

Watson Initiative Shakes Up Politicians

By HENRY C. MacARTHUR
Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO — Nothing in recent years has "shook up" California's politicians, both state and local, more than the proposed Watson amendment, which goes before the voters in November for adoption or rejection.

The amendment, proposed through the initiative sponsored by Philip E. Watson, assessor of Los Angeles County, fixes a limit on property taxes in the state which eventually will reach 1 per cent of the assessed

valuation of the property.

It also provides that property taxes cannot be used for "people related" services, which means education and welfare, where nearly 60 per cent of the property tax is now going.

Thus, if the property taxpayers want to cut education and welfare off at the pockets, it would be up to the state and federal government to provide the funds.

Casper Weinberger, state director of finance, and a former assemblyman, describes the Watson amend-

ment as "the most dangerous, deceptive and destructive measure to be presented to the voters of California in recent times." He says it can be compared to the worst of the George McLain initiatives, would effectively destroy local government, weaken the state's water plan, seriously injure the state's credit and fail to provide an overall tax relief program to the bulk of California's citizens, and would result in a substantial increase in the amount most people would have to pay

for state and local government.

The politicians have good reason to be frightened over the prospect of Proposition 9, which the Watson amendment will be on the November ballot, passing.

The reasons are clear, and simply put, the people of California are tired of empty promises concerning property tax relief, and as long as the administration and the state legislature do not seem inclined to provide such relief, although both have talked about it for two

years, they may feel the time has come to take matters into their own hands, and effectuate a reduction in the California property tax structure.

Although the Watson amendment does not contemplate any reduction in taxes, if the government officials plan to continue education and welfare in the style they have been accustomed, it at least gives some hope to those who are selling homes in highly taxed areas that some relief may be in sight.

The primary trouble with the Watson proposal is that while it places a limit on property taxes, it makes no provision for limits on other forms of taxation, such as the sales tax and the income tax, which hit the people generally, harder than the property tax.

So, as Weinberger says, if the amendment is adopted, "the alternative which obviously will be adopted will be to shift the locally-borne share of education and welfare to the state."

So if this were done, the

only immediate beneficiary of the amendment would be the property taxpayer, whose taxes, according to preliminary estimates, would be reduced by approximately 50 per cent.

Confronted with the possible problem of increasing income taxes about 100 per cent, and the sales tax from 5 to 12 per cent, it is small wonder that the state's politicians are concerned about the Watson amendment, and plan to do everything in their power to bring about its defeat.

Your Right to Know Is the Key to All Your Liberties

-Comment and Opinion-

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1968

Officer George Surber

Officer George B. Surber of the Los Angeles Police Department has joined a very select group of men.

Officer Surber, a Torrance resident, was awarded the Los Angeles Police Department's Medal of Valor Tuesday. That highly prized medal has been given to 146 men since the program was first inaugurated in 1925.

Officer Surber was honored for his heroic action in saving the lives of an injured woman and four small children who were victims of a traffic accident. He entered a burning automobile to pull the woman and one of the children from the very claws of death—without regard for his own life.

And he's one of the lucky ones. Ten of the medals have been awarded posthumously to men who gave their lives in the line of duty.

George Surber is typical of the dedicated men who place their devotion to duty, their concern for law and order, their belief in the principles which made America great above their own lives—not just once in a while, but every day of the week, every week of the year.

George Surber's job is often a thankless one, especially in these days when policemen have been singled out as special targets by the anarchists, revolutionaries, and even politicians seeking to destroy the very foundations of this nation.

George Surber has earned the Medal of Valor. And he also has earned the respect of every American who stands for the principles of this nation.

We are proud George Surber is part of our community.

ROYCE BRIER

Guinea Pigs Prove Rock Music Does Hurt the Ear

People over 30, said to be distrusted by those under 30, don't as a rule care for loud noise.

It is hard to sell subdivision houses near a large airport, where climbing jets fly every few minutes, and those who bought when planes were quieter and fewer complain bitterly. Jet engines fairly close generate about 120 decibels of sound.

One of the loudest manifestations of human aspiration today, comparable to a fire siren when you put your ear to it, is rock music. In the 1930s young folks, now grown, enjoyed sentimental dance bands. Let a kid today stumble on one of these old recordings, and he's like to throw up. When the kids on rare occasions drag the old folks to a rock session, the old folks are like to go into a coma.

When the kids with small rock bands practice at home, neighbors tend to complain, and call the cops to their rescue.

In the New York Times magazine, Prof. Benjamin DeMott, of Amherst, wrote a piece called "Rock as Salvation." In it he explored some rather precious philosophies of the rock phenomenon, of culture.

