

# Torrance Named 'All-America City' for Successful Handling of Growth Problem

## Mayor Isen Tells Story Of City's Development

(Editor's note: Following is the text of Mayor Albert Isen's speech given before the judges in Memphis, Tennessee in November 1956. It gives a good description of Torrance's over-all development, and the reasons why Torrance, together with 10 other cities, was chosen an "All-America City" from among 164 cities in the nation.)

By MAYOR ALBERT ISEN

In October of 1910, an event occurred which shocked the nation . . . the dynamiting of the Los Angeles Times Building . . . with great loss of life.

Jared Sidney Torrance, a prominent investment banker, had for a long time visualized a modern industrial city where people could live in harmony, free from labor strife.

He now felt that the time had come. He chose a location near the harbor which Los Angeles had acquired a few years before. At this time the Panama Canal was under construction and soon to be opened.

He spent two years in preparation, financing, engineering and planning, and for this latter purpose hired the Olmstead brothers, who had designed Washington, D.C., and who were, years later, to design Boulder City, Nevada, on an identical plan.

He floated a bond issue for \$2,500,000, which was taken up by his friends, and acquired some 2500 acres as a site for the town which later was to grow into a city of 20 square miles, 25 million assessed valuation and over 82,000 population.

### City Created

In 1913 the city was created. Industries moved in, particularly the Union Tool, now the National Supply company, and the Llewellyn Iron Works, now the Columbia Geneva Steel division of the U. S. Steel company.

These were the forerunners of numerous large and small industries, and there is still room for many more.

I mention Douglas Aircraft, Harvey Machine company, General Petroleum corporation (our largest taxpayer . . . 30 per cent of real property tax), American Radiator & Standard Sanitary corporation, Dow Chemical, North American Aviation, Bethlehem Pacific Coast Steel corporation, Pittsburgh Plate Glass, Rubbercraft corporation, and recently Carbon Carbide & Chemical company, a division of Union Carbide & Chemical company, have commenced operation and added \$11,000,000 to our tax assessment rolls.

Our population in 1913 was 300. I can bear witness to what I'm telling you because I was there.

I was there in 1921 when our city was incorporated and the population was 1800; there in 1940 when the population was 9950; there in 1947 and 1948 when the population was 13,160, and a separate school district was formed (withdrawing from Los Angeles School System), and the City Manager-Council form of government adopted by charter.

And I was there in September, 1956, when a federal census was taken to receive extra money from the State of California allocated on actual census figures, and which proved our population to be 82,238.

### Proud of City

I am proud that through the years Torrance has had no crime, no vice, no government corruption, and there has never been the necessity of citizen action to clean up a town.

Our bid for All-America City honors is based upon

citizen action in coping with and overcoming the problems arising from a tremendous population growth. As a result, government has been able at all times to supply and maintain all its necessary services and functions in an orderly manner and to the full extent needed.

This participation by citizen groups has spearheaded the passage of bond issues:

- For park improvements.
- For three new fire stations.
- For a new police station and jail.
- For a new civic center and municipal swimming pool.

Committees have been active in studying and recommending on problems of traffic, off-street parking, planning and zoning, recreational and health measures, airport matters, highways and litterbug campaigns, and many more that time does not permit me to enumerate.

This participation reached an all-time high in the year last past.

### School District

The Torrance Unified School District embraces the same boundaries as the city.

In September, 1947, when formed, there were four schools and 1,772 children in the District. In October, 1956, there were eighteen schools, 18,543 children, and five more schools under construction.

In the past year, on June 7, 1956, a bond issue for \$10,000,000 passed 11 to 1. Also, since 1948, five successive issues totaling \$9,000,000 were passed.

In October, 1956, a 75 cent override tax was passed by a 4 to 1 vote, and a \$14,000,000 state building loan was authorized 5 to 1, through the efforts of the Torrance Education Advisory Committee, the Torrance Industries Tax Committee, and the Torrance labor unions. (Exhibits were offered, giving full information on T.E.A.C. and showing cooperation of Tax Committee.)

