

August 12, 1967

THE BRAWLEY NEWS WON'T PRINT THIS !!!

It is now necessary to point out again to you the flagrant deceptions perpetrated on you by the Brawley News to fool you on city taxes.

On August 7th and 8th just a few days ago, the Brawley City Council had meetings. On the meeting of the 7th, Charles Warren offered a plan to renovate City Hall and its surroundings at a cost of \$140,000. Councilman Dr. Yellen proposed 3 methods of obtaining the money to pay for this renovation. On the 8th, the Council debated on the budget and also on the tax rate on which your city property taxes will be paid. Again Dr. Yellen proposed the 3 methods of obtaining money that he had spoken about the night before, as a way in which the tax rate could be reduced about 40% so that your property taxes could be reduced by this amount. But the rest of the members of the City Council refused to do what Dr. Yellen proposed and you again are being swindled on your taxes.

Now these proposals about getting the money to run the city have been given at City Council meetings before. In plain language, the other 4 Councilmen are afraid of the big ranchers and if they consent to do what Dr. Yellen proposes, they will be ruined. So they have what is called a "conflict of interest". If they do what is best for the city, they will be ruined by the big farm interests. This year it was the turn of Dr. Yellen to become the Mayor of the city. But the others on the City Council are so intimidated by the big farm interests that they would not make Dr. Yellen the Mayor but put in Councilman Williams.

Now all this swindling on the taxes can be avoided if you taxpayers are informed what is happening. But the Brawley News, one of the papers in SCHURZ'S PROSTITUTED PRESS will not print the truth, or twists the facts or just omits to print what was said or done at these Council meetings. The Brawley News just murders the FREEDOM OF THE PRESS so that you will be kept in ignorance and in this way make it possible for the big ranchers to exploit and cheat you in various ways and particularly on the taxes.

Now this year the City of Brawley has a budget of \$1.9 millions. Through gasoline and sales taxes, etc. the city gets lots of money from the State so that by city property taxes around \$400,000 has to be gotten. Everyone in the City of Brawley who has a place of business here must pay a business license (occupational) tax. Big ranchers like the Elmores who have 3 offices in town and who receive about \$1 million in charity handouts from the U.S. Government yearly, do not pay any business license taxes. Many other outfits like insecticide or fertilizer companies which are owned by the big farm interests also do not pay this type of tax. It is estimated that if they paid their taxes like they should in proportion to their gross receipts, the city would collect an additional \$30,000 yearly.

You can see that the big ranchers and their pals escape about 8% of the city taxes and if they were forced to pay, that your property taxes would be reduced by 8%. Dr. Yellen ever since he became Councilman about 3 years ago, has brought this matter up at City Council meetings. The other 4 Councilmen in fear, have done nothing. THE BRAWLEY NEWS HAS NOT REPORTED THE STATEMENTS FREQUENTLY MADE AT THE COUNCIL MEETINGS AND YOU TAXPAYERS HAVE BEEN KEPT IN IGNORANCE.

The next method of getting more money for the city and reducing the city property taxes is this. The Imperial Irrigation District was bankrupt in 1931. It was only in the business of selling Colorado River water at that time. It was not in the electric power business. The Sierra Nevada Electric Co. an investor owned corporation distributed the electricity here at that time.

So the only thing the District had to do is increase the price of the river water to get more money. But in conspiracy with the big ranchers, it increased the price of water to the cities so that it was double what the ranchers were paying for the same dirty water. (Cities purify and filter this water so that it is fit for human consumption). This swindling of the cities kept up until 1961. By this time the I.I.D. had forced the Sierra Nevada Electric Co. out of business here and was cheating the people in the cities to the tune of \$14 millions yearly so that it could sell the water to the ranchers at 1/4 the correct price while it sold the electricity at 3 times the correct price.

In 1961, Dr. Yellen began to investigate this in Washington, D.C. in the Interior Dept. Someone in the Interior Dept. tipped off the I.I.D. that Dr. Yellen was on the war path about this swindle. So the I.I.D. put out a statement with much double talk and stopped the overcharging. In the 30 years since 1931 when this swindle was started, the District has defrauded the people of Brawley out of \$300,000. The Anti-Trust Laws in a case of illegal price fixing such as this, permits the injured party to sue to get back the amount swindled plus triple damages which in this instance would amount to \$900,000. So the total to be obtained is \$1.2 millions in this 30 years water swindle.

Dr. Yellen has spoken on this several times in which he advocated the lawsuit. If we got this money, it is possible for the taxpayers not to pay taxes for about 3 years. This money could be used in payment for the \$140,000 needed to renovate the City Hall. Part could be used to cover the open canal on the northern limits of the city. But Dr. Yellen's pleas fall on the deaf ears of the intimidated Councilmen.

THE BRAWLEY NEWS DOES NOT PRINT ANY OF THE PROPOSALS ON THIS MATTER AND YOU ARE KEPT IN IGNORANCE SO YOU CAN BE PLAYED FOR SUCKERS BY THE BIG FARM INTERESTS AND THE IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT.

The final method of reducing taxes for you Brawley residents is based on putting the property of the I.I.D. in the city on the tax rolls. This alone would bring in about \$150,000 and give you a reduction of about 40% in taxes. Now this has some complex legal questions involved which can not be described here for lack of space. This has been pushed by Dr. Yellen at Council meetings but nothing is done and Lawyer Schmitt HAS NEVER researched the legal basis for this method.

The Brawley News of Aug. 9, 1967 in an article "YELLEN ASKS IID PUT ON BRAWLEY TAX ROLLS" has it written up as if Lawyer Schmitt, the City Attorney, gives a definite opinion that this can not be done. The truth is that Mr. Schmitt just gave an offhand opinion and stated he has not put in any study on this matter which has ramifications.

To show what is meant. The City of Los Angeles for many years contended it could not be taxed for its Owens River Aqueduct in Mono and Inyo Counties but it was forced to pay taxes 3 years ago and now pays \$2.5 millions yearly. The same thing happened at Phoenix in regards to the Salt River Project (an Irrigation District) which about 3 years ago was also forced to pay property taxes.

The Imperial Irrigation District is now paying taxes on its poles, lines, transformers, substations and offices in Coachella Valley to the County of Riverside. John Bowman, the previous Assessor-Collector, put land that the I.I.D. owned on the County tax rolls (he did this on legal advice) and tried to collect taxes from the I.I.D. which refused to pay. Bowman never had the guts to take the District to Court and force payment. So you can see that this matter needs more than an offhand opinion by Lawyer Schmitt. The Brawley News does not tell you this. The Brawley News gave a twisted version on this method and nothing else.