

New State Law Requires Identity Of Authors on Political Smears

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL
Member of the Assembly

On Jan. 24, 1957, I introduced Assembly Bill No. 3472, an act to amend Section 5005 of the Elections Code, relating to character attacks on candidates for public office. On May 17, 1957, the bill was amended in the Assembly to make it stronger. The bill passed both houses with very little opposition and was signed by the governor on July 4. It is now known as Chapter 1425.

The purpose of the law is to stop up people who cannot present a good case for election of their own candidate but rely for success at the polls on attacking the character of the opposition candidate. The new law reads as follows:

"An act to amend Section 5005 of, and to add Section 5005.5 to, the Elections Code, relating to character attacks on candidates for public office.

"The people of the State of California do enact as follows: Section 1: Section 5005 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

5005. Every person is guilty of misdemeanor who writes or causes to be written, printed, posted, or distributed, any circular, pamphlet, letter or poster which is designed to injure or defeat any candidate for nomination or election to any public office by reflecting upon his personal character or political action, unless there appears upon the circular, pamphlet, letter, or poster, in a conspicuous place, the name and address of the printer, and either:

(a) The name and address of the chairman and secretary or the names and addresses of two officers at least of the political or other organization issuing it.

(b) The name and residence, with street and number thereof, if any, of some voter of this State, who is responsible thereof.

"Sec. 2. Section 5005.5 is added to said code, to read:

5005.5 Any circular, pamphlet, letter, or poster issued or distributed in violation of Section 5005 of this code is conclusively presumed not to be a privileged communication within the meaning of Section 47 of the Civil Code."

The Legislative Counsel of the State of California, in his opinion dated June 7, 1957, said in part:

"The new Section 5005.5 which would be added to the code by the bill would provide that campaign literature issued in violation of Section 5005 is not privileged under

LOCAL MAN PROMOTED

Robert W. Van der Meid, 2527 Loftly View Dr., has been appointed staff manager for the Prudential Insurance Co. in the Downtown Long Beach district agency, it was announced yesterday by George A. Miller, manager.

Van der Meid was born in Livonia, N. Y., and attended public schools there. During World War II he served with the U. S. Army in the European theater.

He is a member of the Long Beach Life Underwriters Assn., a former treasurer for the Torrance PTA, and a Master Mason. Mr. and Mrs. Van der Meid have two children, Lynne Del, 7, and Robert, 5.

Section 47 of the Civil Code. The later section sets forth the communications which are privileged under the libel laws of this State, and has been construed to permit fair criticism of a candidate for public office, thus to provide a defense in a libel suit to the person publishing it (Harris v. Curtis Publishing Co. (1942), 49 Cal. App. 2d 340; Eva v. Smith, (1928), 89 Cal. App. 324). Under this new section persons who issue defamatory literature against candidates, without complying with Section 5005 could no longer claim, as a defense to a libel suit against them by the candidate, that such statements were privileged."

On June 19, in an opinion submitted to the Governor, the Legislative Counsel again reviewed the bill, which had passed both the Assembly and the Senate, confirmed the previous opinion and stated that the bill was constitutional. As said before, the Governor signed it on July 4. It becomes a law on Sept. 12, 1957.

The new law applies to all candidates for nomination or election to public office, whether he or she be a candidate for school board, city council, county board of supervisors, the Legislature, Congress, Governor, President of the United States, or any other public office.

The new law does not prevent people from writing, printing, posting, or distributing attacks on the personal character or political action of a candidate, hence it is not a "gag" law, a restriction on freedom of the press, or a form of censorship. It merely provides for fixing responsibility and liability on those who issue such attacks.

If they want to launch a "smear" campaign, then they must give their names and addresses and the name and address of the printer, thereby giving the person attacked the opportunity to take the attackers into court. If they do not give such information then in a court action they cannot defend themselves on the ground that what they said was fair comment.

The new law is by no means a final and complete solution of the smear sheet problem because a candidate who is unfairly attacked in a smear sheet distributed shortly before an election does not have time to take his attackers into court before the ballots are counted.

Although he may win a libel action, he can lose an election if the readers of the smear sheet are foolish enough to believe last-minute attacks. Fortunately, most California voters are suspicious of candidates who fail to present their own cases but rely upon attacking their opponents a few days before a election.

If you have any questions or suggestions about this or any other election, please write to me at Post Office Box 777, Inglewood 5, Calif.

TRIPLE POWER

In the modern lighthouse, the equipment which supplies the power for the big lamps is installed in triplicate now as an extra insurance against possible power failures.

OLD COPY
Oldest known manuscript of the Bible, a fourth century copy, it is believed, was found at Mt. Sinai.

