

# 5 Youths Guilty of Raping 14-Year-Old Lomita Girl

Five youths were found guilty Friday of the brutal mass raping of a 14-year-old Lomita girl in May.

Scheduled to come up for sentencing October 17 are Joseph Fernandez, 18, of 1812 Marshall Field lane, Redondo; John Gomez, 18, of 23636 Pennsylvania ave.; Jesse Verdugo Grande, 20, of 2276 West 203rd st.; Thomas Soto, 18, of 2562 West 235th st.; and Felipe Perez, 18, of 2580 West 235th st., all of Torrance.

Fernandez's attorney moved for a new trial, hearing which has been set for the same date as the sentencing.

The jury deliberated two nights and three days before reaching a verdict following the week-long trial.

The mass rape of the 14-year-old girl was one of the most sordid crimes that has occurred in Torrance in recent years.

Six adults and nine juveniles were involved. On the ruse that she was being taken to meet her date for the evening, the girl was picked up at her home and taken to the oil fields near Lomita blvd. and Crenshaw blvd.

She was kept there from 11 o'clock at night until three o'clock in the morning while three car-loads of youths allegedly took turns raping her.

She was blindfolded, thrown to the ground, her clothes were ripped off, and some of the youths held her while others took turns assaulting her sexually.

Of the 15 youths involved, one adult and one juvenile evaded arrest; the above five adults were found guilty; and the other juveniles are either being processed still, out on probation or have been sent to a boy's camp, according to Lt. D. C. Cook of the juvenile bureau of the Torrance Police Department.

The case was tried in Dept. C. of the Long Beach Superior Court, presided over by Judge Beach Basey.

Defending Soto, Grande and Perez was Leola Buck Kellogg of Redondo Beach. Fernandez was defended by William E. McFadden of Redondo. Gomez was defended by J. R. Cullum, public defender.

Prosecuting attorney was D. Sterry Fagan.

"Regardless of how the case turned out I would certainly go along with the findings of the court and jury," Lt. Cook said. "Because I'm sure our courts are very fair and impartial. I am only sorry that boys this age get into this sort of trouble."



## HOW NOW, BROWN BULL?

Mayor Albert Isen emerged a bull's best friend when he called for a law forbidding bull fights in the city of Torrance. He was thinking of Gardena's present controversy. The council went along with the idea. The mayor decided that the painting of a bull fight hanging in his office will not be affected. Art for art's sake, you know.—Press Photo.



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# DOWNTOWN PARKING SHIFTS TO HIGH GEAR

## Hawaiian Miss, Good At Figures

Miss Lois Mural of Hilo, Hawaii is really happy to be here—and the Torrance Unified School District is equally happy.

Miss Mural was hired by the local district to teach science and mathematics at Torrance high school—and for good reason.

She was an all "A" student at the University of Hawaii (except for one B).

And, according to local educators, you can hardly get them kind no more—especially a woman math and science teacher.

The alert, winsome teacher refers to the continental United States as "the mainland" as opposed to "the islands."

The Mainland certainly sprawls a lot," she exclaimed, "I'm so used to think in terms of islands—everything here is in huge proportions.

The pace of living is faster on "the mainland" than in the islands, she observed.

Her parents live in Hawaii, where she also has two younger sisters and a brother who is starting college.



FROM THE ISLAND TO THE MAINLAND  
Now teaching in Torrance is Miss Lois Mural of Hawaii who is a math and science teacher at North high.—Press Photo.

## Council Accelerates Five-Point Program

A five-pronged attack upon the downtown parking problem went into high gear at Tuesday night's council meeting.

Progress reports were given and the following five-point program was discussed:

- 1) Retaining Ralph Dorsey, famed Los Angeles county traffic expert, to help with local conditions;
- 2) Remodeling the city parking lot (Cravens and El Prado);
- 3) Tearing down the fire station;
- 4) Removing the residence at 1517 Marellina for parking purposes;
- 5) A report on the off-street parking assessment district.

The council also received additional proposals from George Binder, major downtown property owner, and an incisive report of a survey made of downtown Torrance by the Automobile Club of Southern California.

"After two years of getting to move on this matter it is now high time to get into high gear," Mayor Isen declared in introducing the parking problem.

