

Letters

To the Editor:

"We Did It Ourselves"
In "Parade," June 18, 1961 (an insert in the Long Beach Press-Telegram, Sunday edition), appears an article on page 11 entitled, "We Did It Ourselves," pertaining to the Torrance school system. Quote, "Faced with America's toughest school problem, this community solved it—with-out help from the outside." This article about the financial problems of the Torrance school district from 1947-1960 appears to be concerned with striking a blow against the principle of Federal aid to public schools than with presenting fact. Many of the "facts" presented are in error and distort conditions as they really are in the Torrance school district. The publishers of "Parade" and the authors, Mr. Ross and Mr. Kiester, should feel obliged in all fairness to retract the article.

We are submitting the following factual material which we wish published now in rebuttal to the Ross and Kiester article: The Torrance situation is similar to that of many other districts in Southern California. There are many districts that have experienced a more rapid rate of population growth than Torrance, which had an increase of 354%; Covina, 408%; Glendora, 420%; Palos Verdes, 387%; West Covina, 1025%.

7% DECLINE
Because of the lag in revisions of assessed valuations behind market values, assessed valuations per capita have declined in MOST districts in Los Angeles County. Per capita assessed valuation in Torrance has declined only 7% since 1950, not 50% as stated in paragraph three of the article. Assessed valuation per unit of average daily attendance has declined only 30%.

Torrance's school building construction was aided by a loan of \$14,000,000 from funds of the State of California, a fact not stated in your article, "We Did It Ourselves."
Many districts have had to secure outside help—state or nation. Torrance is not being condemned for it, only for seemingly attempting to conceal it in the interest of causing people to feel that Federal aid is not needed by school districts if only

Torrance now has only three high schools, one of which was built by Los Angeles before 1947. How could they have built four as the article states? Torrance makes LESS tax effort than the typical unified district in Los Angeles County. The average voted general operating rate for the 21 unified districts in Los Angeles County is \$2.38 per \$100 of assessed valuation compared with \$2.40 in Torrance. Names of a few with higher voted operating rates: Claremont, \$3.65; Covina, \$3.60; Arcadia, \$3.25; South Pasadena, \$3.10; Bellflower, \$3.00; Long Beach, \$2.95; Paramount, \$2.85.

All the larger communities of Los Angeles County except Beverly Hills and Santa Monica have voted to exceed the statutory maximum rate established by California law—many by greater majorities than Torrance. The procedure for such elections is provided by statute. It is not necessary to take advantage of "loop holes" in the law.

GRANTS IN AID
Approximately 49% of the operating costs of the Torrance schools which "We Did It Ourselves" (?) are paid for by Federal and state grants in aid—3.4% from Federal Aid, Public Law 874 and 45.7% from State Basic and Equalization Appropriations. In California, the State School Fund is based principally upon sales taxes and income taxes which are levied upon all the citizens. Since Torrance is a district of somewhat less than average assessed valuation per average daily attendance of pupils, Torrance is subsidized by the State of California as a whole. During the 1960-61 school year, Torrance received \$1,098,125 in State Equalization Aid. This represents a subsidy to the schools of Torrance. Have Supt. J. H. Hull and the Torrance Board of Education offered to return this grant to the "bureaucracy" in the state capitol so that the taxpayers of Torrance could "do it ourselves"—without help from the outside? The point is the burden of educating this exploding population of children is too much for school districts to finance by a tax upon little homes and little gardens. Torrance is no exception. The overwhelming majority of citizens and professional educators in Southern California (including Torrance, I am sure) would be happy to accept Federal aid from a tax source based upon individual incomes and cor-

poration profits in order to be relieved from increasing local property taxes. They would not, I feel, agree with the quoted statements of Supt. J. H. Hull, and he should check their informed desires carefully before he states, "We've shown we don't need Federal aid. We don't want to be stifled by a great, big, impersonal bureaucracy in Washington." Have Dr. Hull and the Torrance Board of Education ever offered to return the Federal aid the district has received during the past 10 years? Can Dr. Hull cite any example of "stifling Federal control" of Torrance schools during the last 10 years which resulted from Federal aid granted to Torrance during this period?

RETRACTION
If Dr. Hull DID NOT make the statement quoted above, he should demand an immediate retraction and correction by "Parade" and all the Sunday newspapers throughout the country which carry the magazine. If this is not forthcoming, he should sue for libel. If Dr. Hull did make the statement, unaccompanied by a full disclosure of the true facts and circumstances surrounding the Torrance financial situation (which I cannot believe without proof) his conduct would be close to unprofessional and he should be reprimanded by organizations of educators such as the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association.

Sources: Final 1950-60 Federal Census and Taxpayers Guide published by Auditor-Controller, Los Angeles County.
*Torrance assessed valuation and population change.
1950 assessed valuation, \$50,794,780; divided by population of 22,241 equals \$2284.
1960: Assessed valuation, \$215,133,000, divided by population of 100,991 equals \$2130.
\$2130 over \$2284 equals 93.3% Torrance assessed valuation per capita 1960 relative to 1950 assessed valuation per capita. A decline of but 6.7% per capita, approximately 7%.