### Citizen Groups

Our city is responsive to numerous citizen groups: Non-salaried commissions . . . planning, park and recreation, airport commission and city council (until this year receiving no compensation).

Ten homeowners associations . . . who have been very active and send delegates to the city council meetings, with the intent of improving their own areas.

Torrance Ministerial association . . . participates in matters for civic betterment.

Torrance Mounted Police . . . actively participate in civic projects; among other things, it is a parade group in which police and lay members participate.

Our Garden and Tree clubs are at all times interested in town beautification and clean-up.

The Junior and Senior Woman's club can be called on at all times to help put over projects for the good of the community.

The Art and Drama clubs have helped to raise the town's cultural level.

The numerous labor unions send observers to the City Council meetings.

The 100 service, fraternal, patriotic groups are at all times ready to help together with the Senior and Junior Chamber of Commerce.

### City Manager Form of Government

It is worthy of comment that this phenomena of growth and achievement has taken place in the last eight years, since our City Manager-Council form of government has been in existence. I doubt that there is any other city that can claim during that time a 600 per cent plus increase in growth. Our government

is non-partisan; council elected at large; and stability is indicated in that Mr. George Stevens has been our City Manager since the beginning.

Summarizing, for your consideration, in Torrance we have had:

(First) Energetic, purposeful, intelligent citizenship action in the past 9 years, reaching its highest degree of effectiveness in the year last past.

(Second) City-school cooperation . . . making use of joint facilities to achieve maximum benefits.

(Third) City Manager-City Council government at its best. In conclusion, 18,000 Torrance school children wrote letters to me to assist me in making this presentation. Although I could not bring all of these letters along, some of them are included in the brochure before you. The photographs accompanying the letters illustrate some of their main points.

After reading thousands of these letters, our committee was convinced that our children, as well as their parents, believe that Torrance is the All-America City.

Their letters prove further that Torrance has civic pride, a noble spirit and an understanding and generous heart. As one Torrance child wrote, and her letter is in the brochure,

"Buildings and people alone did not make Torrance great."

Civic pride and respect for the rights of neighbors has made Torrance outstanding in the nation . . ."

We, the citizens of Torrance, believe that we are helping to build a great city of which Jared Sidney Torrance would be justly proud.

## Coast Screw Products Firm Expands Here

Specializing in stainless steel, titanium and magnesium, Coast Screw Products services local and national suppliers with bars ranging in capacity from one-eighth of an inch to two and five-eighths of an inch. Most of the firm's work is done for the aircraft industry although Coast Screw Products also does commercial work.

The firm, now 2 1/2 years old, located first at 122 East rd., then moved to 1837 Torrance Blvd., and has recently moved to its present location at 1213 W. 253rd st., Harbor City.

The new plant has 4200 sq. ft. of floor space, having twice the capacity of the former plant in floor space as well as featuring additional machinery.

Leonard L. Reid, owner of the firm, started the company in a two-car garage with three partners. Reid, who is now sole owner, has 12 employees.

He has lived seven years in Torrance and has been in this

particular field for the last 25 years. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio.

His sons, Richard M. Reid, 25, and F. D. R. Reid, 21, are also in the business.

## Local School Enrollment Shows Fabulous Growth

Growth and development, which has been Torrance's story for the past few years, is dramatically reflected in what has happened on the school scene.

The Torrance Unified School District, once part of the Los Angeles school district, became independent in 1947.

During the first year the elementary school enrollment was 1679 while the high school population stood at 393, for a total school enrollment of 2072 pupils.

In April 1957, the high school enrollment alone was higher than the total school enrollment for 1947-48, amounting to 3,092 students attending North and South high schools.

As of March 29, 1957 the elementary school enrollment figure was 16,062, representing 22 elementary schools.

Another 1,820 individuals attend the adult education evening school.

It is anticipated that the enrollment October 1, 1957 will come to 17,603 pupils attending elementary school and 3,859 students going to high school, for a total enrollment of 21,462.

