

Press-Herald

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Re-Elect Vincent Thomas

When San Pedro's Vincent Thomas was elected to the Assembly by a three-to-one margin in 1940, it was a portent of events to come. He has been re-elected an even dozen times to the office and now is asking voters of the 68th Assembly District to elect him to his 14th term.

A ranking Assemblyman and Democrat in Sacramento, Mr. Thomas has proved many times in the quarter of a century in office that he has the ability and energy to get things done for his constituents. His direct intercessions on behalf of Wilmington, Torrance, San Pedro, and other areas in his district have won him the grateful thanks of officials and residents on many occasions.

His ability to get things done has been demonstrated by the early completion of the Harbor Freeway, the construction and operation of the bridge bearing his name connecting the mainland to Terminal Island, and in literally hundreds of other projects of vital local importance.

Mr. Thomas has demonstrated amply that he is an able representative of the 68th Assembly District and richly deserves to be re-elected by voters of the district on Nov. 8.

Townsend for Assembly

Torrance—the tenth largest city in California and the third in Los Angeles County—stands an odds-on chance of having a resident represent a portion of it in Sacramento as the result of the Nov. 8 general elections.

Lawrence E. (Larry) Townsend, who lives in North Torrance, is the Democratic nominee in the normally Democratic 67th Assembly District and barring an upset should take the nod of the voters. There is no incumbent in the race.

The Press-Herald believes Mr. Townsend is ably qualified to represent the 67th District in Sacramento. He is member of and has served as chairman of the city's Civil Service Commission; he is active in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, a member of the Public Personnel Association, and a member of community and fraternal groups.

We believe the election of Mr. Townsend on Nov. 8 would add significantly to the representation for this important area in the state legislature.

Public Gains an Ally

The right of the public to know what its courts and law enforcement officials are doing received a strong endorsement this week by a man who wants to be California's chief law enforcement officer.

Spencer Williams, Republican candidate for Attorney General, issued a strong statement defending the right of the public—and the right of newspapers to tell the public—in matters relating to law enforcement.

"Some solutions to this dilemma of Free Press vs. Free Trial have been taken in the form of proposed legislation and mandatory restraints. These I oppose," Williams said.

The great danger in restricting the right of the public to have pretrial information on arrests is that the rights of innocent persons arrested would be seriously infringed upon. "The detailed publicity of an arrest is in itself a protection against fraudulent charges or high-handed tactics," he said.

Mr. Williams is to be commended for his forthright stand against star-chamber justice which appears to be the goal of some powerful segments of the legal and judicial professions.

It would seem to indicate that Mr. Williams offers Californians a chance to select a high ranking official who's interest runs with the public.

It's worth remembering on election day.

Opinions of Others

It's a sad day in the history of the United States when Congress must consider legislation to prohibit American citizens from lending aid and support to enemies of our country. It has been established that various groups have contributed blood and money to the Viet Cong to help the communists in their war against American fighting men in Viet Nam. Many Americans have always thought there is already a law covering treason. There are supposed to be means of dealing with American citizens who lend aid and comfort to enemies of the country in time of war. And if this is not a time of war, it will be difficult to convince veterans of Viet Nam that the conflict there is not war.—Foley (Ala.) Outlook.

Kentucky citizens are taking quickly to the concept of mail-order law enforcement, Kentucky State Police report. Post Office Box No. 10, Frankfort, Ky., is an address used by State Police since last December to which citizens may report crimes and remain anonymous. Since that time 140 letters have been received . . . thirteen arrests resulted from the first fifty letters. Charges have been placed for such crimes as murder, arson, and alcoholic beverage violation.—Benton (Ky.) Tribune-Democrat.

It is becoming crystal clear now that too many decisions in government, business, homes, schools, and even in religious circles are being made today with more regard for what will turn out to be popular than for what we know to be right.—Bentleyville (Pa.) Courier.

The average person will believe anything you tell him if you whisper it.—George B. Bowra in the Aztec (N. Mex.) Independent Review.

Here He Is, Your Honor—



New Tax Assessment Law Trims Chances for Fraud

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL
Assemblyman 46th District

The major tax-assessment reform law enacted earlier this year by the Legislature actually took effect on Oct. 6. I was one of several authors of this law. What happened was this:

Several of us who have been members of the Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation for many years introduced separate bills regarding tax-assessment practices and then merged our several bills into one.

In addition to being a member of the Assembly "Tax" Committee, I also have been a member of the sub-committee on assessment practices, established to examine the practice and procedures of the county tax-assessors of California. Although it was beyond the scope of our authority to look for evidence of crimes, there was nothing to prevent the Attorney General of the State and various district attorneys from using the facts we unearthed.

