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A Homeowners' Tax Plan That Can Help Business

There is a Homeowners Tax Plan which gives tax relief to homeowners and business and industry, and it works. It is not being used in California, but it is being used in Pittsburgh, Pa., and it will be used in Hawaii starting next year. Here is what it does:

If you own a \$16,000 home in San Diego or Los Angeles or other California city where the city tax rate is about \$2.10 or \$21 per \$1,000 of property value, and it is assessed at the customary 25% or \$4,000, you will pay 4 times 21 or about \$84 in city taxes. (County and school taxes would be extra, to keep the comparison with Pittsburgh.) On that same house in Pittsburgh, keeping the assumed California rate of \$2.10 and the \$4,000 assessment, you would pay \$49. That's a \$35 saving just on city taxes. (How much more would the saving be if that tax plan could be used for county and school taxes? Pittsburgh, so far, uses it only on city taxes.)

Hawaii has also adopted a Pittsburgh Graded Tax plan and will begin to use it in 1964, stepping up its effectiveness over the years.

Suppose you have a \$160,000 commercial or industrial building for your business, valued in California at perhaps \$40,000. In a California city you may pay about \$840 in city taxes, in Pittsburgh you'd pay about \$490. How does Pittsburgh do this, and are people in Pennsylvania and Hawaii smarter than people in California?

Pittsburgh does it by taxing houses and buildings at only one half the tax rate on land, while California taxes land and buildings alike. (Pittsburgh has discovered there are two kinds of property, land, given by the universe, and improvements and personal property, created by human labor. Pittsburgh taxes property created by human labor less than land given by the universe, and perhaps some day will go the logical step further and not tax buildings at all. Other Pennsylvania cities do not have to tax buildings. Neither Pennsylvania nor Hawaii taxes personal property.)

We have an opportunity in California to take the same steps Pennsylvania and Hawaii have taken, and pass a Homeowners Tax Plan which will give tax relief to homeowners and businessmen

without disturbing in the least the revenue for cities, counties and schools. The measure, ACA 20, is being studied by the Legislature. You should study it, too. It was introduced by Assemblyman Jim Mills of San Diego, and endorsed by 38 Assemblymen, including all five from San Diego County, and the following from Los Angeles County:

Porter, Deukmejian, Elliott, Carrell, Thelin, Kennick, Song, Danielson, Soto, Moreno, Dymally, Ferrell, Warren, McMillan, Allen, Cusanovich, Dills and Thomas.

San Diego sponsors included Donovan, Burgener, Barnes, Ashcraft. Others of the 38 Assemblymen on ACA 20 are Holmes, Knox, Badham, Belotti, Britschgi, Burton, Casey, Garrigus, Petris, Powers, Rumford, Ryan, Stanton and Veneman.

ACA 20 passed the Assembly Revenue & Taxation Committee by a 9-2 vote, but because it needed 54 votes on the Assembly floor, and only 50 Assemblymen promised to vote for it, it was sent for interim study by the Assembly Constitutional Amendments Committee, which was considering it. See the letter of Assemblyman Nicholas Petris of Oakland, chairman of the Revenue & Taxation Committee, on page 14 of this issue.

ACA 20 is permissive, not mandatory, legislation. It allows cities, counties and school districts to improve property taxation for homeowners and businessmen, does not force them to. It can only be passed by a vote of the people if the Legislature puts it on the ballot, or if it gets on the ballot by signatures of voters.

If you want property tax relief as is beginning to be popular in Pennsylvania and Hawaii, and probably in many other states before long, then you must let your Assemblyman and State Senator, your mayor, councilmen, supervisors and school board members know it. You must study ACA 20, understand it, and then write and talk to state and local legislators, saying you want it passed.

Statewide Homeowners Association will continue to fight hard for ACA 20, but we need the support of our growing membership if we are to get true tax relief in California. You must make up your mind to act, to see and write these legislators, to ask them to help, if we are to get a Homeowners Tax Plan that will also help business.

