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as much impact here as other areas."

Abrica predicted that the Private Property Rights Committee would put \$100,000 into its coffers before April 10, but that should not sway voters, he said. "I think some people will think twice," Abrica said. "Most of (the money) is coming from the outside, big state associations and landlord associations. They're literally buying people to help them," he said.

In addition to opening an office at 1919 University Ave., the Private Property Rights Committee hired political consultants Jack Orr and Daylene Lewis, both of San Diego, to help plan strategy for the campaign.

Of all the committee's contributions, the largest are \$15,000 from the Tri-County Apartment Issues Political Action Committee, a coalition of landlords from Santa Cruz, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties; \$11,860 from Tan Construction Co., a property and apartment management operation; and \$11,165 from the Palo Alto Park Association, a group of East Palo Alto landlords.

That the landlords have raised a far greater amount of money surprises no one familiar with recent rent-control elections on the Peninsula.

The landlord-backed Sunnyvale Voters Against Rent Control had raised more than \$80,000 with a month to go before the Nov. 8 rent-control ballot in Sunnyvale last year. The pro-rent control group had \$2,800 to its credit at the same time. In the end, the Sunnyvale rent-control measure was soundly defeated at the polls.

The same pattern emerged in the Mountain View rent-control election in 1981, where landlords exploited a substantial financial advantage.

Funding edge for opponents of rent control

By Thomas G. Keane
Times Tribune staff

A peek inside the pocketbooks of the advocates and opponents of an East Palo Alto rent-control ordinance reveals a significantly lopsided financial campaign just one week before the election.

Drawing on a reservoir of landlord money, opponents of rent control had raised more than \$61,000 as of March 22, according to financial statements submitted to the city clerk last week. All indications show more money is on the way.

The East Palo Alto Private Property Rights Committee, backed by the city's absentee landlords and a group of homeowners, filed financial statements showing the group had spent \$56,547 of its total contributions.

On the other side, rent-control supporters, including four of the city's five council members, have collected a scant \$520 as of this week, City Councilman Ruben Abrica reported Monday.

The group favoring rent control, Tenants and Homeowners for Fair Housing, is relying primarily on the work of volunteers. "We hadn't reached the \$500 level until this week," Abrica said. "We get small contributions from people, \$10 or \$15."

The pro-rent control group also is endorsed by the South San Mateo County chapter of the NAACP.

In November, the East Palo Alto City Council passed an ordinance that would keep rent prices from increasing faster than the rate of inflation. Landlords and homeowners collected enough signatures in December to have the issue placed on the April 10 ballot.

Supporters of the rent-control measure hope their financial disadvantage won't cripple their effort.

"The election might be close," Abrica said, "but our sense is that the big money hopefully won't have

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