One feature of the new law is that the taxpayer can more easily learn how and why his property was assessed by a county tax assessor. Another advantage of the new law is it reduces the possibility of dishonest work by the various county tax assessors and their deputies.

I use the word "reduces" advisedly. The Congress of the United States and the legislatures of the several states never have found any way to eliminate crime by passing laws. All we can do is to make it difficult for anyone to commit a crime without getting caught, and even this type of legislation is not thief-proof.

Under the new law county tax assessors and their deputies cannot hold any other job in a county, and they cannot perform any outside work which may conflict with their official duties.

The records and reports of county tax assessors now

must be made available to all law-enforcement agencies. This serves a double purpose. It tends to keep the county tax assessors honest and it also enables law-enforcement people to catch and convict people who are operating criminal activities under the cloak of legitimate business.

Businesses and industries having movable property worth fifty thousand dollars or more must be examined at least every four years to make certain that the property statements

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they submit to county tax assessors are not at variance with their own accounting systems.

The California State Board of Equalization is now required to examine the records of each county tax assessor at least once in each six-year period to make certain that the assessments of property are accurate and that, on a property is not assessed lower or higher than property of equal quality and quantity.

Between now and the year 1971, all county tax assessors must assess all property at not less than 20 per cent of fair market value and not more than 25 per cent of fair market value. Incidentally, a cash value means the same thing as fair market value. Furthermore, each county tax assessor must publicly announce the ratio he uses. For example, Philip E. Watson, Assessor of Los Angeles County, long ago announced publicly that he assesses all real property at twenty-five per cent of fair market value.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 1971, all county tax assessors in California must assess all property for tax purposes at twenty-five per cent of fair market value. The reason that the new law does not require this uniform assess-

ment ratio immediately is that it requires considerable time for the counties of California to get ready for the uniform ratio.

In the past, the State-wide time for taxpayers to protest and appeal their property assessments has been two weeks. Under the new law, the period for protest and appeal is extended to two months, effective as of Oct. 6, this year.

All of the above constitutes my attempt to explain a very technical law in layman's language. The new law is technical and complicated because we had to use legal language to accomplish our purpose.

Any person who has tax problems should first consult the accountant who prepares his income tax returns, state and federal. Then, if the taxpayer is still worried, he should consult a lawyer who specializes in tax matters.

There are several books on the market which should be titled: "How to be Your Own Lawyer." They are all worthless. Books which purport to teach you to become an expert accountant in 10 easy lessons are good for nothing except swatting flies. Personally, I find that a properly folded newspaper makes a much better fly-swatter.

WILLIAM HOGAN

New Guide to American Usage Sets Standards

Why another reference book on English, or American usage? An embarrassing question, perhaps an unprintable one, the Columbia University historian, critic and writer Jacques Barzun said during his recent visit here. Fowler was long the standard of copy editors and literary men, but in recent decades the language has changed; English and American have become wide apart, Margaret Nicholson's recent adaptation of "Fowler's English Usage" was an "immense disappointment" in the scholarly community.

The Bergen Evans book on American usage of a few years back had one major flaw. Possibly from his radio work, Professor Evans (of Northwestern) developed a passion for making the common man, if such exists, telling him "anything goes" in the use of language. The common man, if such exists, wants just the opposite. He wants to be told what is right. He is eager to learn.

There was a man named Horwell, an Englishman,

HERB CAEN SAYS:

San Francisco: Velvet Hills Torn by Violence

Other side of town: Nine o'clock that night. "It's the most beautiful night I've ever seen," said Host Lou Ganapoler, standing transfixed on the deck of the Trident in Sausalito. The moon cast an unbroken wake over a Bay as still as a lake. A few yards away, a ketch bobbed at anchor, and soon the striped bass would be running. San Francisco was all diamonds and rubies strewn across velvet hills—and not a single person in the place (covers holding hands, bartenders mixing drinks, Jon Hendricks singing his nonconsequential pleasantries) knew that at this very moment, Hunters Point was erupting. That's the trouble with ghettos, that's the trouble with sweeping people under a rug, that's the trouble with an enchanted city that looks so magical from afar.

Unreality was the weather-column: "San Francisco—88. Los Angeles—78. A good basketball result, but the name of this game is sweat, with hot tempers . . . An aged Negro, looking at the slain teen-ager at Hunters Point: "Now I know how this place got its name" (but the point is more important than the hunter) . . . A police officer the next morning, disgust in voice: "As usual, the papers blew up this story (Hunters

Point) out of all proportion. Only the kids were making trouble. The older people were fine. You guys trying to make another Watts My Line out of this?" Also that same morning, most of the bigger pawnshops were removing the guns from their windows—at least one of which had been smashed (guns stolen) on "the most beautiful night of the year."

