

Indians Kept Records on Smog Years Ago, Assemblyman Learns

By Charles Edward Chapel
Member of the Assembly

I wish that I could tell you that I have an all-out program to get rid of smog, but the trouble is that nobody seems to know all the answers to the question of what causes smog. For several years, I thought that the oil refineries were the principal offenders, but scientists who have spent the best years of their lives studying smog, tell me that the exhaust from automobiles is a contributing factor, the smoke from factory chimneys has its part, and even our backyard incinerators get into the act.

A few weeks ago I visited with some historians who told me that the Indians had records of what we now call smog long before the coming of the Spaniards. Meteorologists agree that in the Los Angeles area we have what they call "temperature inversion," which means that the air normally gets colder as the height above the earth increases, but over Los Angeles there is a blanket of warm air which defeats the normal tendency for air to get colder as it rises higher in the atmosphere. Rising currents of air, which otherwise would carry smoke and dust and chemical matter away from the earth, hit the warm blanket of air and return to the earth, ruining the stockings of the ladies, making our eyes smart, and filling our lungs with poisonous substances.

When I return to Sacramento in January, 1955, I shall do all that I can to obtain co-operation among the Federal, State, county and city governments to continue the fight against smog. If you have an answer to the problem, write me at P.O. Box 777, Inglewood.

Harbor Facilities
Most of you know that I am a Member of the Joint Interim Committee on Marine Affairs and Bay Area Development, and also Chairman of the Special Committee on Small Boat Harbors, which conducted a hearing in Westchester, early in June, this year.

We are doing all that we can to improve our beach and harbor facilities. Unfortunately, the people of Los Angeles County, as a whole, are not vitally interested in this subject. Before I conducted the hearing in Westchester, I sent out 4,600 letters and post cards, at my own ex-

pense, inviting people to attend the hearing. Most of the people who received these invitations are listed in the records of Los Angeles County as being owners of small boats, but the attendance at the meeting was less than two hundred!

Playa del Rey will be the first big harbor development. Actually, it is north of the Playa del Rey community, but the Westport area, which is in Playa del Rey, may be converted into a small-boat harbor. El Segundo does not want a harbor, principally because the Standard Oil Co. has its facilities there. Manhattan Beach has a beach, which must be developed, but no harbor potentialities. Hermosa Beach is an excellent beach and we may obtain State help for a new pier there. At Redondo Beach, there is an excellent opportunity of eventually building a deep-water, close-inshore, small boat harbor within the next ten years. That may seem a long time away to some of you, but the Playa del Rey Harbor is at least three years away, and possibly five years. By all means write to me at Post Office Box 777, Inglewood 1, and tell me what you want done about improving our beach and harbor facilities.

Classroom Doors
Several mothers have written to me about elementary schools which have only one exit per classroom and want to know if it is legal to build classrooms with only one door.

The California State Division of Architecture enforces the rules and regulations of the State Fire Marshal in connection with matters of fire and panic safety in the design and construction of public school buildings. This subject is not covered by the Field Act (which pertains principally to constructing buildings to resist earth quakes), but by authority of Section 13143, Health and Safety Code.

It is common knowledge that fire is one of the frequent and immediate results of earthquakes. The State Fire Marshal's regulations refer to the Uniform Building Code for basic building design and construction standards. This Code requires two exits from a school room only when the occupant load (number of people in room) exceeds 50. The Division of Architecture checks plans on this basis unless

a local authority has advised that they have more restrictive requirements and has requested plans checked accordingly. There are very few school authorities which insist on having two exits per classroom. In conclusion, I am glad to assure the parents who have asked about this problem that all the experts whom I have consulted tell me that one exit for a classroom of normal size is safe and legal.

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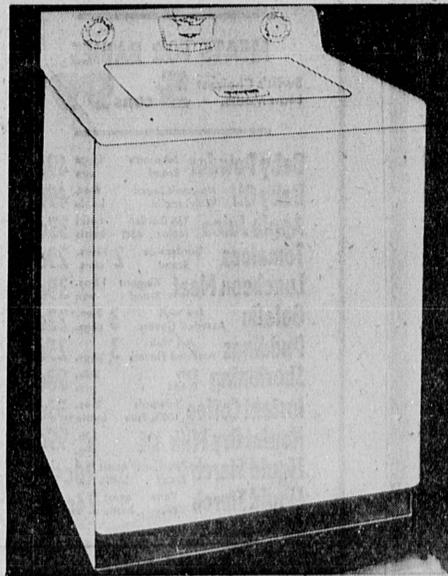
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