

Carson Spelling Bee Scheduled

Carson High will hold its annual spelling bee today in the Boys Gym on campus. Two representatives of the A-11 and B-11 grades will join with two representatives of the A-12 and B-12 classes for the bee. Preliminary matches were held April 30 and May 6 in English classes on the campus.

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Special Session Needed to Enact New Firearm Law

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL
 Assemblyman, 46th District

California state laws pertaining to firearms can be roughly divided into two groups: laws which prohibit the improper transportation and use of firearms of all types; and laws which are primarily intended to protect law-abiding citizens from their own mistakes.

It is correct to say that the first group is fundamentally aimed at criminals and the second group is essentially for the welfare of innocent citizens. Most of the laws in both broad categories have been in the California statutes for many years and are not opposed by anyone except those who deliberately violate them with a criminal intent.

An example of a California law aimed at criminals is one which makes it illegal to carry a concealed firearm, especially

a pistol or a revolver. It is legal to carry a pistol or revolver in plain sight in California, but if it is concealed in the clothing, or placed in the glove compartment of a car, such concealment constitutes a violation of the criminal law.

AN EXAMPLE of a California law intended to protect innocent citizens from their own mistakes is one which makes it illegal to carry a loaded rifle or shotgun in an automobile, even though it is in plain sight and not concealed in any manner. The reason for the law is to discourage people from carrying rifles or shotguns loaded in their cars and accidentally firing them.

Of course, some people will say that if the safety lock is in the locked position, they can see no harm in carrying a loaded rifle or shotgun in a

car. The answer to this argument is that a person may forget to put the safety mechanism in the locked position, or the safety lock may be defective, or become unlocked without the knowledge of the owner. A violation of this law, when a person is convicted, usually results in a comparatively small fine and a warning from the judge to be more careful in the future.

Another example of constructive firearm legislation in California is the law known popularly as the "Hunter Safety Program." It is a law which gives official recognition to the training of juveniles in the safe handling and firing of weapons, principally, .22-caliber rifles, under the supervision of an adult, who has been examined and awarded a certificate of proficiency by the National Rifle Assn. of Amer-

ica, Inc., 1600 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

ANYONE interested in the hunter-safety program can get complete information free by writing to the National Rifle Assn. of America at the above address, but if a letter is addressed to Mr. Leonard L. Davis, Jr., Assistant Director, Office of Public Affairs, it will get very prompt attention.

All of the above comments pertain to existing California laws on firearms. After the unfortunate assassination of the late President Kennedy and the murder of the assassin, U.S. Congressmen and all California Members of the Assembly and State Senators received an avalanche of letters demanding that new laws be enacted to prevent or at least reduce the possibility of future

assassinations and murders. Obviously, every person in America agrees that we should do everything possible to reduce the number of assassinations and murders, but enacting hastily written laws is not an effective procedure.

SINCE 1964 is a Budget Year for the California State Legislature, only bills pertaining to the budget can be introduced without the special, written approval of the Governor. This is in accordance with the State Constitution. Furthermore, under the State Constitution, the Governor cannot give his permission for the Legislature to consider any particular bill. He must give his written permission for the introduction of bills pertaining to a subject, that is a fairly narrow field of potential laws. If the Governor wanted new

bills introduced on firearms, he would have been required by the Constitution to issue what is called a "Special Call," or authorize a Special Session, to consider criminal laws in general. Several State legislators wrote to the Governor asking him to authorize the introduction of bills pertaining to criminal law. Some wanted to introduce new anti-pornography bills, some wanted to introduce bills relating to firearms, and other legislators had other ideas. The Governor did not issue any "Special Call" or authorize a "Special Session" on bills relating to any type of crime.

Although the Governor was criticized for his policy on this problem by legislators of both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, it is entirely possible that he realized (Continued on Page 9)

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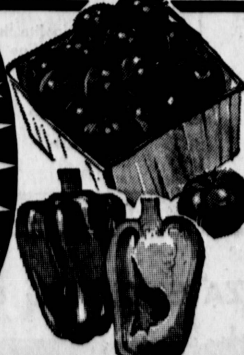
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