

Wild Rumors of 'Gas Attack' Draw Severe Censure By Officials

By MICHAEL STRASZER

Until and unless the more excitable residents of Torrance—and there must be several hundred of them, judging from last Sunday afternoon's hysteria—get a grip on themselves, a bombing incident here would provoke a panic.

All entreaties to "button your lip," "don't spread propaganda" and "above all, remain calm" were tossed overboard by scores of people here when Air Raid Wardens toured their sectors to give information on the official signal for gas attack and what to do in event of that emergency.

Investigation by both Police Chief John Strohm and Chief Warden Irvine J. (Jack) Hallanger disclosed that the wild rumors Sunday of a gas attack is coming" developed primarily from those who let their imaginations broadjump to new records even before the Air Raid Warden had finished giving his door-to-door information.

However, in blaming excitable folk here for spreading the totally unfounded report, neither Strohm nor Hallanger exonerated the Air Raid Warden force as a unit for the wild-fire tales of an incipient gas attack.

'Hysterical Alarmists' Rapped
"In any group of 118 people, the total warden force here, you are certain to find some who cannot be relied upon to repeat instructions exactly as they are given," Hallanger said. "Just try it sometime at a small party, whispering a simple order such as 'Go outside and close the door without slamming it.' By the time your family circle has passed around that modest command, the last person will probably say he heard: 'Row a flatside boat loaded with hoses without swamping it.'"

"Perhaps one or two Wardens did become infected with their own importance," Police Chief Strohm declared, "and, in their eagerness to impress others, did not phrase their oral instructions conservatively. In other words, they 'glamorized' their order which was to make, in fact, instruct residents that in case of a gas attack—which would always be preceded with the two-minute undulating alert whistle signal—the clanging of a dishpan or brake rim beaten with a hammer would be sounded by the Wardens. Then all residents should take cover inside their homes, close all doors and windows and remain calm until the Warden again notifies them that all is clear."

Then both Strohm and Hallanger leveled the charge of "hysterical alarmists" at those who enlarged on the Warden's instructions, rushed to the telephone and began calling friends about "the gas attack that's coming!" Repercussions of the Sunday afternoon "fright story" were felt as far away as Los Angeles and other Southland cities. The border-line panic gave local woman packing and she is reported to have moved her family out of town that night.

Order Was Telegraphed
Another result of the baseless alarm was the complete sell-out of baking soda at stores in and around Torrance which were open Sunday and a similar rush for the same commodity Monday morning. All grocery stores either reported they were sold out or had very little baking soda left by noon Monday. Use of this product was recommended as a safeguard against gas precautions.

The order directing Air Raid Wardens to visit each home in their sector to give the instructions about the way a gas alarm will be sounded was received at 3:15 Sunday morning by Chief

CHILDREN'S WAR EFFORT COVERS MANY FIELDS

Elementary school children of this community are helping to win the war.

They are buying defense stamps, growing victory gardens, conserving supplies and vital materials, denying themselves accustomed luxuries, obeying laws of good citizenship, observing rules of safety, collecting salvage materials, doing Red Cross work and studying nutrition and first aid.

This is disclosed in personally written letters to Superintendent Vierling Kersey from children nine, ten and 11 years of age in response to a letter from him in which he asked for replies telling of their contributions to victory.

A Certificate of Recognition is this month being awarded to each child who thus has presented a plan or described a worthy program of activity in which he or she may be engaged in relationship to the war emergency, and who has indicated that something is being

Clanging Dishpans To Warn of Gas Attack in District

Here are the official orders and precautions regarding gas which were garbled and exaggerated by many Torrance people when they were orally given last Sunday by local Air Raid Wardens.

1. Air Raid Wardens who have been issued gas masks will be given the responsibility for covering a large area than their own sectors in the event all Wardens in the district have not received masks. Wardens without masks must remain indoors the same as any other citizen.

2. All residents of the district must be notified of gas by the Warden and remain under cover until told to leave by the Warden. Even though the "all clear" signal signifying the end of a general air raid has been sounded, if a gas warning has been issued also, residents must wait for the "all clear" from the Warden personally.

3. Clamor and clang of dishpans, gongs, auto brake rims or other metallic noise-makers beaten lustily by Air Raid Wardens will warn residents of the presence of gas during an enemy attack.

4. Warning against gas attack should be given only when the Warden HIMSELF detects the odor of gas in his particular district. He must not sound a gas warning just because he hears a dishpan being pounded in an adjoining area.

5. If during an air raid a gas alarm is sounded, civilians should take shelter in a room sealed by damp newspapers or damp clothes around doors and windows, or take shelter in an upper floor room if available.

6. Civilians are particularly warned to turn off heating and ventilating systems to prevent gas from being drawn into the house, should the gas alarm be sounded. The turnoff, it was emphasized, should be made at the wall outlet and not outside at the meter or main.

Site for Synthetic Rubber Plant Said Located in District

Reports were current in Los Angeles this week that a site has been tentatively selected for a \$30,000,000 synthetic rubber plant for Los Angeles county.

Promoters of the project now are said to be in Washington endeavoring to obtain federal financing through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

Rumors as to the site tentatively selected place it anywhere from Lynwood to the area south of the Dominguez Hills, and it was learned that the project has been made of the Metropolitan Water District as to the exact location of its feed-line which serves Long Beach, Wilmington, San Pedro, Torrance and Compton.

done for a real contribution to Americanism.

Following are a few excerpts from the children's letters:

"When I take a walk at night and look up in the sky there are always lights hunting for airplanes. I would like to operate one of those lights, but I can be more useful on the school fire hose."

"We are growing a Victory Garden with great big radishes as long as your finger; in the next row are onions as hot as fire; in the next row are carrots as sweet as sugar; and in the next row are beets that are as red as the stripes in our flag."

"I am going to do everything I can to help win the war. I am very hard of hearing, but I can help some, anyway."

"I am saving metal. We have a model T that we are finally getting rid of, I hope."

"The time has come when we have to sacrifice candy and ice cream."

Bartlett Gets 17 More Votes From Recount

Instead of unseating City Clerk A. H. Bartlett from his municipal job, the vote recount action brought by his April 14 election opponent, James W. Loughridge of Welteria merely gave him more of a majority—17 votes more to be exact. This was discovered by attorneys for Loughridge and Bartlett last Thursday afternoon when they went over the 1,911 votes cast in the last city election.

As result of the "friendly recount" in the quiet chambers of a Superior Court judge, Loughridge instructed his attorney, Albert Esen, to dismiss the action instituted May 4 after Thursday afternoon when they went over the 1,911 votes cast in the last city election.

It is not likely that the official records of the election will be changed to show that Bartlett was the winner by 35 votes. When the city council canvassed the result of the election April 21, Bartlett was reported to have received 937 to Loughridge's 919.

15 Corrections Made
Attorney William W. Aisup, of O'Melveny & Myers, law firm, who represented the veteran city clerk, informed the Superior Court that "our count of the votes failed to disclose anything in favor of the defendant. On the contrary, my client has been the gainer by 17 votes."

Corrections in the tallies of all 17 city precincts, with the exceptions of Precincts 6 and 15, were found, Bartlett said. No examination of discarded ballots was made, he said; but, "if these had been taken into account, my majority would have been still greater," he commented.

First elected 20 years ago, Bartlett at the completion of his present four-year term, will have rounded out nearly a quarter century of service to the city of Torrance. The conduct of his office has been frequently praised by auditors, as well as county and state officials who have had occasion to examine his records.

Since the settlement of the recount suit, Bartlett has been busy acknowledging congratulations from his wide circle of friends.

"I deeply appreciate the confidence that my friends have in me, and I shall endeavor to merit their continued support by re-dedicating myself to the service of this city," Bartlett said. "Right now I am working hard on the coming year's budget and I hope, with the support of the council, to express my gratitude by saving the taxpayers money and at the same time to hamper efficient operation of municipal affairs."

Judge Sent North To Hold Guards

Determined to do everything possible to keep a State Guard unit stationed here for guard duty at vital installations, such as water facilities and war production plants, transportation lines and Civilian Defense headquarters, the city council authorized Judge John A. Shidler to go to Sacramento at once to present the city's case before the proper authorities.

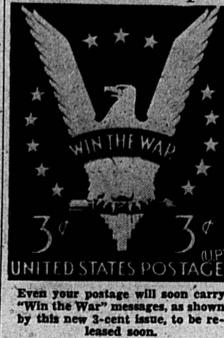
He will contact the state committee of investigation, which, it is understood, reviews all such applications for Guard service and may seek a conference with Gov. Olson on the matter. Councilman James Hitchcock, