THE器PROGRESS

October/November/December 1983

Volume 1. Number 6

Crime, Rent Problems Rank High on the Council Agenda

By Bob Lowe

ver the past two months, matters taken up by the City Council have included crime, rent control, construction of the Dumbarton Distribution Center (Menlo Business Park), and roadwork associated with the Dumbarton Bridge connection to University Avenue.

A concern with loitering, traffic congestion, and possible drug vending in the Euclid and Bell area led to a wide-ranging discussion of crime. Some members of the audience criticized the police for laxness. Others held that the matter needed to be addressed more broadly—that drug traffic must be stopped at the source, and that crime in general can only be alleviated when its social causes are attacked.

Local artist Norm Fontaine said, "These people in the community don't want to be criminals, but there aren't any jobs out there. Let's create a situation for young people that will allow them to be more involved in positive action in the community."

Councilman Satterwhite spoke to

Councilman Satterwhite spoke to the new authority the Council possessed to affect the problem: "For the first time we have the resources and the authority to meet visible, abusive crime in our community and we should do so." He requested a staff report that would answer the question, "How do we allocate our money to solve this problem through people power since police can't handle it

At a subsequent meeting of the council, Lieutenant Wells presented a plan created in consultation with city staff and Sheriff McGuire. Already in effect by the time of the meeting, it called for an examination of the crime problem and a program of aggressive arrest and seizure.

In addition, Sargent Johnson, in charge of narcotics enforcement in East Palo Alto, noted that there was a serious effort to stop drug trafficking at its source. He mentioned recent arrests of importers in Redwood City and San Mateo.

Turning to the matter of rent, the Council selected a rent control task force consisting of Louise Jones and Isabel Rivera, homeowners; Bradley Davis, businessman; Robert Saunders and Anthony Horvath, landlords; and David Skidmore, Sharifa Wilson, Renee Glover, and Duane Bay, tenants.

Councilman Satterwhite voiced the city's charge to the task force: to assume that there will be rent legislation and to give the Council the group's best thinking on the matter. (As the Progress goes to press, public hearings are being held on the task force's 100 page report.)

In other business, the council voted 3-1 (Wilks opposing) to join an appeal of a suit against the Menlo Business Park. Although it is too late to stop construction of the site, it was felt that the appeal would force Menlo Park to address environmental issues that it would otherwise be free to ignore. Drainage, taffic, and noise were mentioned.

Disruption caused by the Dumbarton Bridge extension to University Ave. received attention over the course of two meetings. Residents on Purdue, in particular, complained of early morning noise, a lack of safety for children crossing University, and the absence of a posted schedule indicating the dates and hours of construction.

One resident who had lived on

Purdue for 20 years complained that equipment was moved as early as 5:25 a.m. She said that "we feel like second class citizens down here."

Cal Trans representatives stated that they were not legally obligated to mail out construction notices or to provide flagmen for pedestrian crossings. But they offered to negotiate such matters with the Council. In addition, they agreed to put in a noise wall if residents so desired.

Other actions by the council included a proclamation making September 10 Onetta Harris Day; a commendation of the Ravenswood Little League All-Star Team for its second place finish in the District 11 tournament; and a resolution in support of Big Sisters of East Palo Alto-East Menlo Park. Inc.

4-H Seeks Leaders

The East Palo Alto 4-H Club is presently seeking new project leaders for its after school agricultural program. The 4-H Club provides a variety of experiences through which young people, ages 8 to 18 years, are able to develop their characters as well as their skills. The 4-H program includes agricultural and home economics activities, the raising and marketing of animals, as well as learning to properly care for pets.

For further information, please contact Chester Prince at the University of California Cooperative Extension San Francisco County office (415) 586-4115.



O'Connor school valued at 1.3 million dollars was lost to the Menlo Park School District in the recent election

Davis, Jones Win Seats

By Elena Becks

Two new members of the Ravenswood City School District were elected and a controversial proposition trimming the size, influence, and property value of the district were passed in November 7th's balloting.