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Let's Get Rid of Horse and Buggy Taxation In Age of Space Travel and Super-Sonic Jets

If you agree, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," how do you feel about, "When living in the space age, do as the horse and buggy people do?"

When the American astronauts whirled about the globe and then after landing in the sea were taken ashore and rejoined their families, they came back from the new world of space into the old world of sales taxes on their food and clothing, taxes on their homes and personal property, and taxes on the income they had earned while flying through space.

Our vicious, faulty and degrading methods of taxation were devised thousands of years ago, when men plowed with oxen, walked in the mud, rode donkeys and horses, made signals with smoke.

Should we not have new methods of financing our governments—our states, counties, cities and schools—to keep pace with the new kind of world we have been creating for a hundred years, and are continuing to create?

Five years from now, when we travel in super-sonic planes to New York in two hours, hurtle on a one-hour rocket ship ride to Stockholm, go to the moon and back on a one-day excursion, and have hoppy-copters strapped on for the 15 mile jump from San Diego to El Cajon and the 30 mile jump from Long Beach to San Fernando, will we still be dragging down our economic system by penalizing the producers, the builders and the workers with taxes, while the non-producing land speculators, the owners of run-down buildings, and the loafers and indolent go almost free?

Obsolete Methods

In the modern world that is here, with new ways of doing almost everything, from food production to building, from educational TV and teaching machines to birth control pills and electronic brains, why should we put up with obsolete methods of raising public revenue?

But there is no use casting off the old if it works. Horses are still needed on some TV westerns, although other cowboy shows use jeeps. Don't throw away your umbrella if it still sheds rain. A pencil may be handy in a telephone booth even though you prefer to write on an electric typewriter. And though sticky tape is speedy to use and strong, you may want to tie packages with all that string you've been collecting.

No, don't cast off the old if it works. BUT IN THE MODERN U.S., THE

November, 1963

OLD TAX SYSTEM DOESN'T WORK! It creates unemployment, it slows national growth, it makes slums and fosters delinquency and crime, it hampers homeowners and business, and it irritates and makes tax cheats of all of us!

Why do we pay so much attention to the physical sciences, which eventually result in laundry machines, electric dishwashers, wide screen cinema, fast boats and cars, space capsules and atomic bombs—and why do we pay so little attention to social science and political science, which eventually result in doing things the same old way, mostly?

Ideas Spread

Bell invented the telephone in Baltimore and in a few years it was used in many large cities. Wright flew the first powered plane in the U.S., and it wasn't long before it was used in country after country. The British put television together and now everyone has it.

But in social science and political economy it is different. Pittsburgh is a large city. In the American Journal of Economics and Sociology the former assessor of Pittsburgh, Percy Williams, described Pittsburgh's 50-year "experiment in scientific taxation" as a success. Pittsburgh taxes houses and buildings only half as much as land, and it works. Yet in 50 years, only one American state and a new one at that, Hawaii, has followed Pittsburgh.

A year after Russia had a Sputnik in space, the U.S. had one. Six years after the U.S. had an atomic bomb, the Russians had one. But it has taken Honolulu 50 years to catch up to Pittsburgh, and even now there are no signs that New York, Los Angeles, Chicago or Detroit are even aware of what Pittsburgh has done.

This article is no argument that because it took Honolulu 50 years to catch Pittsburgh it is all pretty futile, and that it will take San Diego 100 years to catch Honolulu. No, this is an argument for a speed-up. In this new, fast, speedy modern world, let us stop horsing around with horse and buggy public fiscal methods, and apply some space age technology to collecting public revenue. Let us stop taxing improvements and personal property, and collect public revenue from land values.

LET US USE MODERN, SCIENTIFIC PUBLIC REVENUE TAX METHODS IN A MODERN, SCIENTIFIC SPACE AGE.

The winds of change are blowing, as

they always do. But now they are blowing tax change. Old fashioned tax collecting will be blown away as sure as Wrights' bi-plane gave way to John Glenn's space capsule. Pity the poor, benighted assessors and tax collectors who stand in the way. And with them will go the city councilmen, supervisors, school board members, legislators, governors and presidents who mistake 1963 for 1763.