Indicative of the enrollment trend are the estimates released by school officials regarding high school enrollment. The present figure of 3,092 is expected to more than double by October 1, 1962, when 6,452 students are anticipated.

## RESERVIST PROMOTED

Wesley Al Hanson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred W. Hanson, 1314 W. 219th st., has been promoted to private first class in the US Marine Corps reserve.

Pfc. Hanson is a supply clerk in Marine Fighter Squadron 123, stationed at the Los Alamitos Naval Air station near Long Beach. He attends week-end training periods each month at the big air station and will attend two weeks summer maneuvers with the squadron at the Marine Air station in Mojave.

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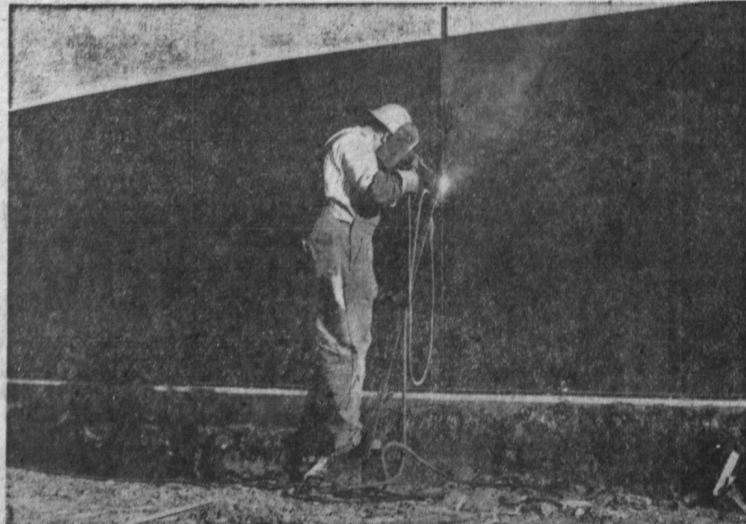
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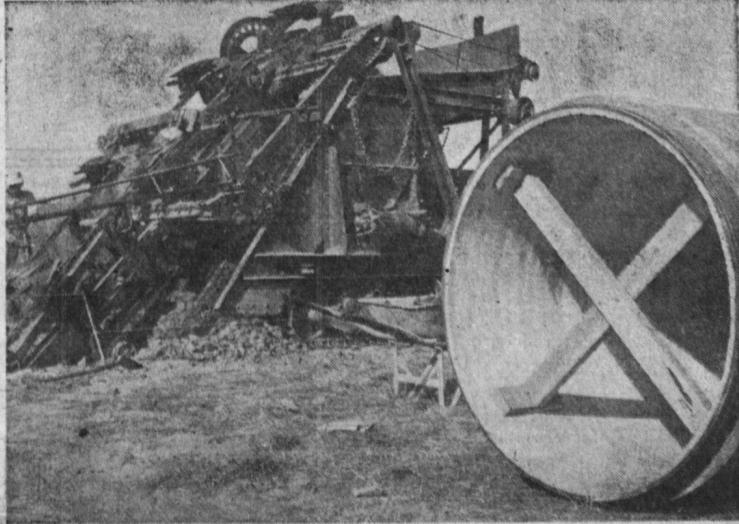


A Completely PLANNED Industrial Community is under construction in the Rancho San Pedro Area and we are installing water storage that will serve every industrial requirement!

At present, two 3 1/2-million-gallon-capacity tanks are being installed. Upon completion, this tank farm will have a total of 50 million gallons capacity. Ample supply to serve any industry.



LEFT—A welder "seams" storage tank on Dominguez Hill water storage tank . . . one of two nearing completion in an initial installation of ultimate 50 million gallon tank farm.



RIGHT—Dominguez Water Corporation workers are laying water line mains as large as 42-inches in diameter in the rapidly progressing storage farm. One of these mains appear in the accompanying photo.

# DOMINGUEZ WATER CORPORATION