

# PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSIDER THESE FACTS WHEN YOU VOTE ON THE 4 MILL TAX INCREASE THE SCHOOL BOARD IS ASKING FOR —

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## How Have We Supported Our Schools?

We have been very generous. Bond issues and millage increases have been approved without question. We have given our School Board everything they asked for. We have not thought of ourselves. **Now it is time to call a halt! It is time that we think about the welfare of the person that has to dig up the money to pay the bills, the tax-payer!**

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## Past Bond Issues

We have a modern set of school buildings. They equal or exceed anything else in the nation. These "architectural gems" were financed with \$14½ millions of bonds that we approved in previous elections. This amounts to 11% of our assessed valuation. In simple language this means that a home assessed at \$10,000.00 **has an \$1,100.00 mortgage** on it that the owner probably did not suspect he was putting on it **when he voted in favor of the bonds.**

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## Past Millage Increases

The schools now receive 22.48 mills for all purposes. Of that, 13.98 mills is for operation and 8.5 is for debt. This proposed 4 mills is for operations only, a jump of 30% in one fell swoop, **truly a fantastic figure.** Some parts of our district are now devoting 72% to their total real estate tax for school purposes. **Does the tax-payer sincerely believe that he can stand still more taxes on his property?**

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## Who Gets Hurt?

4 mills sounds small, does it not? Yet 4 mills means an increase of almost 18% in the property owner's **school tax bill.** (To make it easy to figure, it also means about 12% increase on the **total tax bill.** If the total now is \$500.00 a year this 4 mills will add about \$60.00 a year to it.) To the young family just getting established, **this can mean the difference between staying "afloat" and sinking.** To the older living on a fixed income it can become very serious indeed.

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## Effect On Business

Business pays taxes on inventory, equipment and machinery at the same rate that the home owner pays on his real estate. There is no faster method known of scaring business than to increase tax rates to an uneconomic plateau. Common sense tells us that we need to **encourage business by holding the line or reducing taxes rather than discourage it by increasing them.**

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## Other Needs

Schools are but a part of the services our tax dollar has to be stretched to cover. We also need police, fire, engineering, sewers, inspection, roads, etc. Some of them have suffered from neglect because we have devoted so much money to our schools. **We must look at the complete picture,** not just one facet, and then decide what we want expanded and what we are willing to do without. The problem that the tax-payer is faced with is **how to get the best possible distribution of services for his tax dollar. The last thing he wants today is more tax dollars taken from his pocket.**

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## Temporary Increase?

Legally, millage increases cannot have an original life of more than five years. Then they come up for renewal. This has led many people to believe that these increases are only temporary in nature. Again, common sense tells us that once placed in effect, they come back again and again and again for renewal. 45 years ago we were sold a "temporary" Federal Income tax. About 30 years ago we were sold a "temporary" State Sales tax. **There is nothing quite as permanent as a "temporary" tax.** This 4 mills, once voted, will be with us **from now on, forever more!**

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## Are We Spending Wisely?

To make an intelligent appraisal of such a vast subject as our school system requires more time than was available in this election. Let us stress again that we are not questioning the spending of these moneys. **We are concerned with the plight of the tax-payer that has to produce the money to pay these bills.** As prudent men and women **we should consider our own pocketbooks for a change.**

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## Short Notice

Our School Board prides itself on its ability to project its needs for many years into the future and to do so with amazing accuracy. There is no valid reason why **school elections having such a serious impact** on the welfare of the tax-payer should be called on **short notice, with little publicity** and in such **close proximity to a municipal election.**

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## Why More Millage?

When we raise millage rates we increase taxes **on existing property.** This burdens the home owner grievously. Let us not confuse rates and dollars. Too many people do. Certainly when we have more pupils we require more teachers. Certainly teachers should be paid for their services. Certainly we need more equipment when we have more pupils. But we overlook the fact that every new home built adds to our tax dollars. 2/3 of our sales tax comes back to the schools, so every additional family adds to the sales tax dollar that the state takes in. It is time that our School Board **learned to operate within the framework of all of this additional flow of dollars without attempting to get more money from existing property.**

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## Time For Decision

Many of us have all of our worldly wealth invested in our homes. Tax rates affect real estate values. The higher the rates the less the value of the property. It is high time that the tax-payer who has to raise the money to pay these taxes, raises his voice in a loud and clear protest. From now on he must vote **such an emphatic NO on tax increases that his attitude will be clearly understood,** not only by our local officials but by other governmental units as well. **We will stand for no new taxes!**

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## Make It Emphatic!

If this millage increase is voted down by a slim majority it will be back to plague us again in six months. We must vote it down by such a large majority that it will not show its head for a long while to come. The larger the vote that buries it, the clearer our voice will be heard in our local taxing bodies. If we make it emphatic enough it can also be heard in Lansing and Washington. Let us shout the words, **"No More Tax Increases"** by voting **NO on Monday.**

# YOUR MONEY AND YOUR PROPERTY ARE DEEPLY INVOLVED PROTECT THEM — VOTE NO ON MONDAY

## BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT TAXPAYERS' COMMITTEE

ROLAND C. KOEHLER, President and Secretary