The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd. — Alexis de Tocqueville, 100 years ago, writing of the characteristics of despotic government.

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Watson Seeks Fair Assessments in Los Angeles County, Business Inventory Values To Be Set at 25% Figure

By JOHN NAGY

Philip E. Watson, the Los Angeles County assessor for 11 months, elected in 1962, is a controversial figure now, but there is hardly a doubt he is doing one of the finest assessing jobs in the state; he believes in the law and the people, and he has political strength. Only 39, he could very well become mayor, governor or senator in the future.

When Watson took office he said: "You, the taxpayer, will be treated not as an enemy of government, but as the economic backbone upon which the very foundation of government rests." He is holding to that, he is assessing according to law, and because of it he is in trouble with some politicians, although not with the mass of Los Angeles County homeowners and voters.

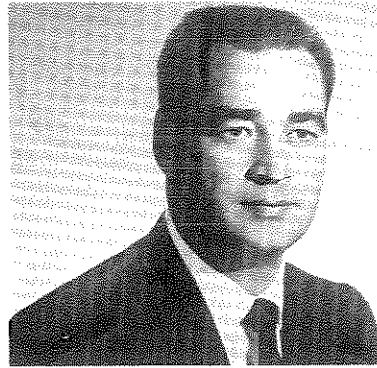
When Watson campaigned for office he promised to assess property according to law, and he promised many reforms in assessment practices. Now, just for trying to carry out some of his promises, he has incurred the wrath of other officeholders, principally supervisors. In addition, because of a mechanical error in an office computer, some assessments were made twice, thereby affecting the assessment roll, and Watson has been attacked for this.

If Watson succeeds in his revolutionary approach to property assessment in Los Angeles County, in beating the old guard, other assessors will have to answer questions that Watson's actions will raise. Assessors, now under fire everywhere for arbitrary and obsolete practices, will face a more furious barrage. In the end voters will decide, but a tax revolt is surely at hand and tax reform is in the air.

What He Promised

Watson had been in real estate and tax consulting, and had eight years service in the assessor's office. He was a bomber pilot in World War 2 and studied accounting and economics at UCLA. He had no political machine, but had a small personal following, including Louis R. Baker, who became his campaign manager.

Watson campaigned modestly, spent little money, but was recognized as sincere. His support built up as people listened to him talk and liked what he said. He told homeowners and businessmen he would state a firm ratio in assessing property. He said he favored an appeals board to replace supervisors sitting as a board of equalization, favored a longer period for protests, promised to end



PHILIP E. WATSON

the deputies who went door-to-door to assess household furnishings, and said he was against taxing household furnishings altogether. He also promised he would end piecemeal appraisals which automatically raised assessments every five years, or so it seemed. What he promised, in effect, was fair assessments. Homeowners organizations were very helpful in electing Watson, because they felt he knew what he was talking about when he mentioned reforms, and when he said he would observe the law. Baker said, for example, in explaining why he campaigned for Watson:

"The democratic structure is jeopardized when elected officials change the intent of the law, and I felt that assessment practices in the county were not fulfilling the intent of the law."

What He Has Done

On taking office, Watson announced all property would be assessed 25% of market value. This did away with the double-talk about an assessment ratio, "not to exceed 50% of an opinion of market value," which had been in effect before. The 25% ratio is important to homeowners, since other classes of property had been assessed at less, and some more, than the 25%, but homeowners generally were assessed at 25%. Surveys show unimproved land generally has been assessed at 2 to 10 per cent of market value, while slums were assessed at 5 to 15 per cent, and inventories at 39 to 45 per cent of wholesale cost. This practice has subsidized land speculators and slum owners at the expense of homeowners and productive businessmen. Watson also said he would bring the assessments on business inventories down to the 25% mark in four years.

