

AN OPEN LETTER

To The Torrance City Council

About The Water Situation

TORRANCE WATER, LIGHT & POWER CO.
Torrance, California
October 12, 1929.

Honorable City Council,
City of Torrance,
Torrance, California.

Gentlemen:

The Torrance Herald in its recent issues apparently indicates public dissatisfaction with the quality of water and with the rates charged by Torrance Water, Light and Power Company and a desire that the city build a municipal water works system.

The stock of Torrance Water, Light and Power Company was acquired about a year ago by Associated Public Utilities Corporation from the Dominguez Land Corporation which latter company through the Dominguez Water Company supplies water wholesale to the Torrance Water, Light and Power Company. Associated Public Utilities Corporation is a holding corporation which also owns the stock of the Pacific Water Company serving San Mateo and the stocks of various water companies in different parts of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The purchase of the Torrance Water, Light and Power Company's stock was made in good faith by the Associated Public Utilities Corporation whose companies have been successfully operating water utilities for a number of years furnishing a satisfactory supply of water at satisfactory rates.

It is a reflection upon the utilities corporation if the quality of water being furnished Torrance does not satisfy the consumers and regardless of the present agitation such a condition is one which the Associated Public Utilities Corporation cannot allow to exist indefinitely. Had the corporation felt that it was impossible to furnish Torrance consumers a satisfactory supply, the Torrance Water, Light and Power Company would not have been acquired. However we believe that the conditions complained of are temporary in nature and curable by proper action by the company which furnishes us our supply. During the past year we have taken all possible steps which we could take ourselves to improve conditions. Until recently we were not familiar with the long history of unsuccessful attempts to secure the correction of the difficulties prior to our acquiring the property.

We have had under consideration during the past four months several proposals for assuring Torrance of an adequate supply of water of the quality that we are desirous of supplying including the provision of new sources of supply. Our decision to make the investment necessary to secure any new source must depend on the attitude of the city as it would be impossible for us to finance any improvements if there were a likelihood of the city ignoring our system and procuring a new source of supply and a new distribution system. On the other hand if the citizens of Torrance were to decide that municipal system is desirable it would appear to be an eco-

nomic blunder for the city to construct a new distribution system and develop a new source of supply duplicating our system. We do not wish to obstruct any movement which has as its object the securing of a municipal plant if that is the only means of assuring a satisfactory supply but shall be glad to co-operate with the city if it shall so desire.

With our existing investment we believe we are in a position to provide whatever additional capital may be necessary to furnish an adequate and satisfactory supply of water to Torrance most economically. We are using our best efforts to secure a new source of supply and are prepared at all times to discuss with any representative or duly authorized body the investment involved, an appraisal of the existing distribution system and the expense of operation and our rates as well as any questions of service. On any additional investment that may be required we should be protected by an agreement with the city that in case the city decides to purchase our property it be purchased at a fair appraisal value. We make this suggestion as the economical course for the city as well as ourselves. We do not believe that animosity can properly be directed at the present owners of the property nor do we feel that any business problem so vitally affecting the welfare of the city should be attacked in any spirit of ill will which might influence the city to take steps which would not ultimately be to the interest of the citizens from the standpoint of health or of good business.

Our plans for developing an independent supply have made slow progress because as reported by the engineers employed for the purpose by the city some years ago there is practically no possibility of developing an adequate supply of good water in Torrance or its environs. We have carefully considered this report and have had further engineering studies made. At the present time we are not convinced that such a new supply cannot be developed and we are prepared to engage competent engineers to determine the facts. In case they advise us that an adequate source of supply can be made available we are prepared to provide such supply and to proceed with the other steps outlined in this letter provided we have assurance that our increased investment will not be jeopardized.

We regret the present conditions at Torrance and are anxious that an understanding be reached as soon as possible permitting us to bring about an improvement in them. We shall very much appreciate your consideration of our suggestions.

We will be glad to confer with your representatives within the next week or ten days to discuss definite proposals for a solution of the problem.

Very truly yours,
TORRANCE WATER, LIGHT AND POWER
COMPANY,
A. J. ROBERTI,
General Manager.