Brad Davis, a six-year resident of the community and manager of the Senior Housing complex, joined R.B. Jones in capturing the two seats on the district board. Incumbent Cecil Reeves joined Glenda Savage, former trustee Nathaniel Brooks, and Theotis Nelson in the ranks of the defeated.

Voters also passed Proposition A. The measure placed the Willows and

Flood districts of the area under the care of the Menlo Park School District and threw in O'Connor School. O'Connor has been closed since 1977 but the property is valued at \$1.3 million, a substantial revenue loss for the Ravenswood District. Opponents of the proposition hoped that the school could remain under Ravenswood District influence so that it could be sold and the resultant funds applied to capital improvements.

The district now consists of four elementary schools and one middle school with a combined student population of approximately 3000. Its 125

Continued on page 4

Gouging, Speculation, Unfair Evictions Signal Need for Rent Measure

By David Skidmore

As we go to press, the *Progress* has learned that rent control has become law in East Palo Alto. The following article, written while public hearings on the issue were taking place, argues the need for a rent control ordinance. A rundown of the new law will appear in the next issue of the *Progress*.

ue to a severe housing crisis, the newly formed City of East Palo Alto is considering the enactment of a rent stabilization and just cause eviction ordinance.

In recent years, housing has become harder to find and less affordable. Median rents across the nation increased 13% last year while the general inflation rate was only 4.7%. In California, there exists a shortage of 536,000 housing units for low and moderate income families at rents they can afford.

The crisis is not limited to rental housing. The average home value in unincorporated San Mateo County shot up 352% between 1970 and 1980.

Rent consumed 32% of the average East Palo Alto tenant's income in 1980.

These exploding home prices have excluded most potential first time buyers from the home market.

The impact of the housing crisis on

The impact of the housing crisis on East Palo Alto has been particularly severe. In 1980, the median family income in East Palo Alto was \$16,128 compared with \$26,400 for all of San Mateo County. Since the average renter earns only 55% that of the

average homeowner, it is not surprising that 75% of the renters in East Palo Alto have low or very low incomes according to County criteria. Yet rents in East Palo Alto are comparable to those in more affluent surrounding areas.

Rent consumed 32% of the average East Palo Alto tenant's income in 1980. Using 25% as the upper limit of affordability, only 26% of low income renters and 66% of all renters can afford the residences they now rent. If trends here match those in a nationwide Federal study, rents have been growing almost twice as rapidly as the average tenant's income.

Based upon need alone, the argument in favor of rent stabilization in East Palo Alto seems convincing. But economic decisions in our society are rarely based upon need. The opponents of rent control appeal to the free market. In their view, high rents are the necessary and appropriate means by which imbalances in supply and demand are reconciled. Rent control, it is argued, removes the incentives which are necessary for developers to build new housing and for landlords to maintain existing properties. Yet even when the debate is joined on these terms, the argument against rent control falls apart.

Even while rental prices have risen free from controls, demand has accel-

erated and supply has stagnated. During the seventies, the work force grew 37% in San Mateo County and 82% in Santa Clara County. Yet multi-family construction permits issued by San Mateo County for unincorporated areas plummeted from 1440 between 1970 and 1975 to 220 between 1975 and 1980. As a result. East Palo Alto has

. . . rapid rise in property values have diverted a great deal of money out of construction and into speculation on existing housing.

a vacancy rate somewhere between 1 and 3%. Anything below 5% is considered indicative of a serious housing shortage.

There are two obvious explanations for this pattern. Since shelter is a necessity, the demand for housing is relatively insensitive to rising prices. People will pay what they must for a roof over their heads, giving up other things in the process. Furthermore, a relatively good record of growth in this area has fueled demand by attracting job seekers from elsewhere. Planners have allowed growth to accelerate without thought to the area's capacity to house the growing work force. East Palo Alto has not shared in the fruits of Silicon Valley's economic boom but it has borne the brunt of the resulting housing squeeze.