In the meantime, business firms in Los Angeles County, fed up with high inventory assessments before Watson came on the scene, had filed suits for the recovery

of taxes to the amount of 150 million dollars, claiming they should not be assessed more than 25%. Watson was advised by counsel that a gradual reduction was legally indefensible—that the law clearly stated the same ratio must apply to all property. On Sept. 10 Watson announced he would assess business inventories at 25% next year.

The cry that went up from some county supervisors was ear-splitting. They screamed that with assessments coming down, taxes on homeowners would have to go up. One supervisor said Watson's cuts for this year were drastic enough without more next year. Another accused him of giving tax breaks to "big taxpayers with large business inventories." A third predicted that Watson's action would result in attacks on supervisors next year when the public gets its tax bills. Not one supervisor commended Watson for trying to observe the law or for giving tax relief to business when Congress and the President say tax relief is necessary. Nor did any supervisor say the legally required reductions in inventory assessments proposed by Watson could be made up by assessing unimproved land and city slum properties at their true value.

Offers Defense

Watson defended himself, however. He said that if business inventory assessments were coming down, assessments on other property, including land and slums, were going up, and in any event it was all being done according to law, and according to his campaign promises. The supervisors were off base on another point. They accused Watson of being responsible for a tax rate increase, while from 1953 to 1962, when Watson was not the assessor, the Los Angeles County tax rate went from \$1.69 to \$2.08.

There is, however, a real area of concern here for homeowners, and Watson is aware of it. It will be a simple matter to drop assessments on inventories in a single year, but can he raise the assessments on land and slums in one year to offset at least a major portion of the loss? If not, the supervisors are correct and homeowners will pay taxes at a higher rate. But in principle homeowners cannot demand equalization for themselves and not for business—cannot demand they be assessed at 25% of market value and inventories at 39 or 45 per cent. The remedy lies, as Roy Wenzlick and others have pointed out, in raising the assessments on

KEITH IS WATSON AIDE

land and slums to what the law requires. If this is done, supervisors will have nothing to worry about.

Now that homeowners and businessmen have seen Watson follow the law on assessments, they know it can be done despite whinings and politics, and they may demand true equalization of assessments throughout the state, no matter which heads roll.

Watson has carried out other important actions. He has done away with the household furnishings snoopers and substituted figures calculated with data processing equipment. This saved almost a million dollars in the assessor's office. He has reorganized the department with the help of John H. Keith, former and first chief of the Assessment Standards Division of the State Board of Equalization, who has a long history in the assessment field and is highly respected throughout the state. He has established 15 county regional offices, each headed by a principal appraiser. These are both appraisal and public information offices, designed to provide closer contact with the public, and staffed largely with persons who live in the areas.

Watson has combined the land and building divisions of the assessor's office

so that it is no longer necessary for two appraisers to view a building, one to assess the land, the other to assess the building. He has also ended revaluing one-fifth of the county each year on an arbitrary basis, and will now review all property each year and keep assessments in line with changes in the market place. Under the five year cycle, four-fifths of the county assessments were untouched for four years, while budgets of cities, schools and county went up each year with the more-or-less automatic assessment increase in one-fifth of the county.

Good Assessing

Bad assessing has had effects, and in the largest county in the U.S., apparently Phil Watson has undertaken to demonstrate that good assessing can have good effects. Beginning next year, much land speculation should be curtailed in Los Angeles County. It has been profitable for the speculator to hold land at low assessments and low taxes, but unprofitable for schools, cities and county. Here are some figures on parcels of vacant land purchased by L.A. County school districts, showing what the assessments actually were, what they would be at 25% of market value, and how everyone lost except the land speculator:

Escrow Date	Purchase Price	Land Assessment	Assessment Ratio	Assessment at 25% Ratio	Percentage Increase in Tax Basis
Dec. 28, 1961	\$217,950.00	\$18,000.00	8%	\$ 54,488.00	202%
July 13, 1961	426,000.00	48,000.00	11%	106,500.00	122%
July 18, 1961	152,222.00	15,950.00	10%	38,055.50	139%
July 27, 1962	38,636.00	5,090.00	13%	9,659.00	90%
June 25, 1963	10,500.00	1,276.00	12%	2,625.00	106%

If these and other parcels had been properly assessed, schools and other taxing bodies would have had plenty of tax base for meeting their budgets.

