

EDITORIALS

Re-elected on Record

Re-election of Paul D. Loranger as president of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce was indicated by because of his outstanding record during the last year.

Civic leaders long experienced in Chamber of Commerce affairs succeeded in convincing Mr. Loranger that his ability and experience are needed during 1955, a year that might well be one of the most important and progressive in the history of Torrance.

There is no more important organization in Torrance than the Chamber of Commerce. It should coordinate and help guide every activity intended to improve or enhance every worthwhile civic asset this great community enjoys.

Ben Franklin, American

Printing week, January 16-22, sponsored by the Printing Industry of America and allied typographical organizations, is appropriately timed to usher in the birthday of Benjamin Franklin.

Franklin will always be one of the most popular of Americans, largely because he exemplified individualism—a philosophy particularly appealing to the minds and hearts of our people.

They loved him all the more because he did not always practice what he preached. He was no goody-goody stuffed shirt sitting in an ivory tower.

Perhaps more than any other person, Ben Franklin was responsible for the establishment of our United States of America.

Always the champion of freedom and of the rights of the underprivileged, Franklin's utterances were leavened with fairness, impartiality and commonsense.

They say that Ben Franklin died in 1790, but he is more alive today than ever. If you stroll through your own community, you will pass one of the finest public schools named in his honor.

THE MAIL BOX

(The Torrance Herald welcomes expressions from its readers which can be published on this page. The editors retain the right to edit the copy for matters of libel and good taste.

Laundry Beats Mud

Last week I read an article in the TORRANCE HERALD regarding a man who was upset by clothes on lines. At first my attitude was amusement, however, in the meantime, I have come to the conclusion that a disappointment in the property you have purchased can be a very real thing.

Perhaps you will let me relate my disappointment. One year ago this month we received the keys to our new home. No two people were ever more proud or happy.

This, though, is not the worst. During the rain the mud from this embankment poured down through our laws. We and three of our neighbors have literally become the gutter for this horrible mound that has already destroyed the value of our property.

The water rushed through so hard at one point that the brick planters were actually undermined. The rose

bushes are standing with their roots exposed. What can people do when a year's expense and labor are washed away—all because someone needed a place to get rid of dirt?

MRS. CHARLES D. PEBLES 4938 Pacific Coast Hwy.

'We Want Barricades'

The Hollywood Riviera Homeowners Assn. wishes to correct the misspelling that the association is not representative of the residents of Hollywood Riviera; and particularly that the association's resolution in favor of maintaining the barricades between Hollywood Riviera and Palos Verdes does not represent the majority opinion in Hollywood Riviera.

Please be advised that membership in the association is open to any resident, that dues are \$2 per year per couple, and that the barricade question was advertised before the November meeting in newspapers and by a sound truck which covered the entire area.

Until or unless some organization of Hollywood Riviera residents, with a membership as large as the Hollywood Riviera Homeowners Assn., passes a resolution against main-

Indian Rope Trick



AFTER HOURS

By JOHN MORLEY

As we enter the new year, it is the opinion of this reporter that the Number 1 problem facing the 84th Congress, the White House and the nation is . . . the 942 Americans still known to be in Communists Chinese prisons since the fall of 1950.

UN Delegate Henry Cabot Lodge has been using the 942 figure in several protests before the UN without result. The Department of Defense has never denied the existence of "additional prisoners" . . . but apparently nothing concrete has been accomplished toward their release since the Korean armistice in July, 1953.

In Korea we heard such names as Lieutenant Harold Holmes of Provo, Utah . . . Private Ez A. Davis, Marion, Indiana . . . Corporal Robert Flecher, Manchester, New Hampshire . . . Private Anselmo Zamora, New Braunfels, Texas, etc., from Defense Department list of "several thousand" unaccounted for prisoners.

These 942 Americans enlisted in the army of the United States . . . not the army of the United Nations. They left their homes, their schools, their businesses . . . drafted by their country . . . to fight for their country. Probably not more than a handful would have enlisted to fight for the United Nations in Korea.

These are well-meaning people who have mistaken conceptions about the "United Nations Army" in Korea. There was no such thing.

These people want the United Nations to act in behalf of our American prisoners. The UN can't if it will . . . but until this protest on the 11 U.S. airmen, the UN refused to take any action. Most of the members of the UN are talking about trade with Red China and getting rid of Chiang Kai-shek on Formosa.

Only residential property which has been considered is the Portuguese Bend Club area, an exclusive beach community of 88 homes and a private club house. Homes here are built on property leased from the Rancho Palos Verdes Corp.

