

Drop property tax for schools

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

State Sen. John R. Otterbacher (D-Grand Rapids), a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate, last week outlined yet another tax reform.

Bringing his "no frills" campaign to a meeting of the Livonia Optimist Club, he said he would favor scrapping the property tax as the primary method of financing public schools.

A tax limitation proposal championed by a group called Taxpayers United for Tax Limitation, a tax cut being sought by Shiawassee County Drain Commissioner Robert Tisch and a group called Coalition for Property Tax Reform are trying to hold down government spending by limiting property tax increases.

Otterbacher also proposed putting an eight-mill to 13-mill ceiling on local property taxes. These revenues, he

said, would be used to fund local government. Otterbacher's proposal resembles another plan being discussed at the state capitol. That plan would keep total tax payments the same, but would reduce property taxes and increase income taxes.

The public schools, dependent on property tax revenues, would therefore fund a portion of the state's general fund. The lost revenue from the general taxes would be made up by increases in the state income tax and corporate taxes, Otterbacher said.

"THAT'S TAX reform—a shift away from an unfair tax to a tax that reflects an ability to pay," he said.

The property tax is unfair. It doesn't reflect an ability to pay.

He called his alternative "more radical" than the Tisch Amendment which would cut property taxes in half and limit future increases in property

assessments to 2½ per cent a year.

"The Tisch Amendment would cut property taxes half," Otterbacher said, "mine would nearly eliminate property taxes."

It is unlikely voters will get a chance to vote on his proposal, though. It is not being pushed by any organizations. It has neither the backing of the Taxpayers United tax limitation plan nor the volunteers and grass roots support of the Tisch Amendment.

In order to find it's way to a place on the November ballot, Otterbacher's proposal would have to gain the support of two-thirds of both houses of the state legislature.

OTTERBACHER endorsed neither Tisch's proposal nor the more moderate tax limitation plan.

"I'm trying to find out what their effects would be the next time Michigan had a recession. What would it mean if it were 1974 revisited in 1980?"

"What does eight per cent unemployment for 18 months mean? Would it mean a curtailment in schools?" he asked.

His questions were aimed directly at



JOHN R. OTTERBACHER

Headline's tax limitation proposal which would limit taxes to a percentage of the state's total personal income plus an allowance for inflation based on the cost of living index.

Tisch amendment to cut property taxes draws older, vocal supporters

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Former Vice President Spiro Agnew would call Robert Tisch's supporters part of the "Great American Silent Majority."

Metropolitan Detroit's share of the silent majority is beginning to make some noise.

Tisch, who is spearheading the drive to cut property taxes in half, is the general who leads a loosely organized grey-haired volunteer army. Supporter of the Shiawassee County Drain Commissioner's tax-cut plan seem to be older taxpayers with middle-income and working-class backgrounds.

Joining the chorus of the growing national tax revolt, they're complaining about ever-increasing property taxes and excessive waste in government.

"IT'S LIKE PAYING rent for your own home," said Nelson J. Hedger, a retiree from the city of Wayne.

"They've been assessing our home up every year," said Berne E. Hedger. "Twenty-five years ago they paid \$12,500 for their home. Today it is assessed at \$26,000, we said."

"We're telling the government to cut back on their frills spending," she said. "In the schools we need more reading, arithmetic and writing, not carpeting, uniforms and \$5,000 administrators."

"I can see what's happening to people and their dreams of owning their own property," said Carlton Kissner, a retired school administrator for the Melvindale-North Allen Park school district. Kissner now lives in Brooklyn, Mich., but has been with Tisch since he began circulating petitions to put his tax-cut amendment on the ballot.

"People are fighting not to be pushed off the economic edge," Kissner said. For many senior citizens, he said, "it's a real tough job just finding the money" to pay their taxes.

"WE'VE BEEN WORKING harder in the past five years than at any other time," said Westland businesswoman Laura (Vicki) Wofford, "and we don't have time to show for it."

Mrs. Wofford and her husband, who operate the J. Wofford Company, an auction house in the City of Wayne, do not fit the description of the typical Tisch supporter.

She is relatively young. Her grey hair is stylishly coiffed. She is the most militant of the people who have manned Tisch's headquarters on Michigan Avenue in the City of Wayne. Where Kissner's voice is calm, deliberate and soothing, her's is powerful and charged with emotion.

The 28-year-old business that she

and her husband operate has become Tisch's headquarters.

Since it opened its doors last week to those who want to sign petitions, a steady stream of Wayne County residents has trickled in.

Moreover, it has sent those who came to sign a petition back out into neighborhoods, shopping centers and other lobbies spreading the gospel of Tisch and hoping to recruit more disciples.

Tisch's troops "remind me of the little old ladies wearing tennis shoes who supported Barry Goldwater in '64," said one member of the Livonia Optimists Club last week.

While the volunteers seem to come from the same middle-income, senior citizen background, the hard-core staffers—those manning the phones at the Wayne headquarters and organizing petition drives in Oakland and Macomb Counties—have come together from smaller, organized groups of disgruntled taxpayers.

Kissner, for example, headed a statewide, non-profit organization called Michigan Citizens for Reasonable Taxation before joining Tisch.

Lillian Dennis, a Warren City Councilwoman, headed a Macomb County group called CRAMIT, Citizens Revolt Against Massive Income Taxes.

"My husband is retired. He gets a pension of \$6,500, part-time as a civilian man I get \$3,000. We have and saved for many, many years to get this home. Now we can't afford the taxes," Mrs. Dennis said.

Said she couldn't remember how much her annual property taxes were.

"I'm such a busy woman I don't pay attention. I write the checks and that's it," she said.

Junk-a-thon in Royal Oak

Used wedding gowns and tuxedos, a hydroplane, religious comic books, a tree climbing harness, a cement mixer and scrub gear are just a few of the items that will be for sale at what is being billed as the world's second largest garage sale in Royal Oak Saturday and Sunday, July 22 and 23.

This is the third year that the city's chamber of commerce is running the event and the organizers predict more than 80,000 shoppers are expected. More than 250 stalls will be set up in the downtown Royal Oak parking structure on Third and Center by area merchants, private individuals, church groups and service clubs. Last year 223 exhibitors drew over 50,000 people to the garage sale.

The City of Detroit's annual garage sale is reputedly the world's largest.

Tell someone you love

the magic is the music on **wmjc fm 95.**



HILLTOP SPLENDOR. Dramatic Contemporary overlooks garden pool setting and Walnut Lake in the distance. Lavish interior features white Italian Marble foyer, sunken living room with full brick wall fireplace, extraordinary fireplaced family room, 40' solid Oak beams in vaulted ceilings, unique interior and exterior lighting. Four bedrooms plus private library, recreation room. On secluded Bloomfield Hill acreage. 647-5950.



HILLTOP SPLENDOR. Dramatic Contemporary overlooks garden pool setting and Walnut Lake in the distance. Lavish interior features white Italian Marble foyer, sunken living room with full brick wall fireplace, extraordinary fireplaced family room, 40' solid Oak beams in vaulted ceilings, unique interior and exterior lighting. Four bedrooms plus private library, recreation room. On secluded Bloomfield Hill acreage. 647-5950.



PALATIAL TUDOR on private acreage. Breathtaking open foyer and living room with vaulted ceilings, towering fireplace and balcony-bridge spanning bedroom wings. 5 bedrooms, 5 baths, library, Central Air, etc. 628-9100. \$279,000.



VALUE EXTRAS highlight this 1976 home. Large sunroom, A/C, electric air cleaner, stained woodwork, crown moldings, Microwave and Compactor, brick foyer, wet bar, etc. 3000 sq. ft. home. 628-9100. \$119,900.



PANORAMIC VIEWS of Spring-fed Walnut Lake from most every room of this charming Cape Cod. Sweeping lawns on over four acres gradually slope to 135' of treed shoreline. Two large bedrooms on each floor, 2½ baths and family room with fireplace in walkout lower level. Comfortable living room has rustic fireplace with rough-hewn mantle. Three car attached garage. Birmingham schools. 651-8100. \$164,900.



PALATIAL TUDOR on private acreage. Breathtaking open foyer and living room with vaulted ceilings, towering fireplace and balcony-bridge spanning bedroom wings. 5 bedrooms, 5 baths, library, Central Air, etc. 628-9100. \$279,000.



BLOOMFIELD ON THE LAKE—prize location for this 4 bedroom, 2½ bath Ranch home. 2-way fireplace serves family and living rooms. Deck off Master Suite. Extensive wood parquet floor. Nicely decorated. 626-9100. \$139,900.



EXECUTIVE RETREAT. New luxury Ranch home offers finest custom features. Cathedral-beamed ceilings, recessed lighting, Lenore kitchen, Central Air, Intercom, 3 bedrooms (each served by one of five baths). 646-6000. \$169,900.



TOTAL CHARM on heavily wooded acre of privacy. Early American decor enhances huge living and family rooms with fireplaces, big Florida room, brick patio on gorgeous yard. Central Air and ... 647-5950. \$109,900.



LOOKING FOR VALUE, room to breathe and relax, suncurved corner lot, spacious rear living room designed for gracious entertaining, country kitchen where cooking is a pleasure? Look no further. 557-6700. \$79,900.



FEELING OF VOLUME, serenely beautiful setting highlight this well located Southfield home. Kitchen is a chef's delight, fireplaced family room encourages family togetherness. A home of distinction! 557-6700. \$52,500.



UNIQUE, custom built Multi-level Contemporary on a sloping treed lot. This home features a great room with cathedral ceiling, 3 large bedrooms, 2½ baths plus many other features. 651-8850. \$109,900.



FIVE MINUTES to Freeway, 12 year old Southfield home offers immediate occupancy, custom Oak window treatment in spacious living room. Enjoy a tremendous activities area. 557-6700. \$79,900.



CUSTOM HUNTINGTON WOODS Gem with mansion-size rooms but cozy charm on vine-covered cottage. Lovely formal dining room will delight a gracious host—one of many highlights. 557-6700. \$74,900.



LIKE-NEW, nicely groomed Quad-level on 187' deep lot. Library or fourth bedroom, sleepable family room, maintenance free exterior, private patio across entire back. 626-5100. \$66,900.

Chamberlain
REALTORS®

Country Squire Shop

Gentlemen's Fine Apparel
75 W. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills

SUMMER CLEARANCE

SALE

Your opportunity to save

20% to 50%

on the finest men's clothing
and accessories

Special Savings on Most Styles of
BALLY SHOES

1/3 OFF

Hours: Daily 9:30-6 pm Fri. eve's til 8:30