Why can Watson do what he is doing? Because he campaigned on need for changes, and voters agreed with him. Be-

sides gaining confidence of the voters, Watson's changes are also in accord with requirements of law. If the changes are revolutionary, it is only because the system in the past has been archaic and illegal. Watson is confident he is on the right track, and so am I and a lot of other people.

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BOOKS

We hope homebuilders will provide more book shelves for homeowners, at least in the new houses being built. Some new houses are woefully short of space for books. In the older houses, of course, you more or less have to provide your own book shelves. New apartments, too, can use book shelves. Renters as well as homeowners read books.

Happily, the book business is booming. More books being published, more bought, more read, than ever before. More publishers going into business, with paperbacks all over the place. Despite television and all the distractions, books are gaining ground. TV is pleasant, but if you really want to learn something, one prescription is a mixture of books and practical experience.

Take politics, for example. Do you dig it? So if you want to know more about it, read a few books and then join a political group and get some first hand experience. Go door-to-door in precinct work or fund raising, make some speeches, help a candidate — and read books. After that you may decide to run for city council or the state legislature.

There's a new book out on President Kennedy by Victor Lasky (J.F.K.: The Man and the Myth) which some Republicans say will defeat Kennedy in 1964. That's a big task for a book, but it does indicate the power and influence a book has, according to some people.

The Politics of Hope, by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., is a collection of essays written between 1949 and 1960, and Dwight Macdonald says the book is mainly interesting for the clues it gives to Schlesinger's political thinking, which, of course, is strictly New Frontier.

Then there's a volume by Martin Dies, the former Texas Congressman who was the first chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee. In the Martin Dies' Story, the author relates what happened to him in his fight against Nazism and Communism.

One of the better works on modern politics, published last year, is The Deadlock of Democracy: Four Party Politics in America, by James MacGregor Burns. This is about the struggle which always goes on between the White House and Congress.

It all boils down to do-it-yourself. Read a book on politics, join a party and get elected, and then vote to cut taxes for homeowners.

Business Directory

Among the many members of Statewide Homeowners Association all over California are these individuals and firms who are Business Members, and who support the program of Statewide Homeowners Association for equal-

ized assessments and tax relief for homeowners and businessmen. They are united with other members of Statewide Homeowners Association for a sound California economy and expansion of a free market system.

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LAND—IS IT REALLY SCARCE?

Land, labor and capital are the elements of an economic system, but in modern economic discussion the factor of land is almost totally ignored. Business writers, textbook authors, politicians, reporters, mainly act—because land is so commonplace—as if it can be forgotten. The printed page is endlessly filled with words about labor and wages, capital, money and interest rates, government loans and subsidies, tariffs and taxes. The writers never seem to realize that all products stem from the application of labor and capital to land, and that how land is used determines what happens to an economy. Homeowners

should become aware of land and land use, and should know there are two kinds of property—land, and the products of land—and they are as different as day from night, and should be used and taxed differently. Men create houses, buildings, automobiles, shoes, but we did not create the land, although we mistakenly go on taxing land as we tax houses, automobiles and shoes. In each issue the California Homeowner will present an article on land so readers can become conscious of land use and land taxation.

By ROY DAVIDSON

A population explosion, which has seen California's numbers increase by more than three and a half million from 1940 to 1950 and by almost seven million from 1950 to date, has been accompanied by a land boom of even more dramatic proportions.

The inflation of California land values has been well-documented in the August, 1960 issue of House & Home Magazine. One San Francisco builder paid \$580,000 for a tract offered for \$15,000 in 1948. Part of an estate that sold for \$2000 an acre in 1952, by 1960 had been going for up to \$10,000 a quarter acre lot. South of Sacramento, land pegged to \$200 to \$300 an acre ten years later was going for \$7500 an acre for subdivisions. A large parcel of orchard land in Orange County increased in market value from 500 per cent to over 1000 per cent in less than 8 years. These are by no means rare examples!

Does the astronomical rise in land values indicated by the foregoing examples reflect a true land scarcity? Or, is it a result of artificially created shortage arising from factors not readily apparent? Part of the answer may be found by seeing the picture in its historical perspective.

Apparent Scarcity an Effect of Land Speculation

Since the time of the founding fathers, men have laid claim for more land than they could use at the time. They were speculating for the "unearned increment" which would be inevitable as population increased and the society became more productive. Indeed, the history of the Public Domain of the United States is a story of unbridled land speculation, involving large doses of bribery, political corruption, and fraud. Yet these early settlers could hardly be blamed for obtaining what was well recognized in the "Old World" to the source of wealth and power.

As long as the country remained predominantly rural and as long as there remained the "safety valve" of a vast unsettled frontier, the dangers inherent in

large masses of "landless" men did not appear too imminent. (It might be noted that the panics of 1819, 1837, and 1857, which we would today call depressions, were generally attributed to land speculation.)

Today, the frontier is gone. Most Americans live in the city. In California, 87 per cent reside in the urban areas. This basic change from an agricultural to an industrial and commercial society has made reasonable access to land even more imperative. But skyrocketing land costs are making it ever more difficult for the homeowner, the businessman, the worker. Urban blight and suburban sprawl rear their heads in every large city. Instead of plenty of jobs, high business profits, good low-cost homes, and minimum taxes, we see large unemployment, shrinking profits, exorbitant housing costs, and confiscatory taxation. The truth is that there is no shortage of land but only a shortage of low priced, accessible land.

Million Vacant Lots in State

An informative report on Taxable Property Values in the United States has been published by the Census Bureau. This report highlights some of the factors contributing to the illusion of land scarcity. Total number of assessed real properties are shown for each state, broken down into five separate categories; non-farm residential, acreage and farms, commercial and industrial, vacant lots, and other. The percent which each type of real property contributes to total assessed valuations is also shown. Finally, the ratio of assessed value to sales price as determined by actual sales over a six month period is indicated.

Statistics for California are highly illuminating. Excluding the approximately 45 per cent of California lands owned by the federal government as well as other real properties exempt from the tax rolls, there were five and a half million assessed properties in 1961. Interesting enough, this total includes 1,010,000 vacant lots or 18.4 per cent of the number assessed! Land shortage indeed! Acreage

and farms account for another 537,000 assessed parcels. Yet these vacant lots contribute only 3.1 per cent to total assessed valuation. Data from measureable sales are even more revealing of the underassessed, undertaxed treatment of unused land in comparison with the tax penalties on productive effort. The ratio of assessed value to sales price for vacant lots was under 14 per cent during this period. This contrasts with the 19.6 assessed-sales ratio for non-farm residential, a category which includes most of the homeowners. The estimated market value of these California vacant lots is over five billion dollars.

The vacant lot picture has not changed significantly since the last Census Bureau study of this kind. There is some evidence that the California land speculator is receiving even more favored tax treatment today. Between visits of the tax assessor his unearned increment shows a rise unreflected in even the minimal tax, presently allowed under our laws, upon vacant or under-utilized land.

It seems quite clear that if we permit the land speculator—and the slumlord—to continue garnering the "booty" from the values created by the community, the illusion of land scarcity will continue. If, however, we recognize the priceless heritage of our land, we will work toward a just land policy.

Doing for people what they can and ought to do for themselves is a dangerous experiment. In the last analysis, the welfare of the workers depends upon their own initiative. Whatever is done under the guise of philanthropy or social morality which in any way lessens initiative is the greatest crime that can be committed against the toilers. Let social busybodies and professional "public morals experts" in their fads reflect upon the perils they rashly invite under this pretense of social welfare. — Samuel Gompers, labor leader.

