

# Proposition 9, 1A: The Public Still Pays the Bill

By HENRY C. MACARTHUR  
Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO — This is the final column dealing with propositions on the Nov. 5 general election ballot.

Propositions 9 and 1A are two measures with similar objectives—property tax reduction. Nine is the only initiative measure on the ballot and 1A is an afterthought provided by the state legislature to offer a vehicle to prevent passage of Proposition 9, known as the Watson Amendment because it was developed and sponsored by Philip E. Watson, Los Angeles County Assessor.

Methods of providing property tax relief in the two measures are wholly different.

The Watson Amendment flatly limits property taxes to 1 per cent of market value for "property related" services, defined as all services other than "people related" services, which include education and welfare and such other services as may be fixed by the legislature relating to "people."

It is estimated the amendment will cut property taxes by 50 per cent. The legislative proposal and the act adopted to carry out its intent proposed to grand homeowners a \$750 annual exemption on property, give renters a double standard deduction on income taxes, eliminate the household property tax, and provide business a 15 per cent reduction in the inventory tax.

Arguments in favor of the Watson Amendment, written by Watson, contend that its adoption will force government to lower property taxes so people can continue to live in their homes. Watson holds that the time has arrived for the people to take a hand in demanding complete tax reform, which their elected representatives have failed to provide, and holds that the best place to start such reform is with property taxes, which fall hardest on the small homeowner.

Virtually all large organizations in the state, headed by the California Teachers Association, oppose Proposition 9, contending it is a "tax trap" which offers more danger than relief for the public, which would be hit with higher sales and income taxes to finance welfare and education, as well as giving large landowners and speculators an unfair break.

Arguments for and against Proposition 1A are not available as yet, due to the legislature's lateness in getting it on the ballot, but the primary argument in its behalf

is that it gives some measure of relief to all phases of taxes with the exception of the state sales tax, which will not be reduced a half a cent if it is adopted.

Should both 9 and 1A pass, the measure that receives the most votes become a part of the constitution. California voters between now and Nov. 5 can look forward to one of the hardest-hitting campaigns in recent years.

The Watson amendment, in proposing a complete change in the structure of government financing, is an indication, whether it passes or not, that at least some people are making an attempt to halt increases in government. But the amendment fall short of its purpose as it fails to reduce government spending and rather, presages a major shift in the tax burden with no assurance of any reduction in over-all spending.

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Your Right to Know Is the Key to All Your Liberties

## -Comment and Opinion-

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1968

### Political Muscle Bared

"Big Daddy" Jess M. Unruh, displaying the raw muscle he has wielded in California politics since the "retirement" of Boss Art Samish several years ago, may have gone too far Wednesday when he called Governor Reagan a "coward and a liar."

Many Californians believe Governor Reagan may have been very close to the truth when he accused Unruh of building campaign funds for his friends by putting "price tag" on legislation.

Whether the Governor had the

mechanics exactly right is something only the insiders can judge. But that Unruh does have the campaign funds and that he does parcel them out to those who toady to him in Sacramento is one of the state's poorest kept secrets.

It's to Reagan's credit that he refuses to go along with the power plays of "Big Daddy," and we applaud him for bringing the matter into the open.

Let Unruh explain where his huge slush fund comes from.

### Tax Relief Hoax

Proposition 1A, the state legislature's proposed property tax relief measure born out of fear and haste, should rank along with Pittdown Man and Orson Welles' radio version of a Martian invasion as one of the great hoaxes of the century.

Proponents of the legislature's measure are spoon-feeding the voter a bowl of "property tax relief," while in effect, the rentor in the state will be the great beneficiary.

The proposition is nothing more than "the old wolf dressed in the sheep's hide trick." It takes on a "promise 'em anything" attitude in offering a \$70 cash rebate to all property owners for this fiscal year and a \$750 exemption in assessed valuation from property taxes in succeeding years.

However, there is nothing in the proposition to guarantee that property tax rates and the taxable percentage of assessed valuation will not increase right along with the so-called relief.

A \$70 rebate this year could easily be chewed up in next year's bill. And a higher tax rate in ensuing years could off-set any exemptions offered in the legislature's plan.

Meanwhile, the rentors in the state will receive tax relief and will not have to contend with the "ifs" of the future.

