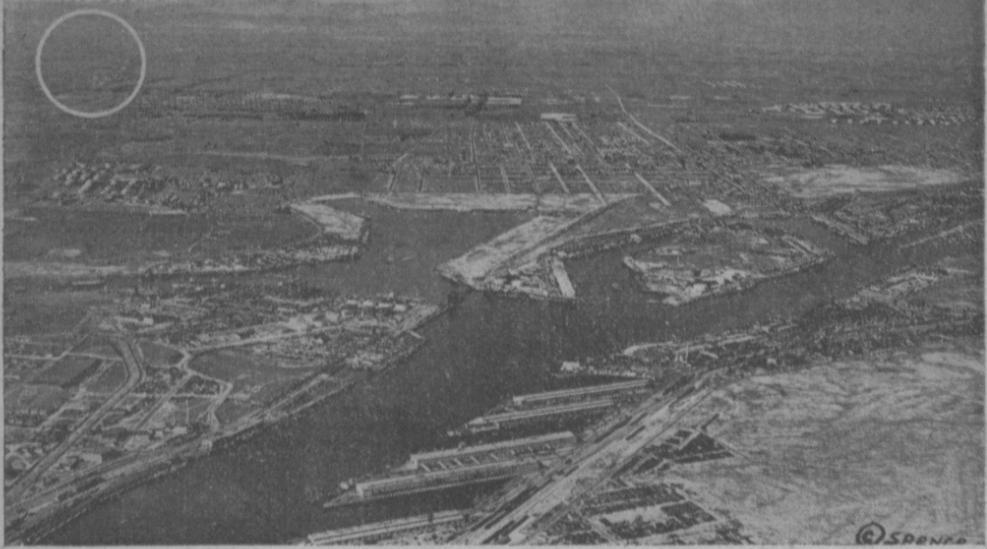


a PORT of Torrance



• Proposed Canal Would Extend From Present Basin at Left Center. (Photo copyrighted by Spence Air Photos.)

FROM the beginning of time waterways have always provided the cheapest method of moving heavy freight.

Venice once ruled the world because of its canals. The tiny country of the Netherlands is a world power far beyond what its size would warrant, because of its waterways. Sweden, Norway, Denmark all assume greater importance because of their canals. The doughboys who served in France will recall the waterborne freight and huge canal system of that country. And the Kiel, Suez and Panama canals have changed the course of modern history.

Canals in the United States have played a most important part in the development of the country. The Erie canal, first called "Clinton's folly," now carries a tremendous quantity of the produce from the Great Lakes and Middle West and has had to be entirely rebuilt and enlarged. Near it is Canada's Welland canal, making the Niagara river navigable. Canalization of the Ohio River made Pittsburgh a seaport.

And in later years such cities as New Orleans, Mobile, Seattle, Houston, have become world centers of trade through the construction of canals.

Chance for Torrance

TORRANCE today has the same opportunity, in the opinion of many engineers who have studied the problem. And, according to F. M. Andreani, who has made a most intensive study of the situation, it can be done at no cost! Merely by changing drainage plans that are now on their way toward adoption will this phenomenon become possible.

Andreani has a background that makes his suggestion worthy of thorough consideration. For it was while serving as harbor commissioner for the port of Los Angeles from 1927 to 1932 that his attention was attracted to the strategic posi-

tion occupied by Torrance.

The story of Los Angeles harbor is too well known to need repetition. Many were the jibes about the city that dug a harbor out of dry land—but today that harbor is among America's largest in point of traffic.

And the center of Torrance is but five miles from that harbor, with portions within three miles!

Easy Digging

WHAT is between them? Sand hills, the highest of which is less than 40 feet above sea level.

And right at the door of Torrance is Nigger slough, with an elevation of less than 25 feet, coming almost to the edge of the city. Raise the sights just five feet and it is found that the 30-foot contour cuts across the fields northeast of the Columbia Steel plant.

Made to order, this topography. So much like that on Houston's upper channel that the resemblance is uncanny—except that Houston is 50 miles from tidewater, Torrance but five.

But how about that "costing nothing" part?

Well, Los Angeles county today is committed to a \$75,000,000 flood control program, of which a little over \$4,000,000 is allocated to the drainage of Nigger slough, 4300 acres of which were declared by the flood control district's chief engineer, E. C. Eaton, in 1932 to be subject to inundation. In the same report he declared that that land, worth about \$2500 per acre today, would be valued at \$11,000 an acre after the slough had been drained. And 4300 times \$8500 equals \$36,550,000, on our slide rule.

No Increased Cost

BUT ANDREANI is not counting on the increased value of land in his calculations. Instead, he points out that the present plan for drainage will

cost a little over \$4,000,000. It calls for a line following the flat area east of Torrance, almost directly above the Inglewood earthquake fault, connecting finally with the Los Angeles harbor's east basin.

