

State Asks Tax Probe Of San Clemente Home

Sacramento

The State Board of Equalization asked Orange county officials yesterday to examine the property tax assessment of President Nixon's home at San Clemente.

The board voted 4 to 0 to ask the Orange county board of Assessment Appeals to undertake a review of the seaside villa's assessment, which some critics insist do not reflect the actual value of the property.

The motion seeking the review was made by member John Lynch of Fresno, a Democrat. He cited the national publicity surrounding the assessment of the villa and said the controversy of whether it had been underassessed for tax purposes should be resolved "the sooner, the better."

The board refused last week to approve a proposal by chairman Willie Bennett, who sought to have the

Ehrlichman Clams Up

Missoula, Mont.

Vacationing Jim Ehrlichman, who spent five days testifying before the Watergate committee, today wants to talk to some more newsmen.

He is in a quiet place in state, not giving interviews or making the former Watergate aide a reporter outside his motel room Wednesday. *United Press*

board do its own investigation. Likewise, he killed down a motion by Lynch to seek a local investigation.

Bennett warned yesterday that unless the three-member Orange county board of assessment appeals acts to undertake the investigation "I'll raise the matter again with this board." He indi-

cated he had the three votes necessary to support an investigation by the state board.

The President's San Clemente property is assessed at \$432,520. At a tax rate of \$10.007 per each \$100 of valuation, the estimated tax bill is \$34,000.

But Bennett and other critics have expressed doubt that the assessment reflects the value of improvements installed at the seaside property. The Secret Service insists that the revisions were for "security" purposes and do not represent "improvement."

Bennett maintains that such installations as a fence surrounding the property "is there for all time . . . and that does improve the value of the property."

Absent from the meeting was Republican State controller Houston I. Flournoy, an ex-officio board member with the power to vote.