

Jane Tolmach -- Campaign Statement

The choice of a member of the Assembly from the 36th Assembly District is an extremely important matter. At stake is the well-being of the people of Ventura County for many years to come.

As a member of the State Legislature, I will be a strong advocate of the interests of all the people. I will not owe any debts to special interest groups, nor will I be partisan in my approach to solving problems of State Government.

I have had very extensive experience in local government in the City of Oxnard. I have demonstrated my independence of judgment, my willingness to work hard, and my commitment to the interests of all the people, not just to a special few. I will continue this spirit of hard work and independence in Sacramento. I am asking for your trust and support because I ^{believe that I} have earned your trust and I am willing to fight on your behalf.

1. Specific Proposals on tax reform --

The focus of tax reform in California must be tax relief for the local ~~property~~ ^{property} owner. People cannot stand assessment increases of 35 or 40 percent a year. We must have comprehensive tax reform in California once and for all. The following concepts must be incorporated into such tax reform:

a) We must stop the State from continuing to shift the costs of government onto the local property taxpayer. Such mandated state programs as education and welfare must be financed at the state level utilizing the broad tax base of the entire state.

b) Our tax system must be made more fair and equitable. Low and middle income people and small businesses cannot be expected to pay a disproportionate share of taxes while large corporations and the very wealthy pay less than their fair share.

c) The cost of government must be reduced by getting rid of some of the costly and unnecessary layers of bureaucracy which have built up over the years. Not only will this save the taxpayer money, but it will also actually improve the delivery of public services.

Finally, I would submit that these tax reform ideas will not become a reality unless we elect legislators who are willing to fight on behalf of the people of California and who are not owned by special interest groups.

2. Serrano decision on equitable school financing --

I will fully support the implementation of the Serrano decision. Every child in California has a right to an equal and appropriate education regardless of where he or she happens to live. To implement this decision it will be necessary to remove the cost of education from the

local property tax, which is the source of the present inequity, and shift to a state-wide system of school finance. However, at this point, I don't believe that any responsible person is advocating any particular state financing mechanism. The problem is very complex and there are a number of studies presently being conducted. We must be totally certain that the new financing mechanism is not prohibitively expensive and that it is progressive in nature so that we don't end up in the same predicament that the Serrano decision is designed to eliminate.

3. Trimming Costly State Mandated Services --

This is an area about which I feel particularly concerned as a local elected public official. There are many areas of trimming which could save the local tax payer an enormous amount of money. For instance, the creation of regional governmental agencies such as SCAG has resulted in a great deal of unnecessary duplication of effort and an excess of costly paper work on the part of public officials. Environmental Impact Reports could be simplified greatly. In the field of education, literally millions of dollars are wasted each year through the filling out of reports and forms which are of dubious value. We have created a nightmare of bureaucratic paperwork which has become totally ritualistic but which costs the taxpayers huge amounts of money each year. Moreover, the employee time which is consumed in dealing with all of this red tape could be much more profitably spent dealing with the real problems of the public. I also believe that the State should refrain from mandating any program unless it is willing to provide the funds to implement that program. It has become ^{too} easy for the State to mandate a program and to require the local governing agency to figure out how to pay the bills. This has, in large part, created the property tax crisis.

4. Four year state university for Ventura County --

This is one of the most critical unmet needs of Ventura County and I strongly support the creation of such a college. At present, our young people who wish to continue their higher education beyond the community college level must either live away from home or commute each day to Santa Barbara or Los Angeles. This places an intolerable economic burden upon working class and middle income families for whom the cost of education is already very high. I will work closely with Senator Rains on bringing such a college to Ventura County. I have already begun discussing the matter with Governor Brown and have impressed upon him the need for such a college in our county.

5. Medical Malpractice Quandry --

On balance, I think that Howard Berman's medical malpractice bill (A.B. 2939) ^{only} would have been a short-term method of bringing immediate relief in this area. ~~It is a stop-gap measure~~ ^{with some merit} This ~~is a stop-gap measure~~ as a stop-gap measure ^{with some merit} even though I had serious reservations about some of its features. ~~At the same time~~, I would ~~have~~ insist upon a ~~comprehensive~~ re-examination of our ~~current~~ system of tort law in order to deal with the basic underlying causes of the malpractice insurance crisis. Until such an examination is made, we will be dealing only with symptoms rather than with the problem itself.

