

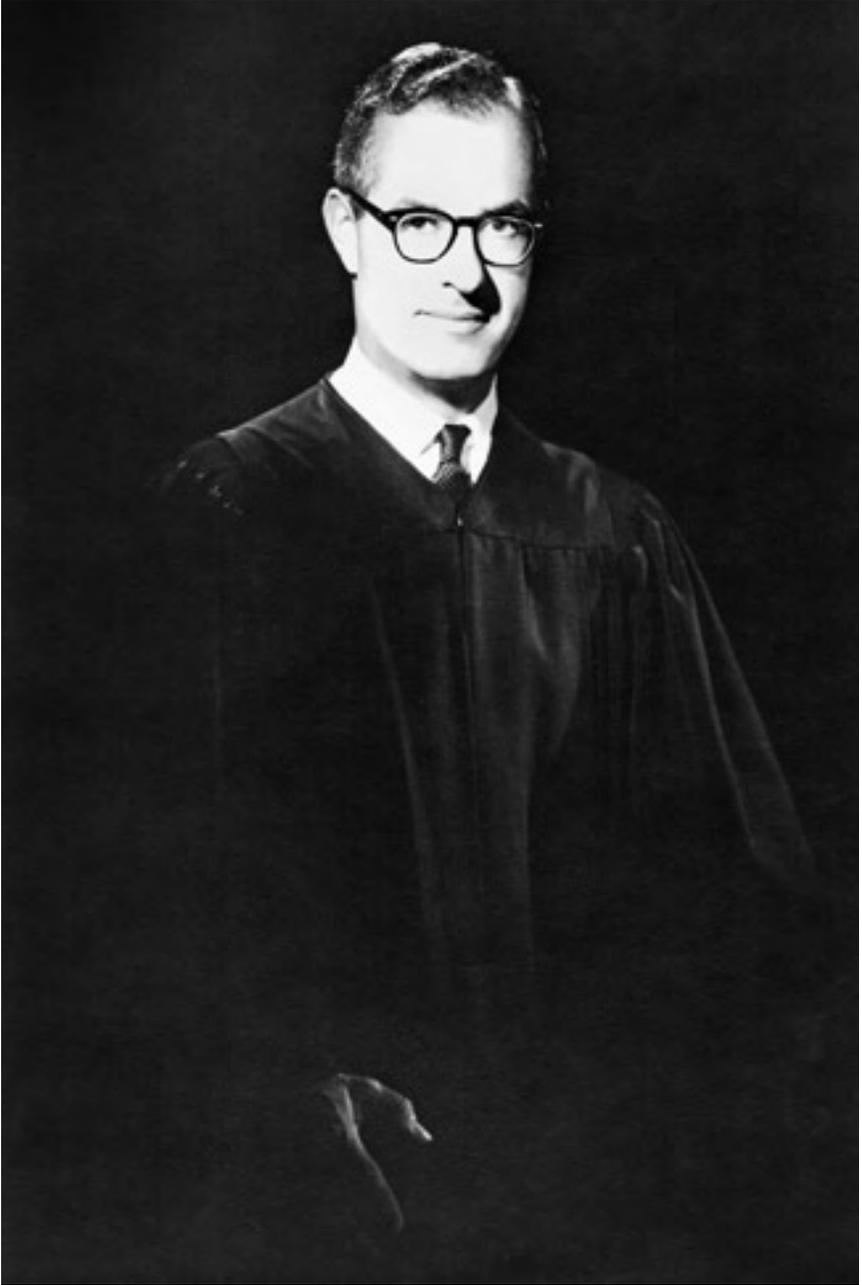
# STANLEY MOSK'S LETTERS TO HIS BROTHER OVERSEAS DURING WORLD WAR II

RICHARD M. MOSK\*

Prior to becoming a California Supreme Court justice in 1964, Stanley Mosk played an enormous role in the history of Los Angeles, the State of California, and the United States. Recently, we discovered letters that Stanley Mosk wrote from Los Angeles in 1944 and 1945 to his brother Edward Mosk, who was serving overseas. These letters not only chronicle Stanley Mosk's historic reelection as a young Los Angeles Superior Court judge, but present a penetrating view of what was occurring during that period in Los Angeles, California, and the United States from the perspective of a young, ambitious Los Angeles liberal.

Morey Stanley Mosk was born in 1912 in San Antonio, Texas. He and his brother, Edward, grew up in Rockford, Illinois, and he graduated from the University of Chicago. He was attending the University of Chicago Law School when, in the 1930s, the family ran out of money and came to California. He completed his law school education at Southwestern Law School. He was active in various California political campaigns, including efforts to rid the City of Los Angeles of the notorious

\* Associate Justice, California Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District (Los Angeles), and son of Stanley Mosk. Comments [in brackets] are by the author.



JUDGE STANLEY MOSK OF THE LOS ANGELES  
SUPERIOR COURT, OFFICIAL PORTRAIT, CA. 1944-46

*Courtesy Hon. Richard M. Mosk*

---

Shaw machine. After a few years of private practice, his professor and mentor, Phil Gibson, then director of finance under the newly-elected first Democratic governor of California in the twentieth century, Culbert Olson, brought Stanley Mosk to Sacramento to work for the new administration. (Gibson later became California chief justice.) Mosk was initially a legal assistant and then executive secretary to Governor Olson. When Olson was defeated by Attorney General Earl Warren in 1942, he appointed Stanley Mosk a Los Angeles Superior Court judge — at thirty, the youngest in the state (and perhaps the youngest in state history).

Because of his age, Judge Stanley Mosk drew opposition in the 1944 election. He was reelected and then entered military service. Governor Earl Warren could have appointed a replacement, but left the seat open so that Stanley Mosk could retain his judgeship.

In 1947, Judge Stanley Mosk ruled that racial restrictive covenants were unconstitutional, one of the first of such holdings. That ruling preceded the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Shelley v. Kraemer*, holding racial restrictive covenants unconstitutional.<sup>1</sup>

Judge Stanley Mosk was active in many civic and charitable activities, but kept a keen interest in politics. His brother Edward, who served in the Office of Strategic Services (Strategic Balkan Services) in Italy and Yugoslavia during World War II, was the Southern California chairman of the Henry Wallace for President campaign in 1948. The poor showing by Wallace and the McCarthy era ended Edward's political career. He had a successful law practice and argued significant civil liberties cases before the United States Supreme Court.

In 1958 Stanley Mosk was elected California attorney general by the largest margin of any contested election in the country. In 1960 he became state Democratic national committeeman. He was an early supporter of John F. Kennedy for President. As attorney general he established Constitutional Rights and Consumer sections and brought actions under the (theretofore moribund) state antitrust law. He developed innovative law enforcement programs. He defended civil rights, recruited women and minorities in the Department of Justice, fought for Latino voting rights, caused the desegregation of the Professional Golfer's Association, argued

---

<sup>1</sup> 334 U.S. 1 (1948).

California's water position before the United States Supreme Court, and instigated consumer rights programs. U.S. Senators Thomas Dodd and Sam Ervin praised him on the floor of the Senate. He was overwhelmingly reelected in 1962 and was considered a leading candidate for the U.S. Senate in 1964, but chose not to run and was appointed to the California Supreme Court by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr. in 1964. He easily survived in the retention election of 1986, in which the chief justice and two other justices were defeated. He appeared on the ballot nine times and never lost an election.

Justice Mosk served on the California Supreme Court from 1964 to 2001 — longer than any other justice in California history. He wrote many landmark opinions and became one of the most prominent state court judges of the era in this country. When Chief Justice Earl Warren resigned in 1968, one of those he recommended to President Johnson as his possible successor was Stanley Mosk. The Los Angeles County Courthouse and the State Library and Courts Building in Sacramento are named after him.

The letters<sup>2</sup> that follow were found in the house of his late brother, Edward Mosk.<sup>3</sup> They were written by Stanley Mosk in 1944 and 1945 to his brother Edward when Edward was serving in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), in World War II, the predecessor of the CIA. It was headed by “Wild Bill” Donovan. Edward Mosk was sent to Italy and ultimately worked with Yugoslavian (Serbian) partisans. His missions were apparently secret. In those letters, a young Superior Court Judge Stanley Mosk writes about what was happening in Los Angeles and the country — from his liberal perspective. He also describes his efforts to get into the military and his reelection campaign.

**ON FEBRUARY 9, 1944**, Mosk writes that he took their mother, recently widowed, to hear Vice President Wallace speak. In 1944, Henry Wallace was the vice president and was admired by liberals. “Incidentally,

---

<sup>2</sup> The originals of the letters are available in The Stanley Mosk Papers, Special Collections and Archives, California Judicial Center Library, San Francisco, which has provided the photographic images published here.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Mosk became a prominent attorney in Los Angeles and was active in local politics.



EDWARD MOSK, BROTHER OF STANLEY MOSK,  
SERVING WITH THE OSS, INSCRIBED,  
"KLAGENFURT, AUSTRIA, ON THE WÄRTHER SEE : MAY, 1945"  
(AFTER THE SURRENDER OF THE CITY ON MAY 3)

*Courtesy Hon. Richard M. Mosk*

---

Wallace was magnificent, as usual. He's a truly great man. Hope FDR doesn't sack him for the sake of political expediency." In fact, President Roosevelt did replace Wallace with Senator Harry Truman and made Wallace a member of the cabinet.

Stanley Mosk then reports, "The California legislature moved up the August primary to May 16, as a means of permitting soldiers to vote. (I'll tell you when to write for your absentee ballot later.) Result: this week is the period for judges to file their intention to run. I filed mine Monday. Now, Tuesday night, I still have no opposition — only veteran Judge Ruben Schmidt has drawn an opponent. Friday will be the last day, and I am keeping my fingers crossed. Will let you know then."

As the youngest superior court judge in modern California history, Mosk had been appointed by a defeated Culbert Olson just days before Olson left office. Olson had been defeated by Attorney General Earl Warren. It is no wonder that Stanley Mosk was worried about drawing opposition. In fact, he did.

