

THOMAS B. CURTIS
2D DISTRICT, MISSOURI

COMMITTEES:
WAYS AND MEANS
JOINT ECONOMIC

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1336 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
225-2311

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:
WILLIAM P. RUSSELL

ECONOMIC ASSISTANT
J. ROBERT VASTINE

DISTRICT OFFICE:
SUITE 201, 34 NORTH BRENTWOOD
CLAYTON, MISSOURI 63105
PARKVIEW 5-8788

DISTRICT OFFICE SECRETARY:
MISS MARTHA SCHIFF

WASHINGTON OFFICE SECRETARY:
MRS. MARILYN EARLY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

September 19, 1966

Mr. Walter Rybeck
647 National Press Building
Washington, D. C., 20004

Dear Mr. Rybeck:

Thank you very much for your letter of September 2 informing me of your conversation with an official of the Department of Housing and Urban Development who is willing to be persuaded that the Department could better achieve many of its goals by exerting leadership in the modernization of the property tax, and asking me to share my views on this matter. I am delighted that you have written me in this regard. My interest in the property tax has been a long and continuing one, and I have felt it a tragedy that for over 25 years the area has been so neglected by scholars.

I have enclosed from the Congressional Record of August 10, 1965 a copy of a speech I made last summer before the annual convention of the Citizens for Educational Freedom in which I express some of my basic ideas about the property tax as a source of revenue for local and state governments and as a means of preventing the uneconomic hoarding of land. I have also enclosed a copy of a tear sheet from the Congressional Record of July 20, 1966 in which I make a few general statements about the property tax and insert an editorial by Raymond Moley about the need for property tax reform. The editorial appeared in the July 11 issue of Newsweek Magazine.

Unfortunately both of the enclosed statements are rather broad statements and not supported by the facts I feel are necessary to make the case for the property tax. I am presently making a rather intensive study of the tax for a speech I am going to give before the Board of Directors of the Tax Institute of America on November 3 at its conference entitled "The Property Tax: Its Problems and Potentials," however, I have not finished making the kind of study I would like to make and probably will not for some time yet. But, please know that I am very interested in the possibility of making a presentation to HUD and hope you will keep me up-to-date by sending copies of any material you collect.

You may be interested to know that I have recently had some correspondence with Dr. Harry G. Brown, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of Missouri. I know little about Dr. Brown except that he has apparently done a considerable amount of work with the property tax and feels strongly that its

Mr. Walter Rybeck
647 National Press Building
Page 2 -- September 19, 1966

modernization will go a long way toward solving the slum problems of our cities.
His address, in case you wish to get in touch with him is 403 S. Garth Avenue,
Columbia, Missouri, 65201.

I appreciate very much your writing me.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,



THOMAS B. CURTIS

TBC/Cns

Enc. copy of A4426-A4428, Record of Aug. 10, 1965
page 15570, Record of July 20, 1966