6. Public employees' right to Strike and Binding Arbitration--

The question of public employees' right to strike is complex and cannot be dealt with in isolation. The entire matter of employer-employee relations in the public sector needs careful attention in the legislature. We must develop comprehensive legislation which deals with the basic problem and which addresses itself to impasse resolution procedures, cooling off periods, and assisting the parties to resolve their **differences** at the bargaining table.

A law which does nothing but permit or prohibit strikes would not really accomplish very much. Unfortunately, we have learned that such strikes do tend to occur in every state, regardless of what the law says. The challenge is to develop alternatives which are less costly and less disruptive.

As to binding arbitration, I would support such legislation as it pertains to questions of contract interpretation once a contract has been negotiated between the parties. This is less costly than law suits and would keep such matters out of our already overcrowded courts. I would not support compulsory third party arbitration as it pertains to negotiation of salaries or other terms and conditions of employment. I believe that this would deter both employees and employers from bargaining in good faith and attempting to resolve their differences locally.

Elected officials must have the right to ~~set~~ the budget by determining the salaries & conditions of employees

7. Crime --

I believe that the Democratic majority in Sacramento and the Governor made a major step toward dealing with the problem of crime in California by eliminating the system of indeterminate sentences for criminals. We must make certain that those who engage in violent crimes are dealt with swiftly and that criminal penalties are certain and precise. I believe that the system of criminal justice in California must be examined in its totality and that appropriate changes must be made to insure the safety of the public. I also believe that it might be beneficial if this examination, including an examination of the court system, were to be made by ^{some} people other than lawyers and judges in order to see if any new and innovative ideas might emerge.

8. Proposition 13 and Proposition 14 --

I am opposed to proposition 13 (dog racing initiative). With regard to Proposition 14 (farm labor initiative), I do strongly support the rights of farmworkers to equal treatment under the law, including the right to secret ballot representation elections and the right to negotiate with their employers. I would have supported the Agricultural Labor Relations Act and I would have voted funding for its effective implementation. With regard to Proposition 14, as it will appear on the November ballot, I have not yet decided how I will vote. I am still not certain of its full ramifications and, like most other Californians, I am not going to make up my mind until I am convinced that I fully understand the matter and can vote intelligently.

9. Best Method of Preserving Agricultural Land --

I would not favor a system of mandated non-development, such as was embodied in A.B. 15 because it could lead to all agricultural land ending up in the hands of large multi-national corporations through the destruction of small land ownership. I would suggest remedying existing practices, such as assessment practices, which force such land into development. I would also favor a system of incentives to develop land within existing urban areas.

10. Undersea oil development off California --

I would have no objection to such development if technology permitted all equipment to be beneath the sea and if, under extremely rigid standards safety procedures could assure us that there would be no spills. I would also wish to be assured that there would be an appropriate economic advantage both for the people of California and for the local communities involved. Such development should not just be a source of high profit for major oil companies.

11. Liquified Natural Gas -- As a member of the Oxnard City Council, I am afraid that I must decline to answer this question. As you know, the Council will be asked to vote on this question after all studies are completed and after public hearings are conducted. I ~~do not~~ ^{do not} believe that it would be ~~proper~~ ^{Proper} for me to offer an opinion before these matters have been completed. It would certainly not be fair for a public official to make up his or her mind on any matter before the public even has a chance to express its point of view. This would be like a member of a jury reaching a verdict before all the evidence is in.

I'm running for State assembly, not for city Council.

12 The most pressing problem before the Legislature --

12. TAX REFORM -- The people of California are rightfully demanding that the legislature act immediately to make taxes fair and equitable. Such tax reform will be my chief legislative priority in Sacramento. I intend to take the message of the people to the legislature and to work closely with the Democratic majority and with Governor Brown in bringing about genuine tax reform for the people of California.