Meanwhile, Stanley Mosk, with 20/800 vision and holding a public office, was exempt from the draft. He served in the Coast Guard Reserve but planned to enlist in the service for active duty. Thus, he writes, "Pushing the election up this way means I can go through with my plans [to enter into the service] even sooner. Did you get an opportunity to talk to your superior before you left? I should not be ready in early June.

**ON FEBRUARY 20, 1944**, Mosk writes his brother:

"Politics is really boiling here. As mother has already written you, I drew the jackpot, with both Leroy Dawson and Ida May Adams taking after me. It means I have a real battle on my hands, one of the toughest ever faced by an incumbent judge in the history of the court. But if I win, I should be somewhat of a figure to be reckoned with thereafter." Municipal Court Judge Leroy Dawson was a World War I veteran and Municipal Court Judge Ida May Adams became known as the "marrying judge" because of all the marriages she performed — for compensation.

He then writes about his campaign, "I am getting a good campaign underway, and am getting some encouraging assistance. For example, among my sponsoring committee, I have such names as Will H. Anderson, Jerry Giesler [the famous criminal law lawyer — the saying was,

when you get in trouble, “get me Geisler”), Joseph Scott [a well-known establishment lawyer], Henry Bodkin, William Mathes [later a federal judge], Rollin McNitt, Kimpton Ellis, and others of the biggest lawyers in town. Labor, of course, will support me, and all Democratic party groups will carry me on their various slates. The Daily News will endorse me, the Examiner will give me good breaks, the Herald will take no action either way, and the Times is the big question mark. The Citizen News will support me, and so will the dailies in Santa Monica, Long Beach and Pasadena. The community papers will get adequate advertising to assure their sympathetic attention.

“Lots will depend upon the results of the bar plebiscite [by the Los Angeles Bar Association]. Perhaps I am too optimistic, but I anticipate victory in the plebiscite, partly because there appears to be general satisfaction with my work on the bench, and partly because neither of my opponents are popular with the lawyers.

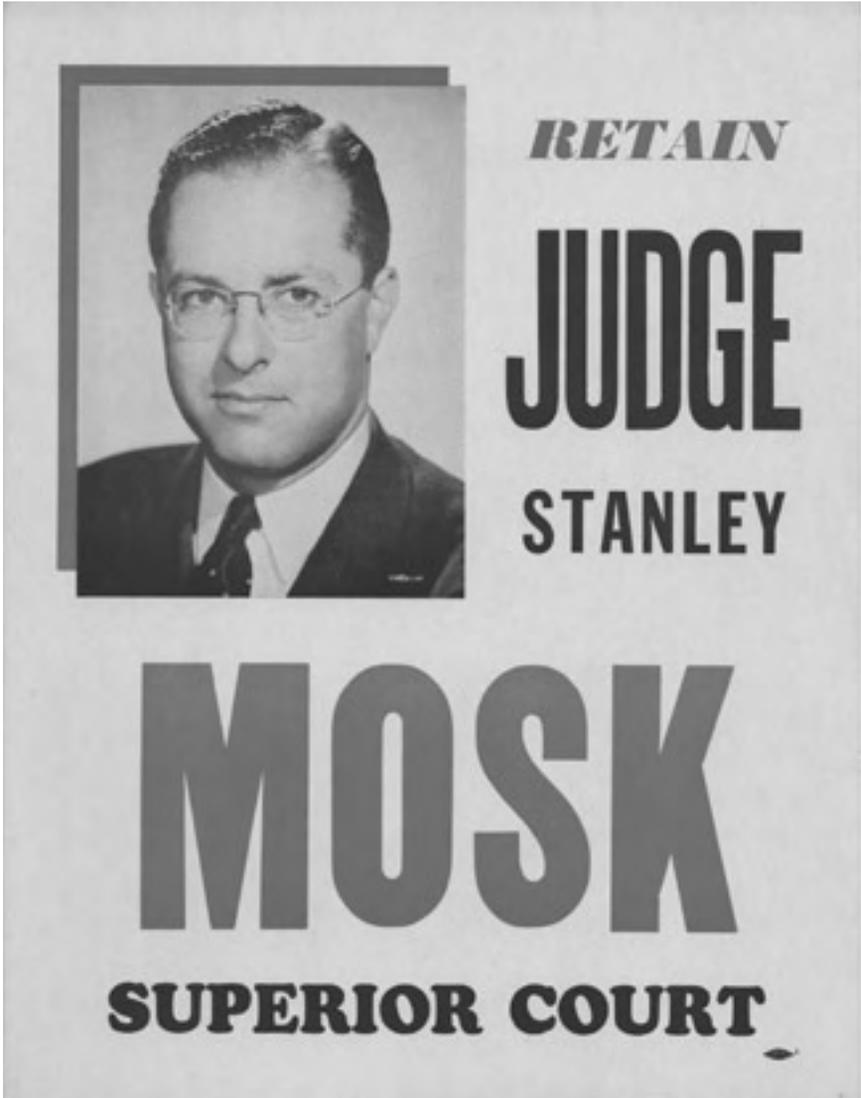
“The fact that there are two opponents is helpful, for I should win a handsome plurality in the primary — but it does make it seem doubtful that I can win a majority in the primary. Hence all my previous plans may be deferred until November, which makes me very unhappy.”

On March 20, 1944, Mosk writes his brother, “Received your first letter sent from ‘somewhere in Italy’; looks as if you are seeing the world, though probably a rather sordid looking world. Heard a broadcast today on the weekly ‘Army Hour’ from a ‘port in southern Italy where supplies are unloaded.’ We listened intently to hear your voice over the din of boat whistles!

“This side of the world seems about as normal as ever. A-gas coupons now cut to two gallons. More and more fathers being drafted, hardly any young men left hereabouts. Willkie won first presidential primary contest, capturing a majority of New Hampshire delegates. The newspapers just couldn’t seem to find any room on page one for that story! Danny Kaye [the popular comedian, who could sing and dance and later appeared in many motion pictures] is a sensation in his first motion picture. I crowded the war off page one throughout the country by denying Charlie Chaplin’s motion to dismiss the paternity suit against him, and ordering the case to proceed to trial. The dis-

strict court of appeal has sustained me, by summarily denying a writ of mandate to Chaplin's counsel; the case now is en route to the supreme court. [Chaplin, the famous motion picture comedian in both silent and talking movies was a defendant in a widely-publicized paternity case. Judge Mosk, under the law at the time, refused to dismiss the paternity case against Chaplin, notwithstanding that blood tests indicated that Chaplin was not the father. This case is discussed in more detail in the next letter.] Some eight candidates are seeking to unseat [Democratic Senator] Sheridan Downey, Lieut. Gov. Houser, Jack Tenney [a state senator who headed up Carbonneau's version of the House Un-American Activities Committee], R.R. Commissioner Justus Craemer, Bd. of Equalization Member Bonelli [who later fled to Mexico amid corruption charges], Bancroft, and a couple of others whose names slip my mind. Should be a battle royal. Forecast Houser and Downey to square off in November. Three-cornered race has developed for District Attorney in this county; incumbent Fred N. Howser, Wallace Ware, and Henry Dockweiler. Ellis Patterson vs. Assemblyman Kellems for Bill Rogers [son of Will Rogers] congressional seat he is relinquishing to reenter the army. Lucille Gleason, wife of actor Jimmy Gleason, may give Charley Lyons some trouble in the 59th. Helen Gahagan [who married actor Paul Douglas and ran against Richard Nixon for the U.S. Senate in 1950, in a famous Nixon campaign in which he portrayed her as soft on communism, and won], Loren Miller [a pioneer Black civil rights lawyer, who later became a judge], and about 10 others seeking to fill Tom Ford's shoes in 14th C.D., Ford retiring. Hal Styles, radio star, may give Costello the first battle he has had in years in the 15th. Clyde Doyle will give Congressman Ward Johnson a stiff fight in the Long Beach area. Able Congressmen Jerry Voorhis [whom Richard Nixon later defeated to win his first race for elective office], Cecil King and Chet Holifield all seem safe.

"My campaign progressing well. Headquarters opened downtown have been covering three meetings daily, billboards arranged for, support from the entire bar, including economic royalists. No bar plebiscite this year, too bad, for I believe I would have won it. Feel certain of running 1st in the 3-cornered race, only question being whether I can win at



REELECTION CAMPAIGN POSTER  
(FROM A POSTWAR ELECTION CAMPAIGN)

*Courtesy California Judicial Center Library*

the primary and thus avoid a November run-off. Want to very badly so can proceed with plans I outlined to you before [to enter the service].

“Serving in Coast Guard Reserve every week now, enjoying it.”

**ON MARCH 27, 1944**, Mosk writes his brother about the Chaplin case:

“Just wrote a letter to a friend of mine in New Guinea — Fred Hendricks — so we’ll send this to you, around the other side of this shrinking globe. Fred had read in their daily mimeographed paper the details of the Charlie Chaplin paternity case, one phase of which I had in my court, and it mentioned my name. Apparently my fame as a jurist is reaching the most remote parts of the world. (I only hope it has reached the innermost recesses of Los Angeles County on May 16th [election day]!)

“In case you don’t know about the Chaplin case: he is presently being tried in federal court on a Mann Act charge involving a 23 year old girl, who also claims Chaplin is the father of her child. As a result of blood tests indicating he is not, his attorneys moved for dismissal of the civil paternity suit. That came before me, and after rather sensational front page headline-producing argument by able counsel, Joe Scott for the girl and Pat Millikin for Chaplin, I declined to dismiss the suit, but ordered it to proceed to trial. I did not discount the value of the blood test, but held simply that the experts must be subject to cross-examination, and that, under the state of our law at present, no test is deemed to be conclusive, but rather merely evidentiary.

“It was apparently a popular decision, for I have received fan mail from all parts of the country. Chaplin’s counsel appealed, and the District Court of Appeal sustained me unanimously. They are now bound for the Supreme Court.