Three New English Teachers Added to El Camino Faculty

Three instructors of English will join the faculty of El Camino college when classes open on Sept. 16. Dr. William H. Harless, director of instruction, announced today.

Newcomers to the faculty this fall will bring the total of fulltime instructors on the campus to 200.

Rejoining the humanities department this fall following leaves of absence will be Mrs. Eva Roitsch and Miss Beatrice Beattie, both of whom are foreign language instructors. Both travelled extensively during their leaves. Still on leave from the humanities division, which is under the administration of Harry L. Ruby, is Mrs. Camellie Weigel.

Travers Named
Seymour Travers, who joined the El Camino faculty last year

as a foreign language instructor substituting for Miss Beattie, will transfer to a straight English program this year, Ruby indicated.

The three additions to the division are Clarence E. Brown, Jr. from Santa Rosa, Edward K. Kaufman of Los Angeles, and Miss Marvyl Doyle of Playa del Rey.

Miss Doyle, a native of Clear Lake, Iowa, received her bachelor of arts degree in English from Drake University, completing work for the master of arts in American literature at the University of Southern California. She has taught at Southeast Junior High School, Northeast High School, and St. Petersburg Junior College, all in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Taught in Iowa
Miss Doyle also taught in

the schools of Russell, Iowa, and served as a WAC in the United States Army Air Forces.

A native of Chicago, Brown is married and has taught at Arlington Heights, Ill., in the Chicago Public Schools, at Wright Junior College in Chicago, at Michigan State University, and at San Francisco State College.

A student at Northwestern and Michigan State Universities, the new instructor also completed work as Chicago Teachers College, where he received his BE degree in English, and at Loyola University in Chicago where he completed his master's in English.

Completing the English staff will be Kaufman, a native of Atlantic City, N. J., and more recently a Los Angeles resident.

A former teacher of University High School, Los Angeles, the University of California at Los Angeles, and Mira Costa High School, Kaufman graduated from UCLA, where he gained both his bachelor and master of arts degrees in English. He has also completed work at the University of Southern California.

ALASKA COLLEGE
Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines was opened in 1922 and later became the University of Alaska, the last of the 69 land-grant colleges to be established by the U. S.

SCHOOL BUSES
School buses are in such growing use they account today for about 10 per cent of the total bus output in the U.S.

FLOWERING BLUEBIRDS TOUR LENNOX STATION

Mrs. Raymond Gagne's Flowering Bluebirds of North Torrance recently visited the Lennox Sheriff's sub-station, to give the youngsters an idea of how law and order are enforced.

Sergeant William Fairchild, a veteran officer, took time out from the grim task of upholding the law to show the girls around and explain the mysteries of law enforcement. They knew a thing or two about a sheriff's job, all the girls being TV devotees, but what they saw and heard at the Lennox station made them all a bit wide-eyed. Especially when they inspected the detention quarters, and saw the "tank" where delinquent juveniles are held. Also, the intricate radio communication and the guns.

Sergeant Fairchild was impressed by the earnestness and solemnity with which the girls went about their inspection tour. He said they showed keen attention to detail.

Accompanying Mrs. Gagne who is an outstanding Bluebird leader in North Torrance, were Mrs. Samuel Freedman, Mrs. Henry Karaszewski.

The girls, all about seven years old, are Linda Karaszewski, Virginia Gagne, Karen Karaszewski, Nancy Freedman, Vicki Weiss, Lana Turner, Karen Kern, and Wendy Loffland.

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CAKE MIX
17-OZ. PKG. **19¢**

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Boneless
TOP SIRLOIN STEAK **119¢** lb.

Springfield
PEAS
303 CAN **10¢**

Sea Glory
Chunk
TUNA **19¢**
1/2 CAN

MARVELUS
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2 FOR 19¢

Roths

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10040 ROSCRAWS AVENUE, BELLFLOWER
MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY — AUGUST 19-20-21

3 lb.
SNOWDRIFT **103**
NALLYS—15 Oz.
BEEF STEW **33¢**
SUNBRITE—Reg.
CLEANSER **3 FOR 25¢**
3 lb.
SWIFTNING **89¢**
TREND LIQUID—12 oz.
DETERGENT **2 FOR 56¢**
Pint
WESSON OIL **36¢**

Reg.
WOODBURY SOAP **3 FOR 31¢**
Bath
WOODBURY SOAP **2 FOR 31¢**
GOLDEN CREME—Pint **15¢**
SHERBET
MOTHER'S MARBLE—9 1/2 oz. pkg. **39¢**
STAR COOKIES **39¢**
I.X.L.—40 oz. can
RAVIOLIS **49¢**

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2. FRIENDLY SERVICE
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5. EASY TO FIND ITEMS
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