

# No Decision in Assessment Hearing

## Local Firms Protest Equalization Plan

By AL CURREY  
Register-Guard Staff Writer  
SALEM—A two hour hearing before the State Tax Commission failed Tuesday to bring a decision in the problem of equalizing downtown Eugene property assessments.

The conference, presided over by Robert D. Maclean, chairman of the state commission, was the third formal inquiry into complaints by owners of properties downtown west of Willamette St.

Maclean adjourned the meeting in the state office building with an assurance that the Tax Commission would attempt to try an order resolving the problem before he retires from his post Oct. 21.

### SOME DISAPPOINTED

But Maclean admitted that the Tax Commission does not expect to find a solution that will please all parties involved and still be according to legal requirements for tax assessment procedures.

Two months ago the west side property owners took their case before the commission, contending that their holdings have been listed on the 1952-53 Lane County tax rolls at figures far above those recorded for comparable business sites downtown east of Willamette St.

A dozen westside Eugene business property owners were present for Tuesday's hearing, together with their lawyers, members of the Lane County tax equalization board and County Assessor George Stock.

After reviewing basics of the problem, the group centered its discussions around a Tax Commission proposal that eastside and westside Eugene business lands be equalized on the 1952-53 tax rolls through use of an arbitrary formula which would somewhat reduce westside assessment while raising a number of assessments on eastside business properties.

### PLAN OUTLINED

Harry Loggan, chief assessment engineer for the state, outlined the plan by using backboard charts to show the relative levels

of current assessments east and west of Eugene's principal business street. His plan, if followed, would involve approximately 400 properties on each side of Willamette.

The effect would be to keep the total assessed value of the central business area constant with that now on the tax rolls. This would keep the overall tax yield from the area unchanged and would not involve any general change in Eugene and Lane County tax millage rates as published by the county assessor's office.

Loggan and Lane County Judge Day T. Bayly both pointed out that simply to reduce westside prop-

erty assessments this year would require millage rate changes and recalculation of many, if not all, county tax bills for this year. Most of the tax bills already have been determined, and to change them now would be a practical impossibility, Bayly noted.

Loggan pointed out that his plan would not bring anything more than approximate equity into the situation this year, and that a general revaluation of Eugene business properties would be in order for the 1954-55 tax rolls.

### OBJECTIONS RAISED

Objections to the suggestion were raised by Fred Knox, manager of the Producers' Public Market, and

by Attorney Donald Husband, appearing for other westside property owners. Both argued that downtown business properties, generally, are assessed out of proportion to true cash value and that residential and rural lands have not been assessed at such a high ratio.

Loggan's blackboard diagrams upheld the view that properties west of Willamette St. now are assessed higher than those to the east. However, his presentation further showed that the westside lands have previously been taxed on valuations far below those listed for similar holdings east of Willamette.

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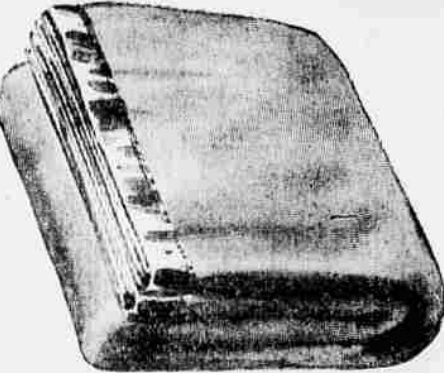
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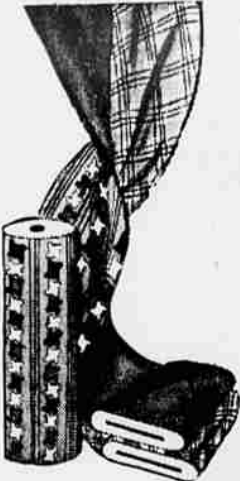
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