

Senate Group To Probe Tax Increases

By Senator Richard Richards
The furor raised by Los Angeles County taxpayers when they received their tax bills this year has understandably not abated yet. Although exasperation is generally evidenced at this time of year, the usual relaxation of public indignation has not followed. Further, there seems to be a great deal of confusion present regarding responsibility for the raise, and perhaps of first importance is the need for shedding clear light on the entire subject.

It is in the hope of securing some clarification of the issues raised so violently in the past several weeks that I have called a meeting of the Senate Interim Committee on Metropolitan Areas, of which I am chairman, for December 23 in the State Building here in Los Angeles.

In the last session of the Legislature, I requested the implementation of an interim committee which could inquire into the problems arising from the exploding growth of our urban centers, and could, in the words of the resolution which created the committee, study and analyze "all matters relating to local government as they affect metropolitan areas."

REMEDY SOUGHT
It is now appropriate that this committee investigate the conditions which have brought about the heavy increase in taxation locally, and that it examine means of remedying this problem. In attendance at the December 23 meeting will be several of our State Senators who are members of this committee, and who have a lengthy background in the type of financial and governmental problems involved.

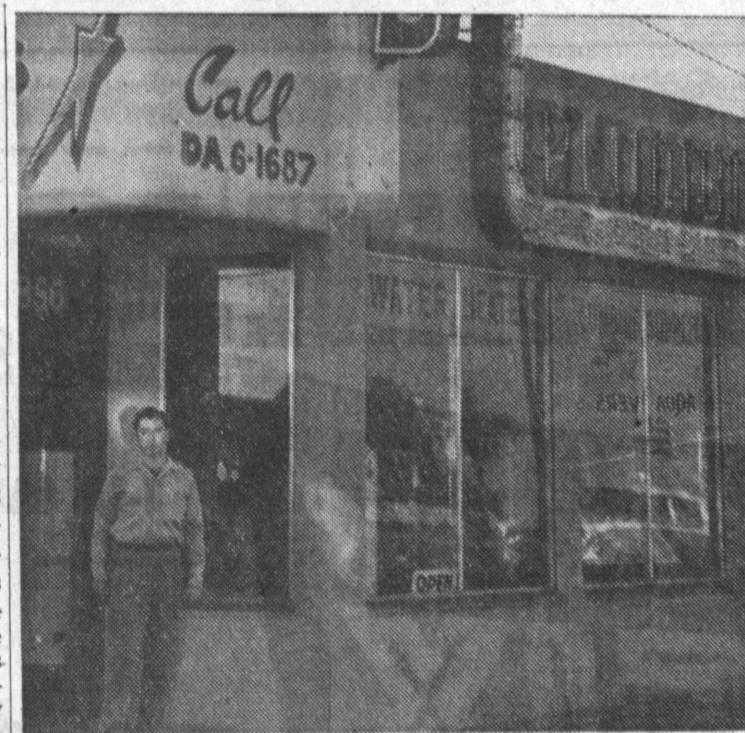
To effectively clarify the problem, it is, of course, necessary that we bring before the committee, as witnesses, representatives of the key governmental groups in Los Angeles County. Invitations have already been sent to (and acceptance secured from) the City Council; the Board of Supervisors, which will have one or more members present; County Assessor John R. Quinn; and Board of Equalization member Robert E. McDavid and his top tax assistant, Dixwell Pierce.

Key tax personnel from the Attorney General's office and the Legislative Counsel will be present to clarify legal points which are expected to arise, and other taxing agencies and experts on finance are also to be represented.

We have a right as taxpayers to be certain that none of us carry a disproportionately larger tax burden than any other; we should have the knowledge of where the responsibility for any increase lies, and not permit any buckpassing to cloud over the issue; and it is particularly vital that we know the direction governmental bodies are taking in regard to this question.

In the last session, the State Legislature approved a record two billion dollar budget. In doing this, we still managed to prevent any increase in state taxes. Now, I believe that a state committee is in the best position to bring together local groups with the aim of reaching agreement on the tax question which will be in the public interest.

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Deputy District Attorney Thomas W. Cochran, a regular member of the faculty of the Law School, will instruct the class. Cases and materials prepared by Professor Roland Perkins of the University of California at Los Angeles will be used as the basic instruction materials together with the legal writings of Judge Charles W. Efricke of Los Angeles, leading authority on California Criminal Law and Procedure.

Dr. Carl H. Manson, Dean of the Law School, announces that persons interested in pursuing the course in preparation for the practice of law should make immediate written application for admission to the Law School at 236 Newport ave., Long Beach.

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