

# No Probe of Nixon Property Taxes

See also story by  
Wallace Turner,  
NYTimes 31 Jul 73,  
p. 21, filed  
Watergate.

## Sacramento

The State Board of Equalization refused yesterday to order an investigation into the property taxes being paid on President Nixon's estate at San Clemente.

The request for the investigation by Chairman William M. Bennett failed to gain the support of any of the other four board members.

Bennett said he was convinced that Orange county officials had not assessed the San Clemente estate at its full market value, particularly in light of major improvements made in the last several years.

### ANGER

But, in an angry session, the other board members argued that they did not have authority to inspect the estate to determine if the owners were paying a fair amount of property tax.

That, they said, is strictly up to Orange county officials.

Bennett and the three other elected members of the board are all Democrats. The fifth, ex-officio, member is Republican State Controller Houston I. Flournoy.

Bennett raised the issue after reading reports that the Nixon property was assessed at only \$1.37 million

although the original sale price was \$1.5 million and the federal government has reported spending \$703,367 for improvements on the property.

### REASON

The General Services Administration said most of the improvements were for security purposes.

Board member George Reilly of San Francisco proposed yesterday that the board request Orange county officials to investigate whether the property had been appraised at its true value for property tax purposes.

His motion also died for the lack of support from any other board member.

"That is their job," Reilly said. "That is their problem."

Bennett said he would wait and see if Orange county officials did investigate the assessment of the property. If not, he said, he will bring the issue up at next month's meeting of the state board. *Associated Press*