“That case has crowded the war off page one hereabouts, so I thought you might be interested.”

The Mosks were both great sports fans. Stanley Mosk had played some baseball in college. He writes, “baseball teams are in spring training . . . Juan Zurita defeated Sammy Angott for lightweight boxing title.” He notes that “local postage rates up to 3 cents.” The national election campaign was heating up, “Senator Barkley in Jackson Day address urged continuance of Democratic party in power nationally, [House of Representatives] Speaker Sam Rayburn to speak here Tuesday and may announce vice-pres. candidacy [he never did].”

As to his own campaign, he writes, “Labor is plumping strong for me and my whole campaign going well, everything has gone my way with

LA Times support the big questionmark; fear labor support may cause Times to oppose me, though my sponsor's list looks like Who's Who of the local economic royalists."

**ON APRIL 23, 1944**, Mosk writes more about his campaign.

"The campaign, I am led to believe, looks most satisfactory. The Daily News [the Democratic newspaper in Los Angeles] came out with a strong endorsement for me . . . and I feel confident of the endorsement of the Hollywood Citizen-News, and, hold your hats, kiddies, the Los Angeles Times! All branches of labor have endorsed me — AFL, CIO, and Railway Brotherhoods — and the usual Democratic party organizations. I have ads in all of the community papers, 1-sheets sniped around town [single sheets pasted on walls like posters], and 100% coverage of the big 24-sheet billboards. All of which has totalled [sic] quite a considerable sum, as you may suspect. But the effect has been just what I desired — a definite victory psychology in my favor, talked all over town, the one question being whether I will win in the primary or face a November runoff. That's a question I can't answer."

He reports on the local races as follows:

"Generally speaking, there is apathy concerning the elections, although there are some interesting races. District Attorney Howser, aided by labor, looks like the victor over Wallace Ware, supported by the Times, and Henry Dockweiler, who has some Democratic support. In the 16th C.D. Ellis Patterson and Assemblyman Kellems are in a stiff battle. In the 15th C.D., radioman Hal Styles is backed by liberals trying to unseat Costello. In the 13th C.D., Ned Healey is facing an uphill scrap to whip incumbent Norris Poulson. In the 20th, Clyde Doyle, Long Beach lawyer, is making a nice race against GOP incumbent Ward Johnson. The 14th C.D., where incumbent Tom Ford decided to retire, has a wide-open dog-fight among Helen Gahagan, Vernon Bennett and Loren Miller; one of the conservatives might slip in the middle of that and win. Progressives Jerry Voorhis, Cecil King and Chet Holifield all appear to be safe again.

"The assembly races are about the same as two years ago. The usual number of progressives will be returned, the usual number of reactionaries reelected. The 59th is after Charley Lyon with a vengeance, Luccile

[Lucile] Gleason, actress, being the candidate; but I have my doubts that he can be unseated.”

He then comments on the national scene:

“Heard Gov. Bricker of Ohio, would-be presidential candidate [he ran as Governor Dewey’s running mate against President Roosevelt],



JUDGE STANLEY MOSK OF THE LOS ANGELES  
SUPERIOR COURT, IN HIS CHAMBERS, CA. 1942-43

*Courtesy California Judicial Center Library*

---

speak at Town Hall here the other noon. I must admit he made a better impression on me than I had anticipated — as a speaker and from an appearance point of view. But his political views are thoroughly 'safe'. In other words, he's impossible.

"Gov. Warren has been named keynoter for the national GOP convention, an honor, we are told by the local press, unique for California. The press also tells us that the GOP national ticket is certain to be Dewey and Warren [not until 1948]."

**ON MAY 20**, shortly after the primary election, Stanley Mosk writes to his brother about the results:

"The election is over, and the results good but not good enough as far as I am personally concerned. I received 240,000 votes; Dawson 197,000; Adams 165,000. While my plurality is about 43,000 votes, you can see that I am a long way from a majority, and face a run-off with Dawson in the finals. He'll be tough competition in any league.

"I had every possible support, and still he polled that big vote against me. Even the Times endorsed me, as did the Daily News, CIO, AFL, Railroad Brotherhood, the bar associations of Glendale, Pomona and Beverly Hills (the only ones that did any endorsing this year) — and yet I failed to win a majority by a wide margin.

"That indicates to me either Mosk is a poor political name, or my two opponents were just too well known. For we did have a whale of a good campaign going; beautiful billboards, some newspaper ads, radio time, the whole works, including over a hundred thousand postcards through the mail. And it indicates that we'll have a terrific battle between now and November... . I am starting in again already, making plans, raising funds, etc. It's a long hard pull between now and November. I really think if I get by, it'll be by the skin of my teeth."

Stanley Mosk had reason to be apprehensive. The conventional wisdom is that an incumbent who is forced into a runoff generally loses. He then writes about other election results:

"Other than my own race, the election results in southern California were the most encouraging in many years. Senator Downey was renominated by a big margin over a field of ten opponents, including Jack Tenney. In every single district, the pro-Roosevelt nominees captured the

Democratic nomination. The big sensation was the defeat of Costello in the 15th by Hal Styles, radio commentator. (Costello's elimination means the 3rd member of the Dies committee to be eliminated this year; Starnes of Alabama was defeated, Dies announced his own retirement, and now Costello.) Arch Young was nominated to face Hinshaw in the 20th; Clyde Doyle against Ward Johnson in the Long Beach district; Chet Holifield, Jerry Voorhis and George Outland all won their nominations, but face November finals. Cecil King won both party nominations in his district. Ellis Patterson won the Democratic side easily in the 16th, and faces Kellems in November. Helen Gahagan beat a field of eight candidates for the nomination in the 14th, and should win handily in November.

"All in all, the returns indicated clearly that California democracy is pro-Roosevelt, and I feel certain FDR can carry this state in November against any opponent, even against a GOP slate containing Warren as the vice-presidential nominee. Downey will have a battle with Lt. Gov. Houser, but should ride in with the president.

"District Attorney Fred N. Howser, with solid labor and liberal backing (the way of that makes a long and not too pleasant story), won at the primary over Wallace Ware, backed by the Times, and Henry Dockweiler, with nothing but a name and a family connection.

"In the rest of the state, outside LA county, and in the assembly races, the results were about the same as usual — generally GOP and reactionary democratic victories. A few bright spots: Lucile Gleason (wife of actor Jimmy Gleason) won the democratic nomination from Charley Lyon; actor Albert Dekker, a really bright guy, won the nomination in the Hollywood district; and Jim Goldsmith, another able young fellow, won the nomination in the 60th, Santa Monica, district.

"All in all, labor did a fine job. The AF of L particularly did some grand work on a big, tangible scale. The CIO limited itself to working among its own membership, and admitted, I understand, that for the first time the AFL political program was far superior to its own. But the CIO gets 'blamed' for the defeat of Costello, and our congressmen are screaming for an investigation, etc.

"Roosevelt now has enough delegates pledged to him to assure his renomination on the first ballot. It appears that Dewey is certain of the

GOP nomination. The only thing either convention will do is choose a vice-presidential nominee, Warren appears to be the GOP favorite. Whether Wallace will get the nod again is uncertain; the California delegation is strong for him, despite a recent visit out here of Speaker Sam Rayburn, an aspirant himself. Heard one rumor that FDR will select Stettinius, who has been getting a build-up lately, with trips abroad, conferences with Eden, Churchill, et al.

“At any rate, things political are beginning to really hum, and will continue to do so until the GOP convention in June, and the Democratic convention in July.”

On a carbon copy of the same letter, sent to Edward's wife, Fern, he concludes with observations on the sports front:

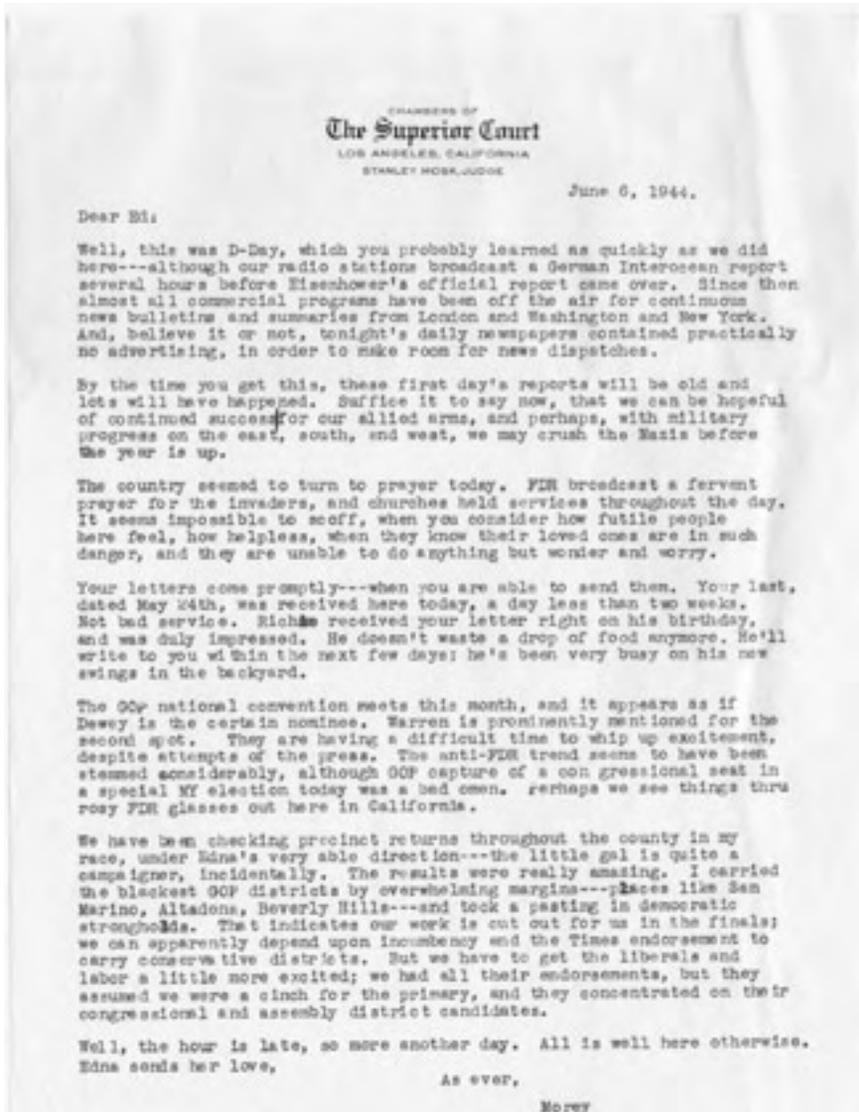
“Since writing to Ed last, the big league baseball season is on. The Cards and Yanks lead again, as usual. But your [Chicago] Cubs, woe is them! They fired Jimmy Wilson when they won their first game of the season, then lost 13 in a row! They are still wallowing in the cellar, after bringing Charley Grimm back from Milwaukee to manage them. My [Chicago] White Sox, in fourth place, look good, and with the best pitching in the league, are considered a real threat for the flag this year. Cincinnati and Pittsburgh look good in the national, Washington and Cleveland also in the American.

