people, not for special interests.

SETTING OWN SALARIES

On the other hand, officials should never be allowed to determine their own salaries, unless it is subject to approval by a vote of the people. It was not in the best interest of the people when the Supervisors were given that privilege in the last general election, and as early as possible, that privilege should be taken away from them. Nobody should have the right to make that kind of decision.

SAN DIEGO, A WONDERFUL PLACE

San Diego has, and always will have, its share of problems, but those problems are by far, overshadowed by the spirit of its citizens. Sure, the voters have made mistakes in the past, and will make mistakes in the future, but it will be a sad day if that ever ceases to be one of their prerogatives. The significant thing is that because of the Supervisors' unpopular action, the people signed petitions and gave their dollars to register their objections.

Mr. Conde, and TAXPAYERS CONCERNED initiated, organized and successfully followed through with a protest which was loud and clear to all elected officials in San Diego County. But even more important, it was done through the legal process, not parading, marching, name calling or threatening, --- just hard work --- within the law and by the people. They have shown that in the final analysis, the people can have their say if they will but speak.

Those citizens who did not have an opportunity to sign petitions will have their day in court, on June 6th through another great American voice, the secret ballot.

END

Statewide Homeowners Association
953 Eighth Ave., Room 212
San Diego, California 92101

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