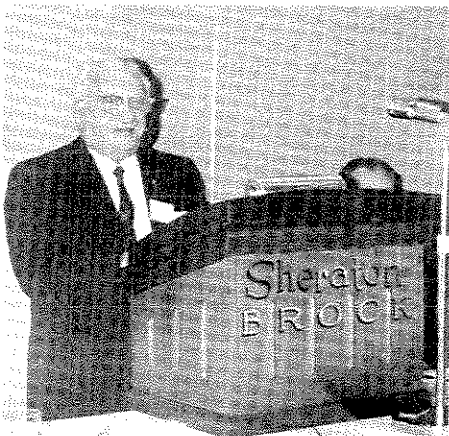
In a nation of sheep, the supermarket shopper is the shorn lamb to whom neither God nor the food industry tempests the wind. — Frontier magazine.

California Homeowner

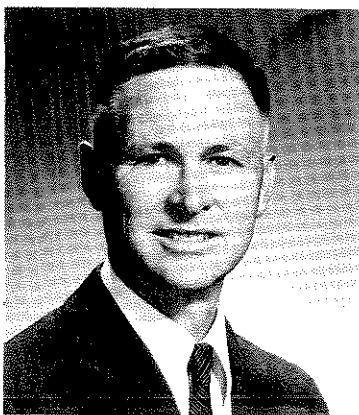
NEWS—About Homeowners And Others

This is a page devoted to activities of members and employees of Statewide Homeowners Association, and to others who are friends of Statewide Homeowners. You are invited to send in photos and news items that can be used. Mail to Editorial Office, California Homeowner, 953 Eighth Ave., San Diego 1.

They Joined Homeowners



Charles Silverman of San Diego, president of Accounting Corporation of America, giant "Mail Me Monday" accounting chain, is a new member of Statewide Homeowners Association. Here he is addressing annual corporation conference at Sheraton Brock Hotel in Niagara Falls, Canada.



Robert de Fremery, vice president of Onox, Inc., San Francisco, and a member of Statewide Homeowners Association. Mr. de Fremery, also a writer on economic subjects, says he joined Statewide Homeowners because he believes in our program of reducing or removing taxes on houses, buildings and personal property. He says this will benefit homeowners and business, put people to work, and promote the California economy.

November, 1963



Mr. and Mrs. (Fred and Florence) Buckley of Glendale, former owners of Glendale Cafeteria, and members of Statewide Homeowners Association, have been doing a lot of traveling in the past several months.



Raymond Townsend of San Diego, concert soloist and violin teacher, is enthusiastic new member of Statewide Homeowners looking forward to taking part in committee activities.



Dr. Felix Weil, right, of Pacific Palisades, is not a member of Statewide Homeowners, but his authoritative articles on property taxes will soon appear in the California Homeowner. Here he is with President John Nagy of Statewide Homeowners.



Los Angeles County Supervisor Warren Dorn boosted Homeowners Week as he posed with Statewide Homeowners cover girl Hedy Bagdy of Solana Beach. Statewide Homeowners Association held Homeowners Week meeting at Hollywood High School Sept. 19 with Councilman Ernani Bernardi and Dr. Felix Weil as speakers along with President Nagy. Ray Kornfeld was chairman. Theme of Homeowners Week was, "Help reduce taxes on homes."

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Mrs. Eileen Harling, secretary and editorial assistant for California Homeowner and Statewide Homeowners Association in San Diego office.

LETTERS

SCHOOL FINANCING

Noted with interest your new magazine. It occurs to me that your organization could do a very important service to the state by making an analysis of the school financing situation and publication of your findings in the CALIFORNIA HOMEOWNER. Many persons would like to have more information on this. You might also explore and analyze the alternatives to a countywide tax, such as the proposal to levy an additional one cent sales tax for education, heavily opposed by some.

Richard J. Donovan
Member of Assembly, Chula Vista

* * *

WALTER PACKARD

Walter Packard's article is splendid; however, he is wrong when he says the single tax theory is presented as a panacea for all ills. It is a first great necessary step toward more equitable, not "equal," distribution of wealth. I would like to subscribe to the CALIFORNIA HOMEOWNER and please bill me.