“On the coast [the Triple A Pacific Coast League], Portland is out to a surprising lead, with my Sacramento boys a miserable last again. Los Angeles, though now in fourth, is still my bet to win again.” [There was no major league baseball in Los Angeles until the late 1950s.]

**ON JUNE 6, 1944**, Mosk writes about D-Day — the Normandy invasion:

“Well, this was D-Day, which you probably learned as quickly as we did here — although our radio stations broadcast a German Interocean report several hours before Eisenhower's official report came over. Since then almost all commercial programs have been off the air for continuous news bulletins and summaries from London and Washington and New York. And, believe it or not, tonight's daily newspapers contained practically no advertising, in order to make room for news dispatches.

“By the time you get this, these first day’s reports will be old and lots will have happened. Suffice it to say now, that we can be hopeful of continued success for our allied arms, and perhaps, with military progress on the east, south, and west, we may crush the Nazis before the year is up.



LETTER OF JUNE 6, 1944

Courtesy California Judicial Center Library

“The country seemed to turn to prayer today. FDR broadcast a fervent prayer for the invaders, and churches held services throughout the day. It seems impossible to scoff, when you consider how futile people here feel, how helpless, when they know their loved ones are in such danger, and they are unable to do anything but wonder and worry.”

Then he discusses national politics:

“The GOP national convention meets this month, and it appears as if Dewey is the certain nominee. Warren is prominently mentioned for the second spot. They are having a difficult time to whip up excitement, despite attempts of the press. The anti-FDR trend seems to have been stemmed considerably, although GOP capture of a congressional seat in a special NY election today was a bad omen. Perhaps we see things thru rosy FDR glasses out here in California.”

Finally, he returns to his own election:

“We have been checking precinct returns throughout the county in my race, under Edna’s [his wife’s] very able direction — the little gal is quite a campaigner, incidentally. The results were really amazing. I carried the blackest GOP districts by overwhelming margins — places like San Marino, Altadena, Beverly Hills — and took a pasting in democratic strongholds. That indicates our work is cut out for us in the finals; we can apparently depend upon incumbency and the Times endorsement to carry conservative districts. But we have to get the liberals and labor a little more excited; we had all their endorsements, but they assumed we were a cinch for the primary, and they concentrated on their congressional and assembly district candidates.”

After receiving a letter from his brother reporting little enthusiasm in Italy for “progressive forces,” [Edward being quite liberal] Stanley Mosk writes on June 30, 1944:

“Your letter in re the general apathy to war events in the southern Italy area was interesting, but, I suppose, a result to be expected of a generation dominated by fascism. While our failure or inability to inspire a burning desire for democracy is to be deplored, it will have to be conceded that it will be a difficult task to do throughout the world. After all, how many sound democracies are there? If we must educate all the balance of the globe, we face an almost insurmountable task.

“I am afraid that in the long run, we will have to leave the task of re-education to the people of the countries themselves — always making certain, however, that no anti-democratic force seizes or maintains control, and ousting it by force if it does.

“Our failure to encourage the democratic forces in reconquered areas is also deplorable. Our treatment of DeGaulle is a blow to unity, and our appeasement of the House of Savoy must be discouraging to whatever people there are in Italy who think.

“That, I suppose, all comes back to the door of our State Department. Maybe effective political action here at home will eventually clean out that nest of imperialists, appeasers and advocates of status-quo-at-all-costs. But at times we despair even of FDR in that regard.”

Reflecting his Democratic Party allegiance, he reports on the 1944 Republican Convention:

“FDR looms the November victor by a comfortable margin, now that the GOP has met. Dewey and Bricker represent a combination bereft of ability, initiative or imagination. The platform of the GOP is a splendid 1924 document, except for its foreign policy plank, which reads like a chapter from a Harding speech in 1920. During the convention, 15 Republican governors appeared before the platform committee and pleaded for a more constructive foreign policy plank, one less ‘weasel-worded,’ one pledging the joining of an association of nations with the power to use military force to preserve peace. But the GOP, having received the blessings of Taft, Vandenburg and Col. McCormick for the plank then prepared, rejected their own governors’ plea. The governors, having been properly spanked by the Pews, Hoovers, McCormicks, et al., went back to their seats and not a one even raised his voice on the floor of the convention.

“Even Wilkie appears cowed. Expressing his views prior to the convention, and they were views every liberal could accept, Wilkie still sent a most cordial wire to Dewey after the latter’s nomination. I had hoped he might bolt and support the Democratic nominees this time.

“Warren came out of the convention with increased stature. He was smart enough to appreciate that this year’s nominees cannot win, that by not being a defeated vice presidential candidate, he will have an excellent

opportunity for the nomination for the presidency four years hence. And so, with the nomination for second place a certainty, he declined it.”

He then discusses the forthcoming Democratic Convention:

“The Democrats meet in Chicago in late July. Gov. Kerr of Oklahoma will be the keynoter. Our party is showing some life lately, and unless the southerners put up too great a kick about the vice-president, everything should be unified for the November campaign. Some of the democratic senators have gotten off some stinging remarks about Dewey, one of the best being by the one who said “We have no objection to changing horses in mid-stream; but we do object to changing from a horse to a Shetland pony!” Since Dewey is very sensitive about his small stature, that crack, which is spreading beautifully, is said to hurt him deeply.”

**ON JULY 4, 1944**, Mosk writes to his brother on stationery headed, “Judging the News with Stanley Mosk, Judge of the Superior Court.” This was a syndicated column he wrote for newspapers in Los Angeles County. He writes to his brother about the war and his own feeling about serving:

“Happy Fourth of July to you! Hope you’ll be back here by a year from today.

“The war situation certainly looks bright this day. The boys are pushing ahead in Italy, a new offensive is underway in France, and the Russians are doing marvelously well in the east. Adolf must certainly be packing his bags by now.

“That brings me to the point of wondering if I’ll not be delaying too long if I wait until after November before getting into the show in some capacity. There are optimistic reports on all sides about the European phase being over this year, and at the rate the Russians are advancing, they may be in Warsaw within thirty days, and in Germany proper long before autumn.

“That would mean I would miss the boat, for I would never forgive myself if I failed to have some small role in this war. So, Ed, will you — if you can at your distance — make some inquiries into the program we discussed when you were last here. I will definitely be ready to go by 120 days after you receive this letter, and, if a specific opportunity presents itself for something really worthwhile before then, I would go on very



## JUDGING the NEWS

with  
**STANLEY  
MOSK**  
Judge of the  
Superior  
Court

July 4, 1944.

Dear Ed:

Happy Fourth of July to you! Hope you'll be back here by a year from today.

The war situation certainly looks bright this day. The boys are pushing ahead in Italy, a new offensive is underway in France, and the Russians are doing marvelously well in the east. Adolf must certainly be packing his bags by now.

That brings me to the point of wondering if I'll not be delaying too long if I wait until after November before getting into the show in some capacity. There are optimistic reports on all sides about the European phase being over this year, and at the rate the Russians are advancing, they may be in Warsaw within thirty days, and in Germany proper long before autumn.

That would mean I would miss the boat, for I would never forgive myself if I failed to have some small role in this war. So, Ed, will you---if you can at your leisure---make some inquiries into the program we discussed when you were last here. I will definitely be ready to go by 120 days after you receive this letter, and, if a specific opportunity presents itself for something really worthwhile before then, I would go on very short notice---leaving the campaign organized and to be run in my absence.

Please look into that for me, Ed, if you can possibly do so. Or, if there is someone I should communicate with directly, let me know that, too. I don't want to delay too long; it may be later than I think!

I enclose Dorothy Thompson on the GOP platform---and a clever cartoon from yesterday's Daily News, a fourth for bridge! Wonder if it's just coincidence that Wilkie looms larger than any of the other three in the cartoon!

Received a nice letter from Isidore Grassman of NY yesterday; he just learned of Dad's passing. His wife died recently, too. And to add a thoughtful gesture, he had heard from Lester Greenberg of LA that I had a tough campaign on, so he enclosed a campaign contribution of \$100. That was so nice and uncalled-for of him, that I hope if you have the chance when you get back to NY, you'll call on him again.

Richie is learning a little geography these days. We've shown him where we think you are, and he recognized other countries on the map. But he does get a bit confused when England is colored green on one map and orange on another! All in all, however, the little guy is getting quite sharp.

Baseball is having a great season---even most rabid war enthusiasts believe it stimulates morale, though they strenuously oppose horse racing---with justification, I believe. The Cards are running off the NL, the Cubs wallowing in the cellar. The AL is a real race, only 8 games separating first from last place. The Browns lead today, but the Red Sox are pinking down their necks, with the Yanks and White Sox in the running. A similar hot race is in the Pacific Coast League, with even the cellar Sacramento boys up to 7 games out of first now---after being 18 games behind at one time. San Diego now leads, a half game ahead of San Francisco.