**Torrance Unified School District, Statistical Report, 1959-1960, page 12.
*Ibid, page 16.
(Signed) O. B. WILLIAMSON

Baseball School Opens at County Park June 26

A six-week baseball school for youths, designed to correct acquired playing faults and stressing aid to individual players, will be conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation on Alondra County parks' baseball diamonds beginning June 26.

Robert Shipley, county senior recreation specialist, emphasized that this program will not be handled as a clinic, assisting in an over-all development of the game, but will offer professional help to individual boys wishing to improve incorrect habits. All sessions will be two hours in length and will start at nine o'clock in the morning. Following is the location and beginning date of the nearest park:

Alondra County Park baseball diamond, 3535 Redondo Beach Blvd., Lawndale; every Friday, starting June 30.

VETERAN COACH
Shipley also said that Charlie Brown, who is a veteran of 30 years of baseball experience, including 12 years as a high school coach and a professional with a St. Louis Cardinal contract, will direct the three schools.

Brown has experience with this type of school, which gives personal help to each participant, for a long period of time. He has seen many of his pupils go into the professional baseball ranks.

As a result of his long study a book, entitled "Baseball Exercises," will soon be published. In this book Brown examines the correct development of muscles and timing. These aspects of the game will be discussed during the class periods and will be applied to each participant's style.

Boys of all ages may attend the school without registering in advance.



TIME FOR FUN—Youngsters at Torrance Park gather with Jim Childers (left), recreation leader, to initiate the summer play season as they anticipate using the facilities offered by the Torrance Recreation Department. The youngsters are (left to right) Candy Holland, 8, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Beckwith; Danne New, 6, daughter of Mrs.

Mary New; Diane Schubert, 6, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Schubert; Marie New, 11, sister of Danne; Cathleen Gifford, 6, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mary Gifford; and Michael Catena, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Catena, Carol Cooler, recreation leader, is to the far right.

Health Report

Too Much Sun Causes Aging

Your skin can get older than you are. Those who get a gorgeous suntan year after year do so at the expense of skin that may get wrinkled, dry and discolored before its time. That's what too much sun can do to you.

Aside from the fun and relaxation of it, nothing about tanning in the sun is especially good for you. However, people will continue to seek a sun-bronzed skin so:

Remember sunburn is a true burn that can really make you suffer.

Don't spend more than twenty minutes in the sun the first time out.

Increase your sunning time gradually.

Use a suntan lotion or cream while you are getting your tan. Put on more lotion or cream whenever you come out of the water and renew it every two hours.

Don't be fooled by a cloudy sky. The burning sun rays come right through.

The sun is strongest for about two hours before and after noon.

You get more of a burn at the beach than in the country because sunlight reflects from water and sand. But you can still get a burn midst the greenery, so better observe that twenty minute limit first time out, where ever you are.

This column is sponsored in the interest of better health by your Christmas Seal Agency, the Tuberculosis and Health Association of L.A.

FISHING for FUN

By Alex Bishop

MODERN METHODS INCREASE FISHING POPULARITY

Now that we are in the midst of the Space Age it brings to mind that scientific advances are not limited to the reaches of the upper stratosphere. On the contrary, and on a much lighter vein of research, the improvements and refinements of angling in the past few years have been just as overwhelming as our progress in rocketry.

The waters of the world (the natural counterpart to the heavens above) probably contain no more fish today than a century ago but the number of finny prizes taken from the depths has so increased that we feel an explanation is in order. The first factor of course must be . . . more fishermen. But we can't just let it go at that because there must be a reason for the growing approval for the sport.

A timely example of our modern methods will occur next Saturday at Pierpoint Landing in Long Beach. The world's largest and most luxurious sportfishing boat, the 85 foot Liberty, will make her maiden voyage in search of fish. Only in the past decade have boats been built for the sole purpose of public pleasure fishing. There are now hundreds of beautifully appointed craft on the coast dedicated to the weekend angler.

Other classic examples of fishing's rise to popularity include wonderful advancements in equipment: the development of the spinning reel, nylon line, fibreglass rods to mention just a few.

With all these advantages to pursue a tremendous sport, what's to hold us back? Don't we lucky Southland residents have the most important ingredient for good fishing right at our back door? We sure do!

"Do-it-Yourself" Fumigants Need Permit for Use

"Do-it-Yourself" fumigations can not only be dangerous but require a permit issued by the Fire Prevention Bureau, reports Fire Chief J. J. Benner.

Residents are advised that with any of the patented "do-it-yourself" fumigants, toxic gases are given off which can cause illness and in extreme cases death.

Permits for the use of fumigants must be obtained 24 hours prior to their use, in order that a physical inspection of the premises may be made by the Fire Department, the Chief stated.

Further information may be obtained by calling FAirfax 8-3366, extension 15.

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