He found some rock intellectuals insisting it is the

basis of a new religious experience, particularly in the sessions where moving color and sound in great volume are combined.

Prof. DeMott suggested some of the lyrics of rock songs are meaningless, but the Professor speaks for those over 30. Under 30 finds these lyrics glowing with meaning and cosmic.

Opinions on Affairs of the World

When amplified, the sounds makes then one with the universe, which is hard even for octogenarian cosmologists to understand.

The amplifier is the key. When the human voice is drowned it does something to the listeners, leaving them mostly alone with themselves, a mixture of anguish and ecstasy. It has to, since old-fashioned forms of communications are suspended.

Some of the metaphysicists of the culture are now saying the great rock heroes—those whose disheveled pictures are posted life-size in the kid's bedroom—are modern geniuses who are

Shakespeare or Homer bringing to man a new life experience he never knew in the Old Stone Age.

But there is a little depreciation in this prodigious latter-day happening.

Recently Dr. David M. Lipscomb, director of the audio-clinical laboratory of the University of Tennessee, released a report of a three-month study of guinea pigs subjected to high decibel sound. Music played to the critters ranged from 120 (loud discotheque) to 138 decibels, just below the pain threshold.

Ears of the animals had 44 hours of listening, then one ear was plugged for another 44 hours. Microscopic examinations were then made of the unplugged ear, revealing breakdown of the cells of the cochlea, the part of the ear which translates sound waves to nerve impulses.

Further, students who habitually frequented rock sessions were found to have hearing deterioration.

So it may be that by 1980, those over 30 will need hearing aids. Those under 30 will distrust them.

Morning Report:

You can get the full hang of how big a menace Czechoslovakia was to Russia by what her troops did when they arrived in Prague. There was very little shooting but a lot of arresting.

Paratroopers almost first off occupied the offices of the academy of sciences and the writers' union. In the customary invasion, such places are way down on the priority list of likely targets. But here the enemy was ideas and the people who spread them. The jails are filling up.

The Czechs didn't have much of an army. The Russian custom agents probably could have handled the situation if the Czechs had ever moved East. But the Czech concept of freedom under communism was another matter. Only the Kremlin is in a position to know how dangerous to Soviet leaders that was.

Abe Mellinkoff

Outside Interests



FROM THE MAILBOX

Townsend's Efforts for Refuse Interests Aired

To the Editor:

In the June 30, 1968, issue of your newspaper an article appeared stating that Assemblyman Larry E. Townsend had joined forces with Ernest T. Winter and George A. Hart Jr. to form a new corporation known as Winter Enterprises, Inc. It was stated that this is to be an advertising and public relations corporation. Articles of Incorporation, 548168, with the Secretary of State June 25, 1968, are so broad that they can go into all and any types of business. Name it, they can do it.

In the Aug. 25, 1968, issue of your newspaper, an article appeared stating that Assemblyman Townsend submitted a resolution to the Legislature commending the formation of the Joint Committee on Solid Waste Disposal Problems. This is H.R. 532. This committee is comprised of different departments from city, county and state agencies. It just so happens that Ernest T. Winter is also a member of this committee. He is represented as vice president, California Solid Waste Research Institute.

On Jan. 17, 1968, Assemblyman Townsend submitted House Resolution No. 25 commending Ben K. Kazarian. In case you are not familiar, Mr. Ben K. Kazarian is president, California Solid Waste Research Institute. Among the many things for which he is commended, one is that "he founded the B.K.K. Co., achieving great success in the reclamation of many hundreds of acres of land." Did he reclaim this land by filling it with rubbish? If so, why the necessity for the following resolution?

H. R. No. 280 states in part: "one of the prime reasons for the reluctance on the part of owners of feasi-

ble sites to permit the disposal of solid wastes upon their property is the destruction of underlying market values of their land compared to unfilled property."

In our own case here in the city of Torrance, it has not been the reluctance of the property owners to use their land for dumps, but rather the people living around the area have been opposed to it. There is another part of the resolution that to me is terribly dangerous. It reads: "WHEREAS, Public policies encouraging the use of private land for community waste disposal, including but not limited to a reduction in ad valorem taxes or assessed valuation during the period of such use, could be a practical solution to this problem."

Is this what we want? Tax concessions given to private dumps. The private rubbish business now charges more for pickup, more to dump in their private dumps than the county. Take a tour of private and county dumps. See the difference. Besides all this, not only are private rubbish businesses making money while the filling is taking place, but they still own the land to sell to the county or what have you for a golf course, etc. (Example: Victoria Golf Course.) When the county dumps are full, the land automatically becomes recreational sites for the people.