Attended a meeting the other day, and a guest in uniform was introduced, a handsome, brilliant chap. It was Gilbert Harrison, now a corporal in the air force, stationed in Sacramento. I introduced myself to him as your brother, and gave him some names to look up in Sacramento. That kid really has a lot on the ball; he should go places in days to come.

Everything else about the same here. All well and reasonably happy. More another day.

As ever,

LETTER OF JULY 4, 1944

Courtesy California Judicial Center Library

short notice — leaving the campaign organized and to be run in my absence.

“Please look into that for me, Ed, if you can possibly do so. Or, if there is someone I should communicate with directly, let me know that, too. I don’t want to delay too long; it may be later than I think!”

Then, back to baseball:

“Baseball is having a great season — even most rabid war enthusiasts believe it stimulates morale, though they strenuously oppose horse racing — with justification, I believe. The Cards are running off the NL, the Cubs wallowing in the cellar. The AL is a real race, only 8 games separating first from last place. The Browns lead today, but the Red Sox are panting down their necks, with the Yanks and White Sox in the running. A similar hot race is in the Pacific Coast League, with even the cellar Sacramento boys up to 7 games out of first now — after being 15 games behind at one time. San Diego now leads, a half game ahead of San Francisco.”

**ON JULY 24, 1944**, Mosk writes evidencing his desire to serve in the military:

“Have received a couple letters from you lately, the last being dated July 15, which is really fast service. No reply yet to my note concerning the subject we discussed on your last trip here. I hope there are some possibilities for the future; I’ll be ready in just a little over 90 days [the election], though if an extraordinary opportunity were available, I feel that I would go immediately, campaign or no campaign.

“Perhaps if you are moved on to new fields from your present location, there might be need of someone to succeed you. I’d really like that. Or something somewhere abroad.

“The way things are moving now, on the fighting fronts and behind the lines in Germany, forecasts are made on all sides now that the war in Europe will be over very soon. Drew Pearson [a prominent broadcaster] last night forecast the end within a few weeks, no later than Labor Day. All commentators indicate the belief that full capitulation of the Germans may come any day.

“John Cohee’s daily analysis in the [Los Angeles] Daily News of today ably indicates why the revolt in Germany has failed. I enclose it for your information.”

He then writes about his dismay at Vice President Wallace being replaced on the Democratic ticket and reports on the convention.

“As far as I am concerned, the Democratic convention was a failure. Henry Wallace was punished for being an outspoken champion of the people; the old time political bosses pulled their backstage maneuvers successfully; and FDR, while he started out to back Wallace, weakened badly and actually acquiesced in throwing Wallace to the wolves. [Vice President Henry Wallace was replaced by Senator Harry Truman and was appointed secretary of commerce. After attacking the administration’s position on the Soviet Union, Wallace resigned upon request. He ran for president in 1948 as a member of the Progressive Party. Edward Mosk was a leader in the Progressive Party.]

“Most of our good people are now rationalizing that Truman will add strength to the ticket, that Wallace will probably be given a high post in the government, that the party platform is strong on its foreign planks, that labor is satisfied with Truman, etc., etc. But the fact remains, that Wallace is one of the greatest living Americans, that he has had courage to speak out, and because of that, he was thrown out. Just as Willkie was shelved because he was too good for the GOP, Wallace was too good for the presently constituted Democratic party.

“I feel discouraged over the whole internal picture. Some six months ago, I said that Wallace’s renomination would be the test of whether we have gone way over to the right. I still believe it was the test — and the Democratic party failed to pass it, FDR included.

“Truman? Yes, he’s all right, an honest, able man. But colorless and possessive of no great vision. (Gilbert Lindsey [who became a Los Angeles City Councilman], a negro friend of mine, to whom I said that, pointed out, however, that Hugo Black [a former senator and justice of the Supreme Court] was the same, that FDR raised him from obscurity, and today he’s a brilliant justice. He said he has enough faith in FDR to believe he would not have approved Truman had he not been of real caliber.) I believe little of what the Hearst columnists say, but, during the

convention, there was an analysis of Truman and Douglas — FDR's 2nd and 3rd choices — and its views on Truman are undoubtedly accurate. I enclose them for your information.

“Incidentally, you may be interested to know that my long-expressed views on Bob Kenny [California attorney general, who, in 1946, lost in his challenge to Governor Earl Warren] have once more been vindicated. As head of the California delegation, he sabotaged the Wallace forces continually. Gov. Olson, Helen Gahagan, J. Frank Burke and John Anson Ford [Los Angeles County supervisor] stuck with Wallace to the bitter end. Kenny, and the would-be political bosses like Ed Pauley [oilman who was an active Democrat], Bill Malone, etc., switched around, to make deals and wound up opposing Wallace. The California delegation finally voted 32 for Wallace, 20 for Truman. But Bob's antics throughout were really reprehensible, and clearly show him to be a conniving opportunist. He plays the game of the Kellys, Hagues, Pendergasts, Flynns, [all famous bosses in political machines] and others who now control the party. The only difference now is that people are finally catching on to him, for he has had to reveal himself openly — as he did at the convention. Remember when I wrote you that some day the tigers would find out he is a lion, and the lions that he is a tiger? Well, they're catching on. The CIO, Lawyers Guild, and other pro-Wallace forces, are not happy at Bob's role in knifing him.

“Gahagan [Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas who ran against and lost to Richard Nixon for the Senate] was a speaker at the convention, to match Clare Booth Luce [married into the Luce family that owned Time Magazine] at the GOP gathering. She did only fairly well. Best talk at either convention was Quentin Reynolds, the author, at the Demo show. It was the most refreshing message of support for the administration I have yet heard, spoken by a man just back from the fighting fronts.

“Other good talks were those by Gov. Ellis Arnall of Georgia, Gov. Kerr of Oklahoma, and FDR's acceptance message was splendid. That Arnall, right out of the heart of Dixie, is an amazing character. A young man, he has been about as far removed from his predecessor Talmadge as anyone can be; no more poll tax in Georgia, voting for 18 year olds,

and many other reforms. If he keeps that up, he should be watched for 4 years from now. Kerr gave a fighting keynote talk that really ripped Dewey to shreds. He's a big hulk of a man, a real New Dealer, and colorful in appearance and delivery.

"Those are the only bright spots in my discouragement. If men like Arnall, Kerr, Claude Pepper, and a few others can be nurtured and developed during the next four years, the Democratic party may not collapse after FDR. But if we continue to make more Missouri Compromises (a la Truman), we're dead ducks."

**ON JULY 30, 1944**, Mosk reports on the war:

"The Russian advances continue to be the sensation of the war. Papers and the radio today played up their drive into East Prussia, and amusingly stressed the fact that the red army was led onto German soil by a 37-year old Jewish general! No commentator believes the Nazis can hold out for another thirty days; most expect capitulation momentarily. Perhaps they are being pollyanish, but the situation does look hopeful."

He then discusses politics:

"Politically, things were quiet the past week, but they'll get under way very soon, for there are just over 90 days left before the election. Dewey meets this week with all 26 Republican governors — there seems to be no good reason, except for the publicity of it. FDR is doing nothing of a political nature."

He returns to his concern about the replacement of Wallace:

"Most liberals are still grieving over the loss of Wallace. I enclose a Pearson article on the backstage maneuvering. Also a piece on the California political scene.

"Wallace has become a real symbol of everything decent and progressive in the democratic party. At the convention, knowing full well how the southern reactionaries were after his scalp, he arose to second the nomination of FDR, and delivered a masterful address on the need of keeping the party liberal, and in going into detail, he urged abolition of the poll tax. It was breathtaking courage. And yet the great left-winger, Bob Kenny, joined the southerners in opposing Wallace! A lot more people have caught on to him now — tho a few are momentarily still fooled, like Lee Bachelis, who now says dumping Wallace was fine politi-

cal strategy! One of these days you'll find Kenny off base for good — and I'll certainly say 'I told you so' to a number of folks. (Gov. Olson stayed with Wallace to the bitter end — unlike Kenny, he doesn't know how to be a political-dealer.)”

On the local front:

“The Hollywood Democratic Committee, a fine aggressive outfit, is doing a swell job locally. It plans a 500,000 copy newspaper during the campaign — about 3 or 4 issues — that should help the democratic nominees AND me. They have endorsed me and will give some real aid, I hope.”

He then reports:

“Saw your in-laws [who were quite radical] at a musical last night. Harry was chairman and did a fine job. We had to leave early, to go to a Newspaper Guild dance — with, of all things, a Times reporter.” [The Los Angeles Times, run by the Chandler family, was favorable to Republicans and Republican policies.]

