

# Big state crackdown on abuses by notaries

By Sydney Kossen  
Political Editor

State authorities are investigating at least 25 notaries public suspected of illegal activities, the Examiner has learned.

Charges include use of the notary seal as a device to:

- Practice law without a license.
- Exploit Mexicans who want to become U.S. citizens.
- Certify false dates on visa applications.
- Indicate official California approval of products advertised in national magazines.

The suspected notaries — their names withheld — face the biggest crackdown of its kind in California history.

"Around the middle of next month, I will take the necessary action to suspend or revoke their commissions," said Secretary of State March Fong Eu, whose office admits notaries to practice and issues their official seals.

Eu, a former assemblywoman from Oakland, mentioned the investigation in after-dinner remarks here the other night. It was part of a long review of her first six months in the office formerly held by Gov. Brown.

"I have under commission at the moment 126,000 notaries public — people who are authorized to perform many services for the business and legal community," she said.

"At first, quite frankly, I

She predicted the legislature soon will pass and the governor will sign a bill to allow registration by mail — a concept opposed by Republican leaders.

Raising money is the most distasteful part of political life, said Eu, wife of a for-

mer Singapore rubber planter.

Last week's \$60-a-plate dinner erased her campaign deficit of \$56,800. "All in all," she said, "I spent \$219,028.79 . . . My husband did not contribute because I did not allow him to."

thought these functions would be quite boring, but I have come to realize the enormous importance they occupy in the lives of lawyers, businessmen, bankers and others who regularly engage in the commerce of this state."

She noted that notaries had been "absolutely immune from any oversight" on the part of her office with the exception of Frank DeMarco, former President Nixon's tax lawyer.

DeMarco resigned his California notary commission last June when threatened by Brown with legal action for backdating the deed donating Nixon's vice presidential papers to the National Archives.

"Over the past four months," Eu said, "we have very quietly conducted a number of random checks on notaries and we have followed through on the numerous complaints we receive about the conduct of many of them."

The 25 fingered by her investigators have "clearly and unmistakably abused their commissions," she declared.

Eu, a Democrat, is better known in her role as California's chief election officer and for her campaign to simplify voter registration.