On the "long-range" picture, most civic authorities are agreed that the hill property would be a considerable attraction to Torrance. It would give the city a fine, suburban residential area, and allow expansion of the city's facilities to the Pacific Ocean.

From the facts now at hand, it is certain that the territory could place an immediate burden on the fire and police protective facilities of Torrance.

Although completely uninhabited territory, the brush and grass-covered hills offer a constant threat of fire. Any little blaze not receiving immediate action by proper fire-fighting equipment could spread into a major conflagration within minutes.

Now protected by the Los Angeles County Fire Department, the land is considered valuable watershed area and the vegetative growth prevents the winter rains from bringing the soil down onto the roads of Lomita and south Torrance.

Fire Chief J. J. Benner, who favors the annexation from the "long-range viewpoint," has said that "any annexation means an immediate drain on my department. From the minute the council approves adding any territory to Torrance, my department must extend fire protection to that area—vacant land or inhabited property," Benner said.

What immediate effect would the annexation of nearly 7000 acres to the City of Torrance have upon the taxpayers? This is the \$84 question which city fathers and officials must answer before they can vote approval or turn thumbs down on the gigantic proposal recently made by holders of land in the Palos Verdes Hills.

Perhaps in no other time in the brief history of this city have the elected members of the council had such a decision to make—a decision that virtually could make Torrance "the" city in Southern California, or an unwieldy, octopus-like community, too big for its proverbial britches.

Offered for annexation to Torrance by the owners of the vast holdings, the Rancho Palos Verdes Corp., the Capital Co., a subsidiary of the Bank of America, and the Great Lakes Carbon Corp., is all of the uninhabited property in the Palos Verdes Hills.

Sections of Rolling Hills, Miraleste, Palos Verdes Estates, and the outlying residential areas along the various Palos Verdes drives, and homes on the north side of the Portuguese Bend area are not included in the annexation.

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Council Facing Major Decision On Offers to Annex Hills Area

(Editor's note:—One-half of the budget of every municipality goes into a bracket known as "protection of life and property," finances for operation of the fire and police departments. Because these agencies probably have more direct contact with the public than does any other city department, only problems of these departments are dealt with in this "annexation question.")

By DICK FRIEND

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Once burning, a fire could easily move into the large residential areas which virtually encompass the vacant property.

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The problem here, it seems, is that the removal of any fire-fighting equipment from the city to the hill area could present a problem for protection of the present homes in the city.

Dispatchers for the County Fire Department now send fire trucks from Rolling Hills, Miraleste, and Lomita into the area as soon as report of any fire is received.

This "first alarm assignment" as they call it, also includes the rolling of a small pickup fire truck, and four fire engines to "cover" the stations which are taking care of the fire.

The County Fire Department moves more equipment on every fire alarm in the present county hill area than is available in all fire stations of the City of Torrance.

Once brought into the city, the county could not roll fire equipment into the area, unless a major fire threatened the inhabited areas.

So it boils down to this: Will the homeowners and industrial firms of Torrance, California, Thursday and Monday, entered as second class matter Jan. 30, 1955, under act of March 3, 1979.

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fighting equipment, probably would be necessary to augment the Torrance Fire Department, should the area be annexed. Additional personnel to man this equipment also would be a necessity.

The problems confronting the Police Department would be somewhat fewer than those of the Fire Department. Police Chief Willard Haslam would be required to have patrol cars on the few roads now in the area, including busy Palos Verdes Dr. South, main route for Sunday motorists out for a drive, and those visiting Marineland.

Only activity probably would be traffic enforcement, until new residential developments start to spring up in the territory. At that time, patrol cars necessarily would have to be assigned to the area.

Protection for the area now is afforded by the sheriff's office, and traffic enforcement is the duty of the California Highway Patrol, both of which operate in unincorporated areas only.

Though only a minor factor, the problem of communication to police cars by the area adds to the overall complex annexation picture. Radio cars operating on the south side of the hills are completely out of touch by radio with the main station, or other units. Geographical factors prevent radio waves of the police-short-wave bands from shooting up over the hills and down to the Torrance area.

Until revenue from the new area is forthcoming, until homes are constructed and on the tax rolls, the area could be a drain on the bankroll and the facilities of the City of Torrance.

City fathers now must decide whether the future of Torrance will be brighter with the addition of nearly 10 square miles of choice land, or whether the new area would seriously drain the life blood out of every Torrance department, giving Torrance a "property poor" reputation throughout the country.

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