Instead, says Andreani, drain both Nigger and Bixby sloughs by connecting them in a shorter, straighter line, free from possible earthquake damage, and reach the harbor at West Basin, where Army engineers have, apparently, planned for future development inasmuch as no harbor line was ever established at the head of this basin.

The cost, he says, will be just about the same—or even a little less. It will include a new ship canal, 35 feet deep, with accommodations for 15 to 20 ocean-going vessels, a turning basin, and eight miles of barge canal, eight feet deep, running as far as Moneta.

Engineers have checked his estimates and found them to be correct, he declares. The figure of \$4,000,000 would not only furnish the water facilities, but would include all necessary bridges. It would not include wharves or piers.

25 Advantages

MANY are the advantages of the proposed plan, he says. Among them, the proposed location would:

(1) Permit relocation of Fish harbor, now on Terminal Island, to an area nearer to residential districts for workers, avoiding ferry service, allowing manufacturers to purchase and own cannery sites and to stagger their locations, thus eliminating the serious existing fire hazard.

(2) Permit leaving the present Fish harbor for possible use by the Navy for a submarine or light craft base, and the removal of any latent menace to the battle fleet.

(3) Permit the relocation of oil loading stations scattered about the harbor, thus reducing the prevailing menace created by the presence of over 4,500,000 barrels of oil, plus the lubricants and gasoline on a score of anchored barges.

(4) Permit improvements, factories, mills, smelters and heavy machinery and fixtures to locate on natural rather than filled or swamp land.

Opens Warehouse Sites

(5) PERMIT the sale of industrial and warehouse sites now legally barred from Los Angeles harbor.

(6) Permit the elimination of the Southern Pacific drawbridge by bringing railways around the northern and western limits of Bixby slough.

(7) Permit the completion of miles of pierhead line at a

fractional cost of similar construction on Terminal Island, which will prove of multiple value of such outflung and exposed improvements if and when undertaken.

(8) Permit projected improvements and construction to be executed on a self-liquidating basis.

(9) Permit more direct, unobstructed, numerous, economical railroad and highway connections with tidewater.

(10) Permit an unlimited extension to present facilities with most reasonable initial cost, the engineering and construction features offering no difficulties, serious or insignificant.

Millions Saved

(11) PERMIT the saving of millions of dollars in hauling charges to and from piers because the proposed canal would be several miles nearer to business areas than in Outer harbor.

(12) Permit vessels to escape the inconvenience and menace of surge.

(13) Permit beneficial use of now idle land, both valuable and valueless.

(14) Permit extensive improvements without taking, condemning or destroying any existing facilities or activities.

(15) Permit the extension of channels and barge canals into territory several miles inland or, if desired, to connect by a loop through the basin planned to adjoin Redondo Beach.

(16) Permit the saving by the county and various communities of burdensome expense in disposal of sewage and flood waters.

Jobs for Thousands

(17) PERMIT the immediate employment of thousands of idle workers.

(18) Permit the addition of commercial and passenger traffic facilities without the necessity of closing Cerritos channel.

(19) Permit the ultimate goal of a true harbor, not only a trans-shipment point but a permanent industrial center.

(20) Permit the establishment of a free port, a foreign trade zone.

(21) Permit certain consolidations of Pacific defense without delay by Congressional investigations and debates.

(22) Permit the development of a basin, protected from dangers of both peace and war, suitable for a Navy yard or any military or naval activity pertinent to our national defense.

(23) Permit freight handling on the mainland instead of having to be hauled over a single narrow drawbridge, the failure of which would demoralize half the present harbor facilities.

Torrance to Gain

(24) Permit a reduction in cost and an enormous increase in facilities for handling heavy Torrance manufactures and raw materials.

(25) Permit the administra-

tion of new port facilities in the county or district instead of placing them entirely in the hands of a single city, the major portion of which is 20 miles removed from the harbor.

Andreani has been instrumental in the formation of Los Angeles Inland Waterways, of which Charles T. Rippy, of Torrance, is president; E. M. Mosher, of Lomita, vice president; S. C. Sault, of Keystone, secretary, and L. W. Talbot, of Gardena, treasurer. These four, plus Charles F. King, of Harbor City; John M. Minor, of WALTERIA (Torrance); and G. B. Snelgrove, of Palos Verdes, are directors.

It is their plan to prepare a petition to the county Board of Supervisors, to proceed with the formation of a harbor district under act 3201, general laws of 1931. The district would include all the communities affected.

May Be on Ballot

IF FAVORABLY received, it is desired to have the plan placed on the ballot this autumn for the approval of the populace.

Quoting General Lansing H. Beach, retired chief of U. S. Engineers, an undisputed authority on rivers and harbors, regarding a Bixby basin development, "I'd start tomorrow—even if it meant an outlay of more than \$15,000,000. The effects of an industrial harbor in the contemplated area would be felt as far as Kansas." Asked if the surrounding property would be benefited by a free port, he declared that its good effects would then "reach back as far as Maine."

"We are already pledged to spend \$4,000,000 on drainage," declares Andreani. "Let us use the money where it will prove of benefit to all."

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