All rentors will have their standard state income tax exemption

doubled from \$500 to \$1,000 for single persons and from \$1,000 to \$2,000 for married couples.

The property tax on household belongings, solely a rentor's tax, will be totally eliminated.

True tax relief in the proposition is for the rentor—while the future for the property owner-taxpayer is clouded in the whims of the legislature and those bodies that set new tax rates.

### Lots of Bosses

How many governments do Americans live under? Most people, thinking of the federal, state, and city or village governments would answer three. Others, remembering counties and townships, would say four or five. The fact is, it takes seven "Governments" to administer the affairs of the United States and they add up to more than 80,000 separate units, reports Commerce Clearing House. In addition to the federal, state, county, township, and municipal governments, there are school districts and special governing units, such as highway and housing authorities. The grand total is 81,299. — Pomona (Calif.) Progress-Bulletin.

### Act of Spite

A young assistant professor of English at the University of California, Irvine, has invited Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver to return to teach at one or more sessions of his literature course in November. In doing so, Dr. Stephen Shapiro has gone directly against the advice and wishes of his department chairman, Dr. Hazard Adams. Prof. Shapiro has asserted the issue "is not Eldridge Cleaver but the matter of faculty autonomy or academic freedom." Under the circumstances, Shapiro's action looks much more like a childish or a deliberately damaging exercise in pique and defiance, aimed at the UC Board of Regents' ruling controlling the access of Cleaver and other guests to UC teaching platforms. . . . Prof. Shapiro has played right into the hands of the demagogues of both the left and right persuasion, whose purpose never has been to improve the university as an educational institution. —Costa Mesa Orange Coast Daily Pilot

### Count People

According to the Constitution, a census is supposed to be taken every 10 years. The original idea was to find out how many people lived in the United States. There was no intention to probe into their private affairs. Now Census Bureau is going far beyond this and wants the answers to such questions as: whether you have a home freezer, if you have been married before, how many people use your bathroom or kitchen and many other things that are really nobody's business.

The next census is due in 1970. Legislation that deserves unanimous support has been introduced to prohibit the federal government from using this occasion as a means of invading the privacy of American citizens. After all, the purpose of the census is to count people — not the number of gold fillings in their teeth.

Wouldn't It Be Simpler, Hubert-?

HERB CAEN SAYS:

## It's the Most Depressing City

From "The Quick Red Fox," by John D. MacDonald, successor to the late Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler as grand master of the diamond-hard detective novel:

"And so we drove back to the heart of the city. San Francisco is the most depressing city in America. The come-latelys might not think so. They may be enchanted by the steep streets up Nob and Russian and Telegraph, by the sea mystery of the bridge over the redwood country on a foggy night, by the urban compartmentalization of Chinese, Spanish, Greek, Japanese, by the smartness of the women and the city's iron clutch on culture. It might look just fine to the new ones.

"But she has lost it, boy. She used to give it away, and now she sells it to the tourists. She imitates herself. Her figure has thickened. The things she says now are mechanical and memorized. She overcharges for cynical services.

"Maybe if you are from Dayton or Amarillo or Wheeling or Scranton or Camden she can look like magic to you because you have not had a chance to see what a city can be. This one had her chance to go straight and she lost it somehow, and it has been downhill for her ever since. That's why she is so depressing to those of us who knew her when. We all know what she could have been, and we all know the lousy choice she made. She has driven away the ones who loved her best. A few keep trying. Herb Caen. A few others. But the love words have a hollow tone these days."

Well, thanks for the mention en passant, Mr. MacDonald, and I'm not going to stand here and argue with you. You're too big and tough, too sure of your ground; besides, there are times when I'm forced to agree. It's a sad thing for a city — any city — when tourism becomes its No. 1 industry. It used to be things like shipping and printing and whatever it is they do in those tall buildings around Montgomery St., but now it's the tourist and his buck, and the faster the better.

We are in danger of choking on our own glorious publicity, half of it contrived and self-manufactured, half of it legitimate. San Francisco has always attracted tourists, but in the old days it was natural, unself-conscious. Outsiders enjoyed the city because the natives enjoyed it. Now we're going out and grabbing them, not too unlike the barkers on Broadway, and we're being effective beyond our maddest imaginings: the tourist season just past was the biggest one in history. Not only that, next year will be bigger.