In the Sept. 8, 1968, issue of your newspaper, it was stated that Assembly Bill No. 1602 — Townsend, was signed by Governor Reagan. This bill "provides for compensation to private refuse collection disposal services when these operators lose their franchises through the incorporation of a city or an-

nexation of the area to a city." It permits the operation of private rubbish service to continue in the area for a three-year period after annexation.

Does it appear to you that there might be a special interest for which Assemblyman Townsend has been working while he has been at Sacramento? This private interest is a dangerous one to all of us. If we aren't careful, the problem of rubbish will be taken away from local entities and be controlled by a committee comprised of private rubbish concerns sanctioned by the state government. Such a plan was outlined at the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources Hearings held in Torrance March 1 and 2, 1968 by Mr. Sam Egan, president, California Refuse Removal Council, Southern District.

Why did Mr. Townsend get these hearings held in Torrance? Why did Mr. Townsend play up all the good points of the private rubbish interest and belittle the county and city operations? Was Mr. Townsend working towards a tax relief for private rubbish at that time? Was Mr. Townsend laying the groundwork for a committee to be formed which would eventually be comprised of the private rubbish operators who will control all the solid waste disposal?

I suggest that all of your readers start looking into these things I have mentioned. They are all public record.

I am a registered Democrat, but my community, district and state come first before any party. I want my assemblyman to represent all the people and not a special interest group.

MRS. B. SHELBOURN

HERB CAEN SAYS:

She Won't Talk About Politics

Dorothy Atwood of Piedmont, who has seven children, is back from Atlantic City, where she was named Single Parent of the Year at the Parents Without Partners Convention. When a TV interviewer there asked her opinion on the Presidential race, she replied: "There are two subjects I never discuss publicly—politics and sex—and one of them is because I don't like it. Next question" . . . Athens of the West (would you believe Sparta?): Palmers Drug Store at University and Shattuck in Berkeley is doing a brisk business in surplus Army gas masks at 99 cents each. They were supposed to be Halloween items, but the students have found something scarier than witches.

Attorney Barney Dreyfus agrees that marijuana can have adverse effects on the human body, "in the form of premature incarceration" . . . Amid all the headlines about stores that will no longer sell guns, toys or otherwise, it should be noted that Portigol's Children's Store on Clement hasn't stocked a toy gun since it opened 35 years ago . . . Police Capt. Charlie Barca's boys, alerted by this moralistic dept., knocked "Topless Beavers" right off the Peppermint Tree's marquee; not only that, they are checking the action inside with feigned interest and alloyed fascination.

News story in the Honolulu Advertiser: "Georgia State Senator Gene Holcombe, 45, here to campaign for presidential candidate George C. Wallace, has reported a \$1,600 theft from his Waikiki hotel room. He told police the money was stolen early Sunday by a woman he met the night before through a taxi driver . . . Police are seeking a Negro woman, about 40, as a suspect."

A Letter . . . To My Son

By Tom Rische
High School Teacher and Youth Worker

Dear Bruce,
One of your father's most exciting experiences was driving a car in England, where driving is on the left side of the road (because in olden days, knights rode on that side to ready their sword hands for action). The English no longer use swords, but if you fail to get out of the wayfast enough, they'll run you down with their cars, which has the same effect.

Your father had to reverse nearly everything he has learned about driving in the past 20 years or so. Most controls for the car are reversed, and I frequently found myself rolling down the windows when I wanted to shift gears.

Ten minutes after renting the car, I scraped some paint off the fender of a car that I was trying to pass. Within a day, I no longer was bouncing the car off the curb as we turned corners.

Major crises occurred when I had to make sudden decisions, like whether to turn on the right or left side of the road. More than once I found myself headed into oncoming traffic.

The car rental agency had thoughtfully plastered large stickers, "Visitor to Britain," on front and back windshields so other drivers would know we were sort of learning to drive all over again.

The fact that British roads aren't particularly well marked added to our problems.

One welcome absence was that of large roadside billboards. We got a clear view of the countryside, which is beautiful. Nearly all advertisements are plastered on walls or buildings.

Although the English have some motorways (freeways), most roads are considerably narrower, dating back to the Middle Ages when a street was only wide enough to accommodate a knight on horseback carrying his lance. Nonetheless, many trucks double park if they can't find a parking spot at the curb, and this often narrows traffic to one lane, if it doesn't stop it entirely.

A friend told me that he rented a car and abandoned it within 15 minutes, but your dad made it for six days.

Yours for driving on the right.

YOUR DAD

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