Progress Report  
Progress reports were as follows:

- 1) The parking lot at Cravens and El Prado—the contract has been awarded and work is starting for streamlining the lot and making it more easily accessible;
- 2) The fire station—the contract for razing the station was awarded to Hugh E. Smith;
- 3) The assessment district—assessment engineers have been given the maps and estimates they need and were to receive a map of the area and lots involved yesterday. "We are proceeding as fast as the law permits," City Manager George Stevens said. "We have top priority on it."
- 4) The residence at 1517 Marellina.—(Turn to Page 7)

## MAN HAS \$16,000 STOLEN

H. G. Cotton, 35, of 22030 Denker avenue returned from his vacation recently to find that his home had been burglarized and \$16,000 stolen.

Cotton said that the thief or thieves made off with \$10,000 cash, \$5625 war bonds, and \$250 in coins which he had kept in various parts of the house.

His birth certificate and marriage license are also missing. Cotton, who is in the service station business in Hermosa Beach, had a reason for keeping the money at home.

"If the old world ever goes on the blink," he said "I figured I'd have 10 grand of my own. That's the way I looked at it." He is offering a \$500 reward for information leading to the arrest of the thief or thieves.

SCHOLARSHIP: Joyce Endo. (Turn to Page 7)

## What's Our Population? Your Guess May Win Trip

Your guess may be worth an all-expense paid weekend for two in Las Vegas or \$200 cash or a portable TV set.

These are the prizes being given away by the Downtown Parking Association and Baker's Furniture, sponsors of this contest.

ENTRY BLANK  
The contest will tie in with the city census which will be held here starting October 8.

There's nothing to do in this contest—except guess. There are no other gimmicks involved—no merchandise to buy, no bottle tops to trade in, no trips to make—all you have to do is fill in the coupon with your guess and see that it gets to our office one way or the other.

This will be the fourth special census here since 1950. Since that time the population has multiplied as follows:

- 1950—22,201
- 1952—31,834
- 1953—44,914
- 1955—67,459

It has been estimated that residents are moving into Torrance at the rate of 1000 a month. Guesstimates as to what the population figure will be after this census have ranged from 80,000 to 87,000. The contest will close around October 22, about one week before the census. (Turn to Page 7)

## Dinner Dance For Senator Richards Sat.

Richard Richards, state senator from Los Angeles county and Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate will be guest of honor at a buffet dinner dance on Saturday night, September 29, 9 p.m. at the Torrance National Guard armory, 2505 Cabrillo street. The affair is being hosted by the Torrance Democrats.

Senator Richards will spend the entire day, Saturday, September 30, in Torrance. (Turn to Page 25)

## NEWS BRIEFS

LANDSCAPING: In addition to keeping the new civic center area watered down to keep the dust down, the city has a man working full-time drawing up the specifications for a sprinkling system. Bids must then be awarded to do the work (in about six weeks). That's the first step in getting the area landscaped.

OVERHEAD LIGHTS: Councilman Bob Jahn objected to "hanging in the middle" signals and asked that the city install four-corner signals from now on. The rest of the council sympathized, objecting to the idea with regret. Reason: cost. Overhead signals cost \$1200. Four-corner signals, \$6000. Southern California seems to be the only area which uses four-corner signals, it was pointed out. Worst thing is, we're used to them—otherwise we wouldn't know any better.

THAT CHAMBER AGAIN: Councilman Nick Draie and Willys Blount wanted to "give credit where credit is due" by praising the Chamber for its new shopping guide. Mayor Isen wanted to know why, inasmuch as the guide was a pure "commercial venture." So there.

DOMINGUEZ ST.: Councilman Nick Draie proposed negotiations with Reynolds aluminum for widening Dominguez st. The council praised the firm for putting up an aluminum fence and removing the former eyesore.

VICTOR TRACT: Hearing for rezoning the area was set for October 9, 8 p.m., City Council. On M-1 zone is proposed.

SCHOLARSHIP: Joyce Endo. (Turn to Page 7)

## OF HOGS, DOGS AND BULLS...

Hogs, dogs and bulls troubled the lofty deliberations of the City Council Tuesday night.

The outcome was that the hogs must go, the dogs must be caught, and the bulls must stay out of Torrance.

For technical reasons, the council extended the deadline by which the hogs must leave Torrance from April to June 15, 1957. Councilman Willys Blount hoped all would go well, expressing concern whether hogs know how to read.

