

Fire Chief Admits DeArmitt Never Told Campaign Stickers Might Be Violation



COUNCIL CANDIDATE DAVID FIGUEREDO
"Stan Remelmeyer said they wouldn't be that small..."

Censors Periling Freedom of Press

What great peril faces Torrance and the nation in the current censorship attempt by illegal vigilante groups and well-meaning public officials?

What is the motive behind the censors who are torpedoing legislatures and the Congress for laws to govern what you may read?

The greatest danger facing a free people is abridgement of their right to know, to be informed, to be entertained. Sinister forces are afoot, periling freedom throughout the land. The Press will bring you a report on these in next Thursday's edition.

402,000 Items Circulated from School Supermarket

Business has boomed at the Torrance Schools "Supermarket of Knowledge," the Educational Materials Building, since its opening in 1958, according to a report to the Board of Education.

More than 402,000 books, films, tapes, records, and other materials were circulated by the central library last year. This figure is more than double the items circulated the year before the new building opened.

The figures represent some 16.1 items per child a year, compared with 10.7 three years ago.

The Educational Materials Building serves as center for distribution of educational materials, ranging from textbooks to models, for the district's 32 schools.

It is used instead of separate libraries at each elementary school. In this way, more books and other materials can be used more by more pupils.

Inside the Press

Sen. Richard Richards takes special note of a ruling ending the countless shady deals pulled by insurance companies under protection of the assigned-risk plan. Read it on Page B-2.

Thousands of drivers forced into this plan are breathing easily again, now that they can be soaked only 15% above regular insurance prices. The Press devoted three editions to fighting this evil recently.

Elsewhere in today's edition:

Classified 2-5-B Sports 7-A
Entertainment 2-B Women 1-B

Attorney Charges Prejudice, Bias; Other City Employees Used Markers With Impunity

Case in Hands of Civil Service Board; Ruling to Be Given June 1

The Civil Service Commission Friday night took under submission the case of Fireman Richard L. DeArmitt, charged with taking an active part in campaigns for the April City Council election.

The council chambers, stuffed to overflowing by the city's Civil Service employees, heard DeArmitt's attorney, Joseph Taback, draw this testimony from witnesses:

That for years it has been customary for city employees to plaster their cars with campaign stickers for their choice of candidates.

That other employees have affixed a greater number of stickers to their cars than did DeArmitt.

That DeArmitt's truck, loaded with stickers, at no time was parked on city property, as were other vehicles, similarly decorated, and belonging to firemen.

That although DeArmitt is facing charges for having roughly a dozen stickers on his truck, another fireman had covered his vehicle with 100 stickers and parked it on city property during the previous city election.

That although the fire chief and other superior officers saw the fireman's truck many times in the month preceding the election, at no time was he reprimanded nor told to remove the campaign material. The charges were brought after the election was over.

Taback introduced evidence to show that DeArmitt was being singled out for prosecution and showed conspicuous evidence of design in the relationship of the charges to the fireman's union office and an apparent lack of cordiality between him and Chief J. J. Benner.

Taback introduced into evidence a double performance report, one by the chief evaluating DeArmitt as "standard" and a simultaneous report by other fire department officers with "above standard" as the consensus. Several other instances of friction were presented to the board.

Portions of the charges involving a political campaign letter written by DeArmitt's wife, Loradelle, were dropped by the city prosecutor, Charles F. Catterlin, at the outset of the hearing.

Taback indicated this was dirty pool, as was the remainder of the indictment, since the city caused the fireman to spend time and money unnecessarily preparing defense of an unconstitutional charge. The answer was to be that Civil Service law does not apply to families of employees.

Taback wove a convincing case of bias and prejudice and was prepared to present 40 or 50 witnesses who put campaign stickers on their cars



RICHARD DEARMITT

and parked them in city lots. Catterlin stipulated that the weight of the testimony would be cumulative, and only three witnesses were heard.

The prosecutor cited some attorneys' opinions in related cases and said the issue only is: Did DeArmitt willfully violate the city charter and state law?

Taback read a U.S. court ruling that indicated DeArmitt's case falls far short of "active participation" as stated in Civil Service law. He directed the board's attention again to the evidence of bias and prejudice and called for consideration of DeArmitt's selfless devotion to community and charity projects in addition to his record on the fire department.

Dave Figueredo, one of the candidates whose name decorated the fireman's truck, said he had asked the city attorney if city officials would object to campaign stickers on employees' vehicles.

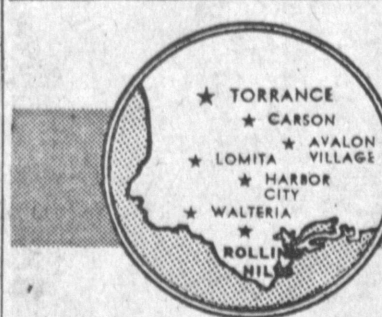
"No," he quoted Stanley Remelmeyer. "I don't think they'd be that small."

The Civil Service Commission will give its decision July 1.

The decision can be reviewed by the City Council. If DeArmitt is found guilty, any penalty can be modified (lessened) by the council.

Robert K. Dower, assistant city attorney, assisted the board with judicial ruling and moderated the hearing. Taback indicated an adverse ruling will force the case into court, since review by the City Council exhausts administrative remedies.