Judge J. R. Fuchs
New Braunfels, Texas

* * *

PROPERTY TAX STUDY

We are in the process of planning our studies for the 1963-64 interim period. The property tax area appears to be the one which presents the most problems and, therefore, the Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation will make a very thorough study of all phases of property taxation. Included within the study, of course, will be the concepts embodied in ACA 20.

We will be looking forward to working with Statewide Homeowners Association during the study, and we will be calling on you for information and testimony at Committee hearings.

Nicholas J. Petris, Chairman
Sacramento

* * *

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations on the CALIFORNIA HOMEOWNER magazine, a good production, and enter five subscriptions for me for the enclosed four names and myself.

Joseph S. Thompson
2411 Broadway, San Francisco

* * *

All economic systems are doomed to imperfection since they are at the mercy of man's lust for power. But of all, the free market allows the greatest diffusion of economic power and thereby protects freedom in all phases of life. — Students for Freedom.

Homeowners and Peace

Most U.S. homeowners seem to observe the peace, although the Constitution gives them the right to keep and bear arms. Which is to say that in time of necessity they may try, if they wish, to protect their homes and communities by force.

Homeowners ought to desire a peaceful world, and enough polls have already shown a deep attraction by people for a durable peace among nations. This attraction persists despite constant involvement in wars, and it merely illustrates the complex human paradox. We hate the income tax but we pay it. We cry, "peace, peace," but we are always marching off to war.

If enough of us decide to repeal the income tax, it will be repealed. If enough of us opt for peace, by being thoughtful, peaceful persons, perhaps, we may reach some kind of stage of world peace. On the realistic basis of past history, however, there may always be "wars and rumors of wars."

There is hardly any sense in being a homeowner if your home is always on the verge of being blown to bits, and you with it. Common sense, therefore, should make homeowners think about peace and how to attain it. The current nuclear test ban treaty is controversial; some think it a step toward peace, others a step toward war. But at least it makes us think of the problem of war and peace, and if we continue to think and plan and work we may conquer war as we have partially conquered fear and ignorance and poverty and disease.

In any event, inasmuch as the present peace drive is strongly under the influence of women and mothers, it is under the influence of homeowners. It is apparently under the influence of those who wish to protect the home and family and community. Both President Eisenhower and President Kennedy supported the limited nuclear test ban, and it is in fact an American proposal, and the American homeowner is more or less the image of America.

Homeowners can never be hurt by a just and durable peace. But no doubt there are wars that are necessary. The peaceful homeowner, in a world where thugs still exist, does not at once give up his guns. He tries to control crime and the conditions of crime, but he may still shoot if you break down his door. By the same token, the nuclear test ban treaty does not outlaw war, if that were possible.

As one of the principal supporters of the treaty said: "I am talking about genuine peace — the kind that enables men and nations to grow and hope and build a better life for their children . . ." Millions of persons all over the world are responsible for the treaty. Any genuine drive for peace will need solid support from homeowners interested in a better world here and now.

Nixon - Goldwater

It appears more and more likely that Richard Nixon will be the choice of Republicans in the center to prevent right-wing Barry Goldwater from obtaining the GOP presidential nomination. Eisenhower says he is neutral. Therefore, unless Romney, Scranton, Morton develop strength in the next few months, which seems unlikely, the question will be, can Nixon stop Goldwater?

It should be pointed out that neither of these gentlemen, nor Kennedy either, has taken a strong, positive stand in favor of property tax relief for homeowners and the business community, nor for a stable American economy free from the ravages of land speculation and the harmful profits of slum ownership.

California Homeowner

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- ✎ A monthly publication of direct interest to homeowners, keeping you informed of laws and developments affecting your home.
- ✎ Membership in a statewide organization and opportunities to attend HOMEOWNERS meetings, hear informed, well-known speakers. This is the only Statewide HOMEOWNERS Association in California.
- ✎ Privilege of attending top-flight, college level classes and seminars in fundamental economics.
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- ✎ An attractive Statewide HOMEOWNERS engraved membership certificate, suitable for framing.
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