Councilman Victor Benstead was bewitched, bothered and bewildered over the number of dogs running around loose. He wanted to know exactly what a dog catcher's duties are and a full report on dog catching, licensing, and vaccinating in Torrance.

Afraid that a bullfighting controversy might erupt in Torrance as it did in Gardena, Mayor Albert Isen called for a law forbidding bullfights in the city. The council had no objections as the mayor championed the bull's cause.

## Postponed

Preliminary court hearing in to the knifing of Russell Hillman, 42, has been postponed until October 1 because Hillman is still in critical condition at Harbor General hospital, according to Det. Sgt. Ted Morris.

Accused of two counts of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to commit murder is Alvin Leo Osborne, 41, ex-husband of Mrs. Lois Hillman, 40.

## Oil Worker Dies of Heart Attack at Top of Derrick

A heart attack claimed the life of a 61-year-old oil worker Friday while at work at the top of an oil rig tower. A safety belt kept him from plunging to the ground.

The incident occurred on an oil rig one block south of Sepulveda boulevard near Pennsylvania avenue.

Death is James Austin Roomsburg of 21098 Hawthorne boulevard. Funeral services were held Monday at Halverson-Leavall mortuary, with burial at Pacific Crest cemetery. The Rev. Elmer Prout of the Torrance Church of Christ was scheduled to officiate.

A fellow worker, Melvin Killingsworth, said that he first noticed that something was wrong while working on the floor of the derrick and seeing Roomsburg's hat come drifting to the ground.

He looked up and saw the stricken man clinging to a rafter. He fell seconds later but was kept hanging in mid-air by his safety belt.

Police and Fire Department units rushed to the scene to aid Roomsburg but he was pronounced dead on arrival at Harbor General hospital.

The victim is survived by his wife, Verna of the Torrance address. (Turn to Page 25)

## Housewife Dumped Off After Attack

A Santa Monica housewife severely cut and beaten, was dumped off at a local physician's office about 4 a.m. Saturday morning after reportedly being raped and beaten by three men in a trailer.

The woman did not know where this had taken place. Sgt. Ted Morris and Officer Mickey Fischer, of the Detective Bureau of the Torrance Police Department, investigated the case.

By mid-day Fischer had determined the place of attack as Hermosa Beach.

The woman was severely beaten and needed five stitches to close a wound on her face. She reportedly met the three in a bar. She was threatened with death if the matter were reported to police.

The case was handed over to Hermosa Beach police.

## EXPERT PROPOSED FOR PARKS

The future of Torrance's parks and recreation program took one step forward this week as Councilman Victor Benstead proposed that the city hire a professional consultant to study and make recommendations regarding the acquisition and development of parks throughout the city.

A meeting of the Recreation (Turn to Page 25)

## BURGLARIES SOLVED

# BOYS STASH STOLEN WEAPONS IN CULVERT

A runaway boy tipped off detectives to the answer to a wave of house burglaries which occurred in this area during the last five months.

As a result three 13-year-old boys were taken into custody. Two of the boys had been under investigation previously by Officer Leo Gonzales of the Torrance Juvenile Bureau.



"A" FOR ARSENAL  
Det. Sgt. Ted Morris looks over culvert where 13-year-old boys stashed stolen weapons.—Press Photo.

Questioned again regarding the recent burglary of the Torrance Police Department pistol range, police officers obtained admissions regarding this and other burglaries.

Latest to work on the case were Det. Sgt. T. A. Morris, assisted by Detectives Mickey Fischer and Don Hamilton.

They interrogated a runaway boy held by Lennox sheriff's station on a car stealing charge. Two other boys became implicated in connection with the burglaries. There were 10 house burglaries in all.

The boys directed officers to a culvert beneath railroad tracks near Dominguez and Crenshaw blvds., where authorities recovered a .32 rifle. The rifle belonged to Morris and was taken in the range burglary.

Two hundred rounds of .22 ammunition were also found under the culvert.

The youngsters also led officers to an open field north of Oak st. and Pacific Coast hwy. in Lomita.

A jacket containing ammunition and a revolver taken from 804 Beech st. were found here.

A total of 450 more rounds of ammunition were found in a nearby field.

### ENTRY BLANK

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

My guess for the 1956 Official Population Census of the city of Torrance is.....

(Please Print or Type in above information)

Mail or bring this coupon to:

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