It appeared that, should the case go to court, it would be kicked back to the commission for a rehearing. The commission is only a quasi-judicial body, and its rules of evidence permitted much hearsay that never would be permitted in court.



24-HOUR WANT-AD SERVICE... CALL ANYTIME DA 5-1515

TORRANCE PRESS

3238 SEPULVEDA BLVD., TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA 10c PER COPY

VOL. XII

1 • 2 •

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 1960

NUMBER 10

City Loses Land Fight With Lomita

Torrance has lost out, for the time being, on its annexation of the uninhabited Crenshaw-Lomita area.

Judge Eugene Fay ruled in Inglewood Superior Court that the city should have allowed 10 days for supplemental data to be filed. He held that an objection rejected by Torrance should have been included which would constitute more than 50% opposition to the annexation.

Torrance now will have to wait a year before annexation could be effected.

Robert K. Dower, assistant city attorney, represented Torrance in the action.

7500 Students Sign to Attend Summer Classes

Some 7500 students have signed for summer school classes in Torrance schools, according to Trudy Aldershof, director.

These include some 7000 elementary students and 2500 in high schools. The high school figures include 1475 eighth-graders who will be doing work in exploratory or advanced courses.

The eighth-grade program is designed to help students take more subjects. High-school enrollment is up from last year by about 500 students.

Classes will be held for six weeks, from June 20, in all buildings. High-school classes will be offered in all subjects for which there is enough demand.

Play Programs End at Six Schools Here

After-school and Saturday play programs ended yesterday at six Torrance school playgrounds, according to the Torrance Recreation Department.

Programs ceased at the Anza, Flavian, Hamilton, Parkway, Riviera, and Wood Schools with the end of play at 3 p.m.

All but the Parkway School grounds will reopen for the summer on June 27, as will playgrounds at 18 other schools.

The Parkway grounds will not have a summer program because of the school's proximity to the beach.

Craft Workshop Scheduled for Youth Leaders

A craft workshop for leaders of youth groups is scheduled Friday under auspices of the Torrance Recreation Department.

The session is scheduled for 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Arts and Crafts Center, 22730 Lupine Drive.

Center director Erika Muhl said the course is designed for leaders of groups of youngsters from 8 through 12 years old and is being offered as a community service.

A charge of 50 cents is made to cover cost of materials.

Pool to Open Memorial Day

The municipal plunge will be open Memorial Day from noon until 4 p.m.

Parks will be open Memorial Day, but school playgrounds will be closed.



JIM BECKER

Jim Becker Again Will Head Harbor Area Chest Campaign

After leading the successful 1959 Harbor area Community Chest campaign, Jim Becker again will take over as chairman of the 1960 appeal hoping to surpass the record \$108,933 raised last year, Glenn Koger, Harbor area board chairman, announced yesterday.

Becker, Torrance manager of the Southern California Gas Co., will head the Red Feather campaign in Torrance, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita, Rolling Hills, Palos Verdes Estates, Portegese Bend, Rolling Hills Estates, Waverly, San Pedro, and Wilmington.

"We are fortunate in the Harbor Area to have Jim Becker take this important post again," Koger said.

"He and thousands of volunteers did an outstanding job last year for 170 Community Chest-supported agencies that help thousands of Harbor Area residents every year."

Campaign divisions include residential areas, advance gifts, business, and firms employing fewer than 150 persons.

Enrollment of volunteer leaders is under way and will continue through the summer.

Becker is a member of the board of directors, Torrance (Continued on Page A-3)

Torrance Low in Traffic Fatalities

The May edition of Traffic Safety magazine, published by the National Safety Council, shows Torrance as the fourth lowest in traffic fatalities in the nation for cities of 100,000 population.

Santa Ana is in third position, and Santa Monica and Burbank follow in 79th and 118th place.

There are 135 cities reporting in this category.

From 55 cities in the 100,000-to-200,000 category, Glendale ranks 17 and Pasadena is in 48th place.

Lt. Donald E. Nash of the Torrance Police Traffic Division said Torrance's position is outstanding, due to the congested area which his division works. He said the division has accomplished this by selective enforcement and accurate and thorough accident investigation in which causes are determined.

Selective enforcement is mainly derived from accident investigation reports which show the time, location, and cause of accidents.

Enforcement then is applied to these locations and violations causing accidents.

Steel Factory Lays Off 125 for Two Weeks

The open-hearth department of Columbia-Geneva division of U.S. Steel will close today for two weeks.

The unit will reopen Sunday, June 5. The holiday will involve about 125 men.

The action is a result of a decreased demand for steel products, company management said. No other departments will be affected.

The division employs about 680 persons in Torrance.



TESTIMONY—Battalion Chief Ralph Lucas corroborates Chief Benner's testimony that Fireman Dick DeArmitt never was warned about campaign stickers during month before last city election. In rear are Joseph Tabak, defense attorney, DeArmitt, and Barbara Jackson, court reporter. Tabak showed it has been practice for employees to express political opinion.



NEW OFFICERS—New officers were elected this week at South High School. Seated are Bill Shaw, Boys' League president; Steve Otto, senior president; Susie Schenk, junior

president; and Dave Hawkins, sophomore president. Standing are Robbie Hole, Associated Student Body president, and Sandi French, president of school Girls' League.