Second, high interest rates, general

Continued on page 2

City Council's Letter to Reagan Calls Grenada Invasion "Flagrant, Illegitimate and Racist"

1 November 1983

Dear Mr. President:

The deployment of United States Marines and United States Army Rangers for the invasion of the tiny nation of Grenada has plummeted our country into another illegal war.

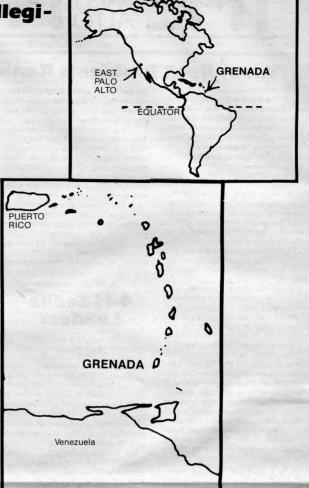
WHEREAS, none of the objectives stated by you-the protection of American citizens and the restoration of democratic institutions on the Island—justifies the invasion of an indepen-

WHEREAS, the invasion directly violated charters of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and perhaps more importantly, our own Neutrality act which prohibits actions against a foreign country not at war with the United

WHEREAS, the invasion is diametrically opposite to the democratic principles on which our country was founded, it must be clearly understood for what it really is—a flagrant, illegitimate, and racist response based on fallacious assumptions. The United States felt that Grenada, a Third World nation, did not have the intellectual capacity to make informed decisions on behalf of its citizens; therefore, the United States felt it must intercede because Grenadian leaders were incapable of managing their own affairs.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the East Palo Alto City Council wishes to go on record as being strongly opposed to this invasion, and is gravely concerned about the survival and wellbeing of Grenadian, Cuban, and American citizens who are threatened by this action. The Council asks that there be immediate withdrawal of all troops from Grenada; if conflict persists, the matter be turned over to the United Nations Security Council; and lastly, compensation be provided for the loss of lives and property resulting from the invasion.

(Mrs.) Barbara A. Mouton Mayor, East Palo Alto



RENT CONTROL

Continued from page 1

inflation, and the rapid rise in property values have diverted a great deal of money out of construction and into speculation on existing housing. Once property values took off, the market entered a vicious circle in which speculation on these price rises artificially increased demand and thus led to a new round of property inflation. This has been encouraged by tax laws which allow apartment owners to reap the benefits of accelerated depreciation. Speculation leads to higher rents because building are invariably sold with larger mortgages at higher interest rates. Refinancing costs are then passed on to the tenants.

When supply and demand are both relatively insensitive to rising prices, the market is out of control and rent gouging becomes rampant. Rent levels, reflecting acute scarcity, come to bear little relationship to actual landlord costs; much less to the tenant's ability to pay.

They would still make a profit but not a windfall. Tenants would gain much needed relief, speculation would largely subside, and rents on comparable units would tend to equalize.

The rent control law under consideration in East Palo Alto would return the rate of rent inflation to that which would likely obtain in a more normal market situation. Landlords would be allowed to pass through legitimate cost increases. They would still make

a reasonable profit, but not a windfall. Tenants would gain much needed relief, speculation would largely sub-side, and rents on comparable units

would tend to equalize.

How would new construction and maintenance of existing buildings be affected? The proposed law is carefully designed to mitigate negative effects New construction would be exempt. Increased maintenance and operating costs could be passed on to tenants No rent increase would be allowed on any substandard housing unit until it is brought up to health code standards (at least 700 units are currently considered substandard). Low cost rehabilitation financing is available and bonus rent increases would be allowed in cases where truly major improvements occurred. This mix of positive and negative incentives should prompt landlords to provide proper maintenance.

Many studies, including one carried out by the State of California, have shown that moderate rent control laws do not lead to declines in new construction or maintenance expenditures. In the case of existing buildings, landlords simply cannot risk the present equity held in their buildings by ignoring necessary maintenance; especially when such costs can be passed through.

Rent control prevents rent gouging but it does not insure the develop-ment of permanently affordable housing. Thus the City is considering an innovative program whereby rent control would gradually be lifted as progress is made toward converting a substantial portion of the rental hous ing stock to permanently affordable housing alternatives such as limited equity cooperatives where tenants actually own the building and equity growth is restricted so as to keep the units affordable for future coop

The ordinance also includes a crucial just cause eviction clause. Presently, landlords can evict tenants without even stating a reason. Over 12,000 evictions, many arbitrary in nature, took place in California last year. The proposed law would allow evictions only where the landlord can

Project Helps Children Handle Threatening Situations

The Child Assault Prevention Project (CAPP) was started in 1978 by Women Against Rape in Columbus, Ohio. The CAPP project is a primary prevention program designed to help children recognize and deal effectively with potentially abusive situaprove just cause such as destruction of property or non-payment of rent.

If this ordinance is adopted by the City Council, East Palo Alto will soon join a growing list of communities which have chosen rent control as a rational solution to a widespread and serious housing problem.

The CAPP project has three components: workshops for parents, teachers, and children. In their workshop, children learn how to be assertive as well as how to talk about and correct situations where their rights are being

The Mid-Peninsula YWCA Rape Crisis Center and the Mid-Peninsula Support Network are implementing the CAPP project. If you are interested in becoming a CAPP volunteer or would like more information about CAPP, please call Cari Wilson at 494-0972 or Mary Hayes at 964-6503.

A Southern TASTE EXPERIENCE from the kitchen of Mrs. Lillie Johnson

Macaroni Salad

- 3 cups cooked elbow macaroni
- 3 hard cooked eggs 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 medium sized onion, chopped 1/2 head iceberg lettuce, shredded
- Combine all ingredients with a dash of salt

Dressing

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- 1/2 cup water 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard 1 tbs flour
- 2 eggs, beaten

Combine sugar, salt, mustard, and flour.

Add beaten eggs, vinegar, and water. Mix well. Cook over hot water until thick, stir thoroughly. Cool and add to macaroni salad just before serving. Serves 8.

Old Fashioned Egg Custard Pie

- 3 eggs slightly beaten
- 3 cups sugar 3 tbs butter
- 1½ cups milk 1 tsp vanilla

Melt butter. Mix with milk and bring to a slow boil. Remove from heat immediately. Combine other ingredients and pour into milk mixture. Pour into 9 inch unbaked pie shell. Bake 10 minutes at 475°. Reduce heat to 375°. Bake 10 minutes longer.

HOW SOON TO FREEDOM

How soon to freedom Have we come? How far away Really is that day? Is peace down the road, After we've dealt with this load? How soon to freedom Have we come? Will we all be there, How close Are we to what we want most? Will we know how to Rejoice in that freedom coming to me and you? How soon to freedom Have we come?

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E.P.A. IS A CITY, NOW

Let's get down to the nitty gritty. Now, it's better

The City Council is using all its might.

The members are ready for the big

When they get finished with this

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Now, E.P.A. is a city.

Than ever. It is so out of sight!

fight.

As a city.

city, It will be alright

E.P.A. IS A CITY

E.P.A. is a brand new city. It really is not a pity.
We had to sing all night and day,
Until a new city was born. E.P.A. has lots of trees to make shade.

To make us happy, a city was born. But, still there are those in brokendown apartments who are saying That they have no money and that they aren't staying.

They have no food And are in a very bad mood.

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OUR NEW CITY

We had to sing all night and day, Before our new city was born. CCAIN was mad. But, we were glad Because we wouldn't have to sing anymore.
The day the city came into being,
Everybody was happy,
Especially EPACCI.

I will be happy to get a high school, A store. And much, much more.

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Vibrations of love sweeping us off our feet to the unknown streets of life where we receive gifts we never anticipated beforehand.

Where we never guessed other people loved us as much, love gradually clearing our understanding; as a mother learns the needs of her child. Our suffering is small compared to the goodness we receive, like an apple with a small bad spot, cut it out and you have a good apple.

Love expands beyond one's own concept, as a woman's womb expands during birth. Love expands beyond egotism where we see, feel, and expose that vibration of kindness within.

There is the love of equality. Where nations fight nations. Where governments, like Mothers make a difference between her Children.

With the same similarity in plant life. The right amount of sunlight and moisture we grow beautiful plants with affection and legislation hopefully our children will become more civilized.

As flowers throw off a pleasant fragrance, so does kindness throw off love.

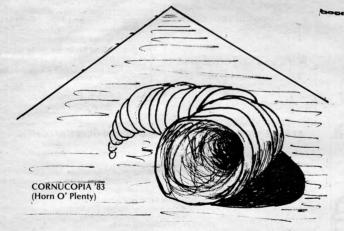
by Elmo Malveaux

INCORPORATION NIGHT

The Incorporation night was alright. Boy, was it out of sight! For E.P.A., we have things to give To make this city a better place to live.

We must clean the city To make it look pretty. So, let's get down to it. Let's all benefit.

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Thank you for this holiday Praising the Pilgrims' token way Of giving thanks with Indians who Were wiped out when the year was through Thank you for the tribal lands Stolen by your bloody hands Thank you for historic lies As American as pumpkin pies For frozen turkeys stuffed with nuts Forget about the flaming huts In Vietnam, El Salvador, Grenada, or the one next door Thank you for the Puritan creed Of Christianity laced with greed Of human bondage, slavery, Wars and murder I thank theeFor Thanksgiving day For those who stuff their face to say The cranberry sauce was good, was sweet As dreams that die with starving

young For food that never touch their tongue

Thank you for the tax you take From our fair wages that we make Thank you for the legal fights
When you turn off the gas and lights
Thank you for the money spent Everytime you raise the rent And thank you for the price of gas Horn of Plenty: Kiss my ass! ©Abena 11/23/83

Citzens Beware:

Palo Alto Park Association (PAPA) formally grouped in organizations such as CCAIN are attacking East Palo Alto

- 1) Introducing a referendum to overturn the hard fought rent control ordinance
- 2) Recall of recently elected officials
- 3) The continuing lawsuit against the City of East Palo

Defend Rent Control, **Protect Our City!!**



408/370-2333

HENRY LEWIS 256 E. Hamilton Avenue #E Campbell, California 95008

History of East Palo Alto, Part V Racial, Economic Motives Spurred Opposition to Cityhood in 1958

he previous article in this series suggested that the 1958 conflict over incorporation in East Palo Alto was not simply a battle over economics. A consideration of race must be added to matters of financial interest in order to fully account for divisions over the question of cityhood.

The fiercest opposition to cityhood East of the Bayshore came from the then white University Village area. Residents there complained that their taxes would go up to support improve-ments to older areas of East Palo Alto. It was also relevant, however that most of the Black population at that time resided in these older neighborhoods and that Blacks were the strongest proponents of cityhood.

Financial considerations also mattered on the all-white West side of the highway where property values were considerably higher than on the East. West siders' opposition to incorporation, like that of antagonists East of Bayshore, involved the fear that they would have to subsidize less affluent, less white sections of the community. But a more explicitly racial motive for their opposition had to do with Ravenswood High School.

In 1957 the Trustees of the Sequoia Union High School District set the boundaries for Ravenswood High, its fifth school. The attendance area initially comprised all of East Palo Alto plus Menlo Park on the East side of the Bayshore. While the new school would be predominantly white, its boundaries encompassed virtually every black family in the 100 square

mile District.
An aversion to crossing the Bayshore, like a disinclination to carry a financial burden that would benefit older neighborhoods, masked a racist outlook. Yet those with the greatest wealth in East Palo Alto feared incorporation for more strictly economic reasons. Virtually all the industrialists in East Palo Alto joined the Kavanaughs, the largest landowners, in vocally opposing incorporation because of the taxes they believed would accompany cityhood. With the exception of the Kavanaughs, none resided in East Palo Alto so its racial composition little mattered to them

Fear of taxation prompted Ted Wunderlich of McCammon-Wunderlich to claim that his business would leave East Palo Alto if it incorporated. More importantly, Clarence Kavanaugh formally filed to annex his 100 acre industrial tract to Menlo Park. This act alone convinced many people that East Palo Alto would not have a sufficient tax base to run the city.

Though enough signatures for incorporation were gathered, they did not represent a sufficient percentage of the community's property to permit an election. So the matter was dropped in August of 1958. That Kavanaugh's move was purely an attempt to avoid potential taxes became clear when he tried to re-annex his land to East Palo Alto after the drive to form a city died.

The next installment of the series will complete a first cycle of East Palo Alto's history. It will point out the consequences of the failure to incorporate in 1958. And from the vantage point of this key event in the community's development, it will gather to-gether essential strands of the past that bear on more recent history as well as on the future

Vigorous protests culminated in a petition signed by 3,669 East Palo Alto and Bellehaven residents who represented a hodgepodge of different interests. Such pressure resulted in a minor boundary change that sent some Black students from Belle Haven to Menlo-Atherton High (where all high school students from East Palo Alto and Menlo Park had previously gone). This satisfied neither those

protesters who wanted to guarantee greater racial integration or those who wanted less. Many West siders fit the latter category.

Angered by the Sequoia Trustees' refusal to allow them to stay within the Menlo-Atherton High School attendance area, a group of West side residents sought annexation to Menlo Park. Earl Beattie, the leader of the group, offered this rationale: "Maybe by annexing to Menlo Park we would have a voice in shaping school districts that we want our children to go to and not to have them shunted across the Bayshore. I'm quite furious about that!"

Since there was nothing inherently dangerous or inconvenient about walking across the University Ave. overpass to get to Ravenswood High School, it is obvious that Beattie and like-minded individuals were really concerned with the racial makeup of the new school. They reasoned that incorporation of the entire East Palo Alto area would lock them into a community and a high school that would become increasingly identified with Black people.

The East Palo Alto Progress

A non-profit monthly community newspaper serving East Palo Alto, California. Persons interested in contributing articles, photography, or poetry may do so by submitting them to The East Alto Progress

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Contributors: Lon Otterby, Ron Drake, Cynthia Ellwood, Catherine Jones Elmo Malveaux

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School Board

Continued from page 4 teachers have carried on the task of educating those sutdents for the past seventeen months without a contract. They are the lowest paid teachers in San Mateo County and among the lowest paid in the state. Starting

salaries for Ravenswood teachers barely top \$10,000. There is also a large and growing Latino population for which the district has been unable to sustain an adequate bilingual



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one to distribute flyers, announce-ments, etc., D. & O. BASHIR AS-SOCIATES COMPANY is awaiting your call at (415) 322-7145. Rates are far below those traditionally charged for these types of services. D. & O. BASHIR ASSOCIATES COMPANY is a member of the East Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce.

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City Council Passes Rent Control and Just Cause Eviction

The East Palo Alto Council of Tenants offers its heartful thanks to councilmembers Ruben Abrica, James Blakey, Barbara Mouton and Omowale Satterwhite, for granting tenants rent control and just cause eviction protection that we so badly need.

Show the City Council your support and appreciation. Call or write: East Palo Alto City Council, 2415 University Ave., East Palo Alto, 94303; 324-1308