

Report Evidence Lacking in Sex Lobbying Charge

By VINCENT THOMAS
 Assemblyman, 68th District
 That legislative whipping-boy, the lobbyist, was again brought under the lash during our general session last spring. Not to be out-shadowed by the sex scandal then rocking British governmental circles, our newspapers alleged that unidentified California lobbyists had made use of illegal feminine companionship to influence legislation. An Attorney-General's investigation made later turned up no evidence of truth in the allegation.

Independently of this probe, the Senate Committee on Legislative Representation announced that it would make a full-scale study of lobbying, to determine among other things the level of current practice in the field, the effectiveness of the laws controlling legislative advocates, and the desirability of making changes either in the law or its administration, or in the applicable rules of both Houses of the Legislature.

Our State Constitution specifically defines bribery of a legislator as "lobbying," and makes it a felony. Equally, it makes acceptance of a bribe by a legislator a felony, conviction of which also brings disenfranchisement in addition to other penalties. The Penal Code makes either giving of a bribe to influence a legislative vote, or its acceptance, a felony punishable by penitentiary confinement.

THE LAW which requires paid legislative advocates to register with both Houses, and to file monthly reports of their compensation and expenditures was first enacted in 1949. It now contains a Code of Ethics, violation of which is supposed to bring revocation of the advocate's credentials. The law requires registration with the Secretary of the Senate and with the Chief Clerk of the Assembly, but this procedure has been simplified, so that the Legislative Analyst's office does the clerical work connected with receiving registrations and monthly reports. Under the joint rules of both Houses, his responsibility is strictly limited to this "ministerial" function.

At its first hearing, the committee heard from a number of witnesses, spokesmen from state government, as well as registered advocates themselves.

One of the Governor's secretaries reported to the group the chief executive's horror over the fact that registered lobbyists are estimated to have spent a total of \$1.3 million during the 1963 session. Saying that it is time to take a long, searching look at spending by lobbyists, the Governor recommended that the law be amended to require them to report their contributions to elections campaigns of legislators, as well as their Sacramento expenditures. He also said he believes the word "lobbying" has invidious connotations.

THE STATEMENTS were promptly challenged by the Dean of the University Law School. First, the latter said he did not feel the total expenditure by lobbyists was high enough. "If we can get the necessary information to the Legislature for \$5 or \$10 million, that's a bargain," he said. He added that the only reason the word lobbying has invidious connotations is that people like the Governor keep saying so.

The lobbyists who spoke were unanimous that existing law serves the desired purpose very well, and argued against the suggestion of the Attorney-General that more detailed reporting of expenditures be required. The Legislative Analyst reported that his office could handle any increased work the Committee might recommend very easily and economically.

Savings, Loan Company Active

The Torrance branch office of Glendale Federal Savings and Loan Association loaned \$1,884,404 to persons purchasing, rebuilding or remodeling homes in the area during November, according to Charles T. Cederlof, branch manager.

The company's 14 branches loaned home owners throughout Southern California a total of \$16,779,867 during November.

Change of Zone Request Denied

A request by David J. Halliburton for a change of zone from R-3 and A-1 to C-4 and R-3 has been denied by the Regional Planning Commission. The property is located at Figueroa Street and Carson Street and contains 8.6 acres.

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