

Homeowner at End of Line When Tax Buck is Passed

MAY 25, 1966

PRESS-HERALD

B-9

By PHILIP E. WATSON
County Assessor

While major attention in the last few weeks in Sacramento has been focused on the snail-paced progress of Assembly Bill 80, the property tax reform bill, a number of other pieces of legislation affecting our tax bills have slipped in and out of the legislative halls.

A Constitutional amendment which would, in effect, freeze assessments at low values until property owners were ready to sell, at high prices, for subdivision or other development is well on its way.

This is heavily supported by the farm interests, who see themselves as the major beneficiaries of such a value freeze. But it would benefit the owners of any large land-

holdings, who could wait out the tide of development with low tax bills, while the rest of us were picking up their tab.

SINCE IT IS a Constitutional amendment, it must be submitted to the voters via the ballot. If you see a catchy billboard slogan telling you to "Keep California Green," take a close look at the proposition. Your pocketbooks could go red.

Another effort to exempt business inventories from property taxes skimmed through the Assembly almost unnoticed. This is Assembly Concurrent Resolution 55, which establishes a special advisory committee to recommend alternate sources of revenue for local government if household furnishings, bus-

ness inventories, and solvent credits are exempted.

THE EXEMPTION of household furnishings, which almost everyone favors, and the exemption of inventories, which is special interest legislation, should not be tied together. The first would result in an insignificant tax loss and almost no shift in tax burden. The inventory exemption, on the other hand, would mean a loss of about 10 per cent of our total base and would mean the homeowners and other real property owners would have to make up this enormous difference.

Perhaps the most alarming feature of this resolution is that it states all the arguments for exempting inventories as if they were facts

when, in truth, they are merely unproven contentions. Those of us who oppose the inventory exemption can provide statistics to disprove each of these contentions. Yet 75 of the 80 Assemblymen joined in sponsoring this incredible resolution.

A BILL to exempt the per-

sonal property of educational radio and television stations has passed the Assembly and seems likely to pass the Senate. By itself, this will represent an insignificant revenue loss but again, it is another broadening of the welfare exemption and another indication of legislative willingness to chip away at the

tax base until only the homeowners are left.

Legislative reluctance to offer any significant property tax relief to any group of homeowners was demonstrated last week when Assembly Bill 88, a bill to allow the state to rebate a part of the property taxes paid by elderly citizens on fixed incomes, was sent to interim study by

the Senate Committee on Revenue and Taxation.

THE PROPOSAL will, of course, be revived at the next session of the legislature. But in the meantime, the tax relief door has once more been slammed in the face of the most marginal group of property owners. If, in the end, the legislature fails to pass the much-needed tax reform bill, this

session may prove one of the most disappointing in recent years.

(Political Advertising)



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Area Students To Enter Fair

Three Torrance students will exhibit projects at the Industrial Education Exposition of the 9th annual Great Western Fair and Dairy Show to be held June 1 through 5 at the Great Western Exhibit Center, Santa Ana Freeway and Atlantic Blvd. in Los Angeles.

Exhibitors are Alan Brackett, 16, 4270 W. 182nd St., and James Litsis, 16, 5844 W.

180th Place, students at North High School, and James Harb, 17, 5422 Michelle Drive, West High School student.

ATTENDS CONFERENCE

Dr. Bernard N. Robinson, optometrist, attended the California Optometric Association's Contact Lens conference which was held in Fresno.

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Jumbo 1/2-Gallon
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