Covering Hunters Point was a new Channel 7 news

San Francisco

team of relative importance: Photographer Lance Brisson, son of Rosalind Russell and Fred Brisson, and Reporter Dick Carlson, son of Screenstar Richard Carlson. The windshield of their car was smashed during the riot, but this wasn't their baptism of fire. While covering the Port Chicago peace picketing, they were roughed up plenty by the Marines.

Scoping the Wall St. Journal (again): Dick Heckencamp queried his stockbroker, Kent Penwell, about a certain stock, and netted this reply: "Could be a good one. If you want to eat well, I'd buy a thousand shares. If you want to sleep well, I'd recommend a hundred." Dick decided he'd rather sleep than eat . . . At Off Broadway on "the most beautiful night of the year,"

Eddie Fisher developed big eyes for Yvonne D'Angers' dittos and tore himself away, at last, with MacArthur's "I shall return."

Really really big: The highest cocktail party ever thrown in S.F. was hosted recently by Eugenio Lopez, the richest man in Manila, for Pres. Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines—on the top (42nd) floor of the Wells Fargo Building. It must have cost a fortune, even if you're a Manillaire: hundreds of guests, literal fountains of champagne, Al Wallace's strolling violinists, and tons of caviar and other calorics supplied by the Fairmont. I don't know how the President felt about this, but Senator Lopez was loudly described not only as "the most powerful man in the Philippines," but also as "the power behind the throne" . . . The only throne visible was in the 42nd floor offices of Senator Lopez's Manila Electric Co., where his private bathroom features not only that indispensable item, but also a shower and a great window (no curtains) opening on the finest view in town; curtains are not necessary when only seagulls can peek. "Why does Senator Lopez have a Manila Electric office in San Francisco?" I asked. "So he can deduct parties like this," I was told. Makes sense.

ROYCE BRIER

Men Face Worst Plight In Calcutta's Streets

If you were to search the face of the earth for a community where man is in his worst plight, and on the biggest scale, you might choose Calcutta.

Various great cities are afflicted with a kind of chaos and insensate structure defying solution. New Yorkers have lately complained of this malady. London endures its problem of mass with phlegm, Tokyo is altogether too big, but everybody eats. Sao Paulo has tar-paper slums in the sunshine. All great cities excel in one or more defects.

But Calcutta combines them all. The climate is murderous, the site miasmic. The destitute leave the land for the city and join a dull and hopeless huddle. The land round about swarms with an inert peasantry, unable to feed itself, let alone produce a surplus for the town.

Here are several million people, thrice the number

who inhabited the area 40 years ago, and in no great while there will be 10 million.

If you go among these seven million, you will hardly believe reality. A million or more have no homes, and have never had

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one. They sleep in the street doorways (the sole gift of climate), and in daytime shuffle about with wooden blocks dangling, which they use for pillows. Among them are hundreds of thousands of children.

Another two or three million live in hovels, many to a room. Some have part-time, menial jobs which pay \$60 or \$70 a year. But many are down with malnutrition diseases and could not work if work existed. The malnutrition results from inadequate wheat rations, though America and Australia pour

in millions of tons of wheat annually.

This hopeless four or five million mass knows no pleasure except the pleasure of procreation, and of course procreation is at the base of their misery, though they do not know it. Above this almost mindless mass there are a million or so of tradesmen and educated clerks, and the thin crust of the rich.

Imposed on a sluggish community is inflation, and a progressive scarcity of foodstuffs and simple goods. It prevails over all India, but Calcutta is a sump for the most intensive miseries.

Recently, a 48-hour strike was called in the city and Bengal countryside. It was against inflation, starvation rations and government inertia. All transport halted, factories were closed by Communist-led pickets. Mobs of youths roamed the streets, bullying motorists and pedestrians.

If the strikers hoped to raise the food intake, they were dreaming. Characteristically, the Governor of West Bengal announced no strike could increase the food ration because there isn't any more food.

It's a national problem and, like the problem in India for many a year, it is met with a single idea: we can't do anything. All Indian society is so constituted that it is set against doing anything. Doubtless there are many efficient and conscientious public officers, but the over-riding attitude is to refuse to struggle with fate. If anybody on earth had a solution for this situation, he would confer an incalculable boon on mankind, of whom the Indians number one-sixth.

My Neighbors



Abe Mellinkoff