The city is getting a hard glint in its eye, and the most typical sound is no longer the cable car gong, the foghorn, or the midnight blast of a ship heading toward the Gate. It's the cash register. To some, the only sound that counts.

Aw The poor kid dept.: Noble quote from the Rev. Henry Benton MacFadden, about to retire from the ministry over there in Vacaville: "It's rather a difficult matter, starting out to earn an honest living after 45 years in the church" . . . Kiddie korner revisited: A six-year-old boy, visiting Pajaro Dunes, postcarded his mother: "They have the biggest ocean I've ever seen! But don't worry mommy, I stay in the shallow end."

Grand finale: The Opera Guild's fashion show at Trader Vic's recently (to diie over) ended with Model Mimi London wearing a floor-length white fox. As she stood there, preening, Commentator Adalene Ross stage-whispered: "Unzip it." Mimi, out of the side of her mouth: "Can't. I'm not wearing a stitch underneath." Adalene was referring to the bottom half of the coat, which zips off, but Mimi didn't know about THAT zipper — so when Adalene repeated, Unzip it!, "game-to-the-end Mimi did. Right down the middle. And that shows a lot of class.

Eat more wry: Dep. State Attorney General Marshall Mayer, running for the Assembly, is now taking on the lumber barons who are logging in San Mateo County. How-does-this-grab-you quote from Mayer: "Peninsula forests are being logged to provide lumber for the Japanese—who forbid destruction of their own forests!"



FROM THE MAILBOX

## Ex-Policeman Seeks New Incentives for Training

Editor, Press-Herald

Law and order today is the subject of great public interest and having spent six years as a police officer and the last thirteen years as a civilian, I feel I have been graced with an insight to both sides of the problems and would like to suggest a plan to professionalize police work within a budget the public can afford. I would like to refer to this as "The Torrance Plan."

First in behalf of the police officers, I'm sure the public is totally unaware of the thousands of hours they have spent attending colleges and seminars on their own time, without any incentive other than to try to become the best policeman they are individually capable of being.

Yet, myself and others did not choose to follow this course, and right there is where the system begins to crumble. The first point being that there is no way for me as a civilian to identify the police officer that is going above his call of duty to educate and prepare himself.

The second point is that we, the public, do not offer the policeman any incentive to educate himself further. With this in mind, I propose "The Torrance Plan," a plan that will require the support and cooperation of our city administrators, educational leaders, and local lawyers.

First, I would hope that our Mayor, Mr. Isen (a most able attorney) would call upon our attorneys within the city to form a board of governors. This board of governors would establish the format for a highly specialized and professionalized course in criminal law and criminal law only.

This course must be at such a professional caliber that in due course the board of governors could and would in all good conscience appeal to the California State Bar to create a special branch to further explore and exploit this program statewide, and hope that eventually the State Bar would see fit to award a special degree as a California Police Criminal Attorney for policemen only, and to be used in police work only.

Next, I would hope that our Torrance Board of Education would supply the teachers and all other necessary aids to establish this course and make it available to our police officers.

Finally, I would hope that our city fathers would offer a pay incentive to a police officer to take the course, with automatic pay increases as he successfully completes the course. Upon successful

completion of each stage of the course, there should be awarded to the police officer a distinct and easily recognizable emblem to be worn on his uniform so the public would be aware of his intellectual growth and attainment.

We have all the facilities within our city to initiate a program of this type. As a citizen, I want professional police work—for me and my family—and I am willing to pay my share to see it come to pass. I also feel the police officer has a responsibility to show by his efforts that he is willing and capable of becoming a professional.

### Thanks Offered

Editor, Press-Herald:

We would like to take the opportunity afforded by National Newspaper Week to thank you for your coverage of Red Cross services and activities, and for the support you provide Red Cross through coverage of the United Crusade fund campaign.

Few have keener appreciation of the function of community newspapers than the Red Cross volunteers living and working in your circulation area who depend on your paper to keep informed of local events. Community awareness of Red Cross programs through newspaper coverage has always made it easier for Red Cross volunteers to seek funds, blood donors, trainees and special kinds of volunteer help.

Your cooperation has been a valuable contribution to the success of many Red Cross programs.

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