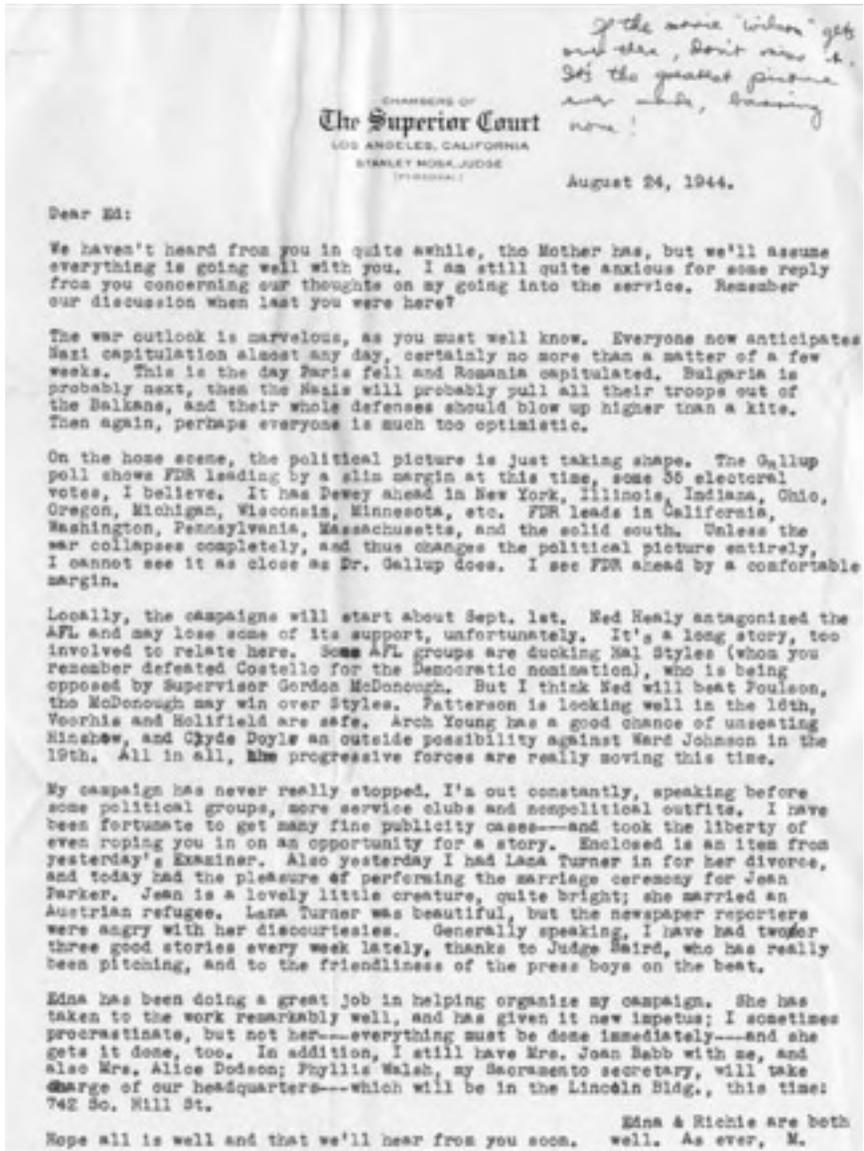
**ON JULY 31, 1944** he returns to the same theme about Wallace:

“At any rate, I enclosed an article by Drew Pearson on the inside of the Truman nomination at the Democratic convention. I did not realize he was to have a second part to the article the following day. So, knowing you would want the whole story, I enclose herewith the second article. (Note he mentions the Bob Kenny double-dealing, too. The only inaccuracy is that Kenny ducked committing himself to Wallace even before the delegation left California; rumor had it with some degree of accuracy that he wanted to be free to make a deal for a cabinet post for himself. He plays along with Warren, and won't oppose Warren for governor in 1946; thus he has about reached the top spot in California, and so he eyes a national post.)” [He did run against Warren and lost. Active in liberal politics, he was later appointed by Gov. Edmund G. Brown, Sr. as a Los Angeles Superior Court judge.]

**ON AUGUST 24, 1944**, Mosk writes:

“We haven't heard from you in quite awhile, tho Mother has, but we'll assume everything is going well with you. I am still quite anxious

for some reply from you concerning our thoughts on my going into the service. Remember our discussion when last you were here?



LETTER OF AUGUST 24, 1944

Courtesy California Judicial Center Library

“The war outlook is marvelous, as you must well know. Everyone now anticipates Nazi capitulation almost any day, certainly no more than a matter of a few weeks. This is the day Paris fell and Romania capitulated. Bulgaria is probably next, then the Nazis will probably pull all their troops out of the Balkans, and their whole defenses should blow up higher than a kite. Then again, perhaps everyone is much too optimistic.

“On the home scene, the political picture is just taking shape. The Gallup poll shows FDR leading by a slim margin at this time, some 35 electoral votes, I believe. It has Dewey ahead in New York, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Oregon, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, etc. FDR leads in California, Washington, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and the solid south. Unless the war collapses completely, and thus changes the political picture entirely, I cannot see it as close as Dr. Gallup does. I see FDR ahead by a comfortable margin.

“Locally, the campaigns will start about Sept. 1st. Ned Healy [a Democratic candidate for Congress] antagonized the AFL and may lose some of its support, unfortunately. It's a long story, too involved to relate here. Some AFL groups are ducking Hal Styles (whom you remember defeated Costello for the Democratic nomination), who is being opposed by Supervisor Gordon McDonough. But I think Ned will beat Poulson [a Republican who later became Mayor of Los Angeles], tho McDonough may win over Styles. Patterson is looking well in the 16th, Voorhis and Holifield are safe. Arch Young has a good chance of unseating Hinshaw, and Clyde Doyle an outside possibility against Ward Johnson in the 19th. All in all, the progressive forces are really moving this time.

“My campaign has never really stopped. I'm out constantly, speaking before some political groups, more service clubs and nonpolitical outfits. I have been fortunate to get many fine publicity cases — and took the liberty of even roping you in on an opportunity for a story. Enclosed is an item from yesterday's Examiner. Also yesterday I had Lana Turner [famous movie star] in for her divorce, and today had the pleasure of performing the marriage ceremony for Jean Parker [another movie star]. Jean is a lovely little creature, quite bright; she married an Austrian refugee. Lana Turner was beautiful, but the newspaper reporters were an-

gry with her discourtesies. Generally speaking, I have had two or three good stories every week lately, thanks to Judge Baird, who has really been pitching, and to the friendliness of the press boys on the beat.”

He concludes with a penned note referring to an academy award nominated movie, *Wilson*, about the life of Woodrow Wilson: “If the movie ‘Wilson’ gets over there, don’t miss it. It’s the greatest picture ever made, barring none!”

**ON SEPTEMBER 28, 1944**, Mosk writes about his campaign:

“We’re working our heads off [in the election campaign], sleeping little, and annoying everyone in town for assistance of various sorts. I think we have made considerable progress since the primary, but how it will all come out is in the lap of the gods — and a million voters

“But first, let us tell you how deeply grateful we are for your thoughtful wishes, and for your generous contribution. It was really terrific of you guys, and we shall be everlastingly in your debt. I hope there is a balance at the end so we may repay it; but in any event, at this moment, the aid was desperately welcome.

“The total cost of this thing is assuming astronomical proportions, but, I must say this, many people and organizations have rallied to our side in really gratifying numbers and with tangible results. I’d rather not write details, for letters may go astray, but the tale is a most interesting and encouraging one.

“I am enclosing samples of our literature. Will send you other materials from time to time — probably without an enclosed note for lack of time. The Hollywood Democratic Committee has been circulating a newspaper, ‘The Free Press’ throughout the county, and it has contained a generous amount of space devoted to me. I have been making meetings in all parts of the county, as many as six some days; last Sunday, for example, I spoke at a breakfast in Redondo Beach, a luncheon in Long Beach, an early afternoon Italian affair in southwest Los Angeles, then a late afternoon picnic in Glendale, then a rubber workers dinner near the Goodyear plant, and I ended up at a big Hungarian party on West Washington. Bed sure felt good that night!”

He reports on the election:

“The general campaign is underway. I assume you’re kept posted on the presidential race. Don’t know just what reports you get, but my personal opinion is that Dewey is making a creditable showing, that he has scored a number of telling blows, and that he has made alarming headway in some quarters. I still believe California is safe for FDR, but the margin will be surprisingly slim; I fear our people are much too confident, and our present party leadership in this state is miserably bad: the Mike Fannings, Robertsons, Pauleys, Kennys, Malones, et al., are far from inspiring directors. At this moment, believe it or not, six weeks from election day, there isn’t a single piece of FDR literature in the County of Los Angeles — except the material included in the Hollywood Democratic Committee newspaper.

“You’ve probably heard the exposure of Hal Styles [Democratic candidate for Congress] in the 15th, that he was formerly a Ku Klux Klan leader. Unfortunately the tale appears to be true, and there are serious, probably decisive, defections in the district as a result. I think he’s through now. His loss will probably hurt the whole ticket in that area.

“Helen Gahagan, Ellis Patterson, Chet Holifield, and Jerry Voorhis are all in fine shape. Clyde Doyle in Long Beach, and Arch Young in the valley, face tough uphill battles. Ned Healy and Poulson are battling evenly at this writing.”

He then summarizes other news:

“U.C.L.A., in the first football game of the season, trailed USC with two minutes to play, 13-0. Believe it or not, in two minutes a guy by the name of Johnny Roesch first passed for one touchdown, then ran 80 yards for the other, crossing the goalline to tie the score after the whistle had blown. Final score, 13-13. The game has created more interest than the political campaign.

“Dewey was in town last week, attracted 93,000 people to the coliseum. The crowd was not exaggerated, for we were there — having our literature passed out. We had fine circulation of it, some people later commenting that they weren’t sure whether it was a Dewey or Mosk rally.

“The American League baseball race is the tightest in history. Tigers lead today, Browns half game behind, Yankees two games in third, Red

Sox four games in fourth. Can possibly end in a dead heat between Tigers and Browns, necessitating a single game to decide the winner...

“Well, I must be off to East Los Angeles; more another day. By the way, Ed, anything new on the situation you were going to speak to your boss about [getting into the service]? The time is getting nearer and nearer.”

**ON NOVEMBER 8, 1944**, Mosk writes about the election:

“November 7, 1944, was a great day for America, for the world — and for the Mosk family!

“Going in reverse order, first, about our race. Our campaign was about as thorough as any could be, organized in every assembly district. We were on every Democratic slate — and we kept our opponent off the GOP slates. (In fact, Brennan, Dewey’s campaign manager, sent out 3500 letters for me!) The Daily News, Times, Long Beach Press-Telegram, and Santa Monica Outlook editorially endorsed me; only the Long Beach Independent endorsed my opponent.

“Nevertheless we were concerned, not only because of Dawson’s great personal popularity, but because we could not tell how the name of Mosk would appeal to the average voter as against a good Anglo-Saxon name. Most people who wished us well said we would win by a slender margin, a few close friends said it would be easy. But you know how back-pats are.

“Then came the landslide. At this moment, we have over 650,000 votes, to 450,000 — a margin of over 200,000. And our lead grows with each new return; it might hit a quarter of a million. We topped the whole ticket, including even FDR in Los Angeles County! Our vote exceeds that ever given to a judge in California. It’s really terrific. [Mosk won with 740, 227 votes to Dawson’s 525,765 votes — an amazing reversal of the primary election results.]

“But most important were the nation-wide results, a real victory for democracy. Beaten were Gerald Nye, Hamilton Fish, Congressman Day of Illinois, Congressman Maas of Minnesota, and Congressman Ward Johnson, Norris Poulson, Tom Rolph and Albert Carter of California. Taft has a very narrow lead in Ohio and still may lose [he won]. Republican Senator Danaher of Connecticut lost. Barkley, Wagner and Lucas were reelected.

“Downey was reelected [Democratic United States Senator Sheridan Downey], though Lt. Gov. Houser pressed him. But greatest California victories were Ned Healy over Poulson, Clyde Doyle over Ward Johnson in Long Beach, George Miller over Carter in Oakland, and Franck Havenner over Rolph in San Francisco. Every Democratic incumbent was reelected: Jerry Voorhis, Ed Izac in San Diego, George Outland of Santa Barbara, Chet Holifield, Harry Shepard, Cecil King. Also victorious were Helen Gahagan and Ellis Patterson. Gordon McDonough, republican, beat Hal Styles, as was expected. Only casualty was Arch Young, who failed to oust Hinshaw in the valley.

“Most of the reactionary assemblymen were reelected, but Albert Dekker won in Hollywood, and Ralph Beal, an independent candidate backed by the Teamsters Union, upset John B. Knight, who won both republican and democratic nominations in the primary.

“As you’ve probably heard, the whole congressional picture is good, democratic majorities being safe in both branches of congress. If the GOP can read the election figures, there will probably be fewer isolationists from this point on. (Though the leading editorial in tonight’s Hearst paper was something like this: ‘Boys and Girls Celebrate Quiet Halloween This Year’).

“Proposition Number 12, the anti-labor measure [restrictions on the closed or union shop and labor organizing and communications], was beaten badly, and Number 11, the pension measure with bad taxing features, was also beaten. Other measures were intelligently passed or rejected — the results showing the people really knew how they were voting.

“So, all in all, we’re terribly tired, but elated. So, will you excuse us for giving no further details tonight. More soon.”

**ON NOVEMBER 25, 1944**, Mosk writes about events:

“Papers are playing up the big bombing of Tokyo tonight; apparently it was a great event, and left big fires raging in some aircraft plants. We hear little from Italy these days, probably because of the lovely weather you must be having there.

“We’re not yet recovered from the grueling campaign. I am so tied up with so many organizations, that I just can’t seem to stop going to

meetings, yes, and even making speeches. I would have taken a vacation but for the fact that I used mine up last July.”

He then reflects on his intensified efforts to enlist:

“I followed your suggestion and telephoned Arthur Goldberg in Chicago [later U.S. secretary of labor, U.S. Supreme Court justice and U.N. ambassador], and, pursuant to his suggestion, called on an attorney, Martin Easton, in the Rowan Building. From him I received the necessary forms, which are filled out and enroute now to parts and persons unknown. What will follow, and how soon, is problematical. But I am getting prepared, hopefully, for any eventuality [in efforts to get into some war service].

“I have also communicated with UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration — established by the Allies in 1943 to provide aid to liberated areas]. Through my fraternity magazine, I learned that a fraternity brother of mine, Alvin Roseman, was acting personnel director in Washington. I wrote to him, but my letter followed him to somewhere overseas, where he now serves as chief of the Balkans division of UNRRA. (He may be somewhere near you; if so, look him up, he’s a fine, able chap. Graduate of Ohio State, a Ph.D. in Social Service from Chicago, Roseman has a lot on the ball.) He referred me to the present personnel director, one Col. Joseph Harris, who I understand is a former U. of California professor of political science. A letter is enroute to him, too.

“If you get any other ideas, let me know pronto. I am getting impatient, and may end up walking into my draft board any day now.”

He concludes with sports:

“USC-UCLA tangle tomorrow for the Rose Bowl invitation. Wish I could hold this up for the final score, but I’ll be at Coast Guard base [he served as a local reservist in the U.S. Coast Guard] all day, and won’t wait to mail this [USC won]. Saw a pro football game a week ago [local professional teams. There was no football team in Los Angeles until 1946]; it was quite poor, except that Kenny Washington [a former UCLA football star] is still tops in any ball game. Saw UCLA beat College of Pacific 53-7.”

ON DECEMBER 7, 1944, Mosk writes about the final tally of his own reelection:

“Absentee ballots are all counted, and the results final. The totals, complete, are: Mosk, 740,227; Dawson, 525,765. That gives me a healthy majority of 214,462. You may note that I dropped some four thousand votes in the absentee count, which indicates to me that I may very well have lost had I done nothing, just assuming that incumbency automatically reelects a judge.

“Our work really was productive. Frankly, and immodestly, I think we had the best judicial campaign ever run in this county, and one of the best campaigns of any kind. The total vote I received is the largest ever received by any judge in the history of Los Angeles County. And I ran higher than Senator Downey, Fred Houser, or Tom Dewey; only FDR topped me — and to him, I'll bow most any day!

“Any way you look at it, three quarters of a million votes are an awful lot! Apparently the name of Mosk isn't a handicap, a factor that we couldn't be certain of until it had a real test.”

He discusses his efforts to join the military service:

“As you probably know by virtue of previous letters, I did talk to Arthur Goldberg over the telephone, and he advised me to see Martin Easton, a local attorney. I now have applications pending, and am impatiently waiting to hear something. (If you know of any way of expediting it in Washington, by all means do so.) If I do not hear anything by the first of the year, I intend to merely report to my draft board for induction.

“I have checked with Navy, and there is no chance of any active service there because of my eyes. (My optometrist tells me they are 20/800 of normal, though corrected with glasses to 20/20.) Army has closed its AMG recruiting, and has nothing else available. I have an application pending with UNRRA, but have little hope there, except as a civilian — and I'm not interested in that. So, if OSS fails, I'm not going to waste anymore time, but will go into the army from induction center and start from scratch. Ordinarily I'd be anxious to do that, but I fear that there again, my eyes may cause me to be buried in a camp in this country for

the duration, whereas I'm eager to get overseas, somewhere near a theater of real activity if possible.

"My only misgiving about leaving town, is Mother's situation. As you know, her building has been sold, and there is always the uncertainty of what the new owner may do. But Edna will be prepared to assist in any emergencies, and I'll leave some funds in Mother's possession for use for up to a year if necessary."

He comments on the State Department (the Mosks were more amenable to liberal regimes abroad than had been the State Department):

"Lots of interest hereabouts in the State Department shakeup. The FDR appointments seemed to me to be very bad, with the possible exception of MacLeish. The first public statement of Stettinius on the right of each nation to choose its own government was splendid, but it has certainly run headlong into British stubbornness in both Greece and Italy. Even the conservative press — which isn't too happy about the prospects of a "communist" government in Greece — commented favorably on the State Department statement.

"Do you get any news of that character where you are? Or is your stuff pretty well censored before it comes through?"

**ON JANUARY 8, 1945**, Mosk writes about the economy:

"Received your letter the other day, the one in which you mentioned current Italian prices. Though most items were extremely high, we did enjoy your remark about "ties that would sell in the States for \$1 are \$4 or \$5". For the fact here now is — the same! The good old dollar tie is no more.

"As Fern has probably written you, prices here are high, plenty high, despite inflationary controls. And from now on, it appears that conditions generally are going to be more difficult. And about time, we all feel, that the country get down to winning the war, instead of seeing how much luxury can be retained. It seemed unbelievable to me that horse racing could continue, for example; if there is anything unessential, that is it. Yet only on January 5th did all racing cease in the United States."

He reports on his efforts to join the military:

"I still have heard nothing from my application. So I have gone ahead, waived my draft exemption, and expect to be drafted within the next ten



THE MOSK FAMILY —  
EDNA, RICHARD, AND STANLEY MOSK, MARCH 1945

*Courtesy Hon. Richard M. Mosk*

---

days or two weeks. Where I shall ultimately end up is in the lap of the gods. I checked with Martin Easton, and he advised me that the outfit can ask for me, no matter where I may be; so there seemed no reason for me to delay longer.

“I have no illusion about service. My bed is comfortable, the house is warm, privacy of the bathroom, meals of my own choice, hours that I set for myself, activities and thoughts of my own — those are certainly precious things. I’m voluntarily changing them all for the ultimate in regimentation, discomfort, perhaps danger. But I am convinced that it is best for me and, I hope, the country.”

He reports on the news:

“FDR’s statement that there is no formal, written Atlantic Charter caused some concern. Curiously enough, the Hearst paper was most shocked. I think the enclosed Grafton article does a good job of brushing aside the cobwebs.

“Capt. Pierre Dreyfus, son of the famous French martyr, is in town, to speak for the American Jewish Congress Wednesday at the Philharmonic. I am to be chairman of the meeting . . . also here is Rebecca Seiff, London Zionist leader . . . Had the pleasure of marrying Woodrow Wilson last week. Sure enough. Of course, it was really Alexander Knox, the brilliant actor who portrayed Wilson in the excellent movie, which I hope you have had a chance to see [1944 acclaimed movie biography of Woodrow Wilson, referred to by Mosk in another letter as “the greatest picture ever made, barring none!"]. He married actress Doris Nolan at the home of Allan Scott, writer. I was asked to, and did, perform the ceremony. Best man for Knox was Barry Fitzgerald, the old-timer who scored so remarkably in ‘Going My Way’ and ‘None But the Lonely Heart,’ two of the very best yarns of the year . . . By the way, do you get to see any films? Had dinner Saturday night, formal dinner mind you, at the home of a lawyer who said Fern had made fine suggestions to him for his beautiful home. He is Isidore Prinzmetal, former chief counsel for MGM. Nice guy. Very ultra dinner, the twenty or so guests including Betty Hutton, Keenan Wynn (son of Ed Wynn, and a fine actor himself), Stephen Crane (ex-husband of Lana Turner), Dave Rose (the fine orchestral arranger and leader, ex-husband of Judy Garland), Earl Robinson,

and others . . . Curiosity of the evening was the fact that I had granted divorces to three of the guests: Lana Turner's from Crane, Judy Garland's from Rose, and one other."

**ON JANUARY 22, 1945**, he again writes about inflation:

"The Italian inflation seems very bad. While prices are high here, and many civilian goods are growing more scarce, the administration has generally done a fine job of preventing unbridled inflation. In fact, I'd say the OPA [Office of Price Administration] has been remarkably successful."

He writes about his service solution:

"I sure wish there were something you could do to expedite my application in Washington. Easton merely tells me nothing doing at this moment, but he seems to indicate there are possibilities in the future. How far in the future seems to be important.

"Growing impatient, I waived my draft exemption, asked to be classified 1-A. My board promptly obliged, and I was called for my physical examination last Thursday. I was perfect in all respects, except one: my eyes. My vision is 20/400, corrected to 20/20. But the poor uncorrected vision placed me in a Limited Service class. I thought that not too unsatisfactory, until I later learned that no one in that category has been called in the past year or year and a half, and there is no immediate prospect.

"So I fear I am right back where I began. I have tried OWI [Office of War Information] and UNRRA, and neither is presently interested in military personnel, only civilians. And, of course, I am not interested in remaining a civilian. Since neither of us are willing to give in, I have gained nothing, and apparently have no chance if my Easton application doesn't come through — with a waiver on eyes, which, I understand, is not at all difficult to obtain.

"Consequently, Ed, I would deeply appreciate deep meditation on any ways you can suggest. I have talked to and written to Goldberg in Chicago, and he has promised to make proper inquiry. But being an outsider, I suppose he cannot do anything directly. Please keep after it from your end, Ed, if you can without embarrassment, as I am most anxious. And I have all personal affairs in preparation for speedy departure.

“It’s really ironic, to hear of all the folks trying their best, with appeals, etc., to keep out of service. And I’m doing my level best to get in. And with equal lack of success to date.”

Returning to Henry Wallace, he writes:

“FDR made his first good personnel move in a long while, what with his removal of Jesse Jones and appointment of Wallace as secretary of commerce. Naturally the southern democrats are screaming their hearts out. But I don’t think the Senate will dare turn him down, first because they know Wallace’s popularity with the people, and second, because even FDR’s worst enemies must realize that never in history has a president been refused the right to select his own cabinet.

“Glad to see Wallace back in harness. While the commerce job isn’t too romantic, I know he can do well in any task assigned to him.”

He comments on events in Los Angeles and California:

“Stage sensation of the year is in town: Paul Robeson in ‘Othello.’ Sold out for three solid weeks. Movie of ‘Tomorrow the World’ is being released next week; understand it is even better than the great stage play. Basketball is becoming big time in LA as it was in NY; games now moved to Pan-Pacific, where double-bills are offered each weekend. USC again is tops, with UCLA second, California and Stanford out of the running. City election here is beginning to brew. Clifford Clinton has announced his candidacy against Bowron [for mayor of Los Angeles]. John Anson Ford [a Los Angeles county



**RICHARD MOSK, CA. 1946**

*Courtesy Hon. Richard M. Mosk*

supervisor] may get in, and Councilman Ira McDonald may make it a foursome. Appears that CIO and conservatives will back Bowron; AFL and democrats will back Ford; reactionaries will take McDonald; and reform element will go with Clinton. Should be interesting. My choice, in event that the lineup, would be Ford. Surprise of the year has been Governor Warren's advocacy of compulsory health insurance! He actually has proposed it to the new session of the state legislature, over vigorous opposition, as usual, by the organized medical profession. Appears that Warren wants to be reelected in 1946 as a liberal, so as to have a chance for the GOP presidential spot in 1948. The CIO has a health insurance bill of its own, but will settle for the Warren proposal. Another measure pending in Sacramento proposes to increase superior court judges' salaries. I favor that, though taxes will take about half of the increase.

He concludes with the war:

"The war picture certainly looks great at this moment. The Russians at this writing are 165 miles east of Berlin at one point. And going strong. Maybe, maybe, the European end may come before long."

**ON FEBRUARY 1, 1945, MOSK** writes about local politics:

"Municipal politics are brewing here, what with filing in progress for the April city election. [Mayor] Bowron, Supervisor Roger Jessup, Clifford Clinton and Councilman Ira McDonald are avowed candidates for mayor at this moment, and John Anson Ford is a prospective fifth. Looks like a terrific battle, and anything likely to happen. As it now stands, all liberals would take Bowron, though with many gulps. If Ford gets in, most liberals, democrats and the AFL with probably back him, the CIO sticking to Bowron because of a long-standing reported understanding or deal. Bowron, though personally honest and heading a graft-free administration, has been bad on public ownership (in his appointments to the Water and Power Department of private utility men) and on civil liberties (in his inflammatory and undemocratic utterances in re the Japanese-Americans, which look bad even by comparison with Gov. Warren). He has tossed in a liberal appointment here and there to keep the CIO happy, but the number is infinitesimal compared to the total number of officials he has selected.

“There are a number of judicial contests. Bob Clifton drew two opponents, Ben Rosenthal one. David Mohr — I believe you know him — filed against Judge Newell Carnes.”

Then back to Wallace, whose nomination for secretary of commerce was drawing opposition:

“The Wallace battle [the aftermath of President Roosevelt replacing Vice President Wallace in 1944 and opposition to his being in the cabinet because of his liberal views] is still raging in Washington, though you no doubt get reports on that. Most people are incensed at the opposition to him. I wired [Senator] Sheridan Downey — had reason to suspect he might weaken — and was pleasantly surprised to receive a prompt telegraph in reply, assuring me he would back Wallace to the limit, even with full RFC powers. [California Senator] Hiram Johnson, of course, is hopelessly on the other side.

“We saw Paul Robeson [former Black opera singer and Communist] in ‘Othello’ last night. It was one of the most magnificent plays I have ever seen, so timely in its Freudian plot, and so superbly acted. Robeson was as good as one expects, but, if you remember Othello, the best role is that of Iago. A chap by the name of Jose Ferrer was beyond description in handling that part. It was a delightful evening, one you would have enjoyed, one of those rare experiences when the theater really means so very much. We went with Paul and Gloria Webster, he a writer of stories, plays, lyrics — you may know him or his wife.”

**ON FEBRUARY 26, 1945**, Mosk writes about some interesting items:

“Went to an Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union dance Saturday night; guests were a dozen Italian prisoners of war. The many Italians in the union really showed the boys a fine time. But Edna can’t reconcile the fact that they were trying to kill Americans a few short months ago. She, and others, feel that we ought to treat them well, but be aloof. Others think we should treat them as allies. Through Frank Lorenzi of the Daily Journal, we talked to a couple of them (he acted as interpreter), and we found them anxious to return to families and friends in Italy, not much interested in the outcome of the war or matters political. These lads seemed to all be from Milan.

“Politics is really starting up locally. Enclosed is a complete list of all candidates, some names in which may be familiar. Spring baseball practice begins for the Pacific Coast League next Monday. The class of ball will probably be worse than ever . . . UCLA, believe it or not, finally beat USC for the southern basketball championship . . . Just heard two touching broadcasts tonight. One was ceremony at restoration of civil government in Manila, MacArthur turning over the [Philippine] capitol to Pres. Osmena. The other was the landing of the Bataan nurses in San Francisco, after three years of imprisonment . . . Things certainly are looking up all over . . . March of Time’s current movie issue is on Italy. Graphically shows some of the things you must be seeing, some of the problems we have now, and that Italy will have for a generation or more . . . Health insurance battle in state legislature looms big when session reconvenes next week. CIO has the best bill, but it has little chance of getting by. Warren’s bill may pass the assembly, but I can’t see the senate going for any health measure. I have fun with republican friends, chiding them about Warren being a radical. . . . Richie lost his first tooth the other day. He’s quite proud about the whole thing. . . . Just read a current best-selling novel you’ll like, if you run across it: ‘Earth and High Heaven’ by Gwethalyn Graham. Story of a lawyer and anti-Semitism in Montreal. . . . Dispatches written from an Iwo Jima foxhole, sent by AP, and front-paged in all papers hereabouts, were by Morrie Landsberg. He covered our office and the state capitol at Sacramento for four years, and was a close friend of mine. Nice guy. . . . State Supreme Court rendered a fine decision, through Chief Justice Phil Gibson. I enclose a clipping on it.”

He writes about his own situation:

“Thanks for your continued efforts on my behalf. It looks as if I have my problem solved, however, and that I may be going into service most any day now. It isn’t absolutely certain, but almost so. My draft board just reclassified me 1-A again, and in one more step I think I’ll be in. I won’t give you all the details at this moment, but suffice it to say I expect to be in the Army Service Forces, Transportation Corps. My training, so I understand, will be in New Orleans.



STANLEY MOSK AS A PRIVATE IN THE U.S. ARMY, 1945

*Courtesy California Judicial Center Library*

---

“I feel so sure of making it this time, that I suggest you don't write to me after receiving this letter until I send you my new address. Edna and Mother are reconciled to it, and will make the best of it.

“The war picture looks good. The new American offensive nears Cologne now, 11 miles away. Once the Yanks can reach the Rhine, I look for a real break-thru. How long can Germany stand this pounding?”

Stanley Mosk later recounted that he was allowed to memorize the eye chart so as to be allowed to enter the U.S. Army as a private in early 1945. He underwent basic training and was scheduled to be sent to the Asia theatre at the time the war ended. He returned to resume his duties as a Los Angeles Superior Court judge. He then went on to a distinguished career of service to California — a career that spanned over sixty years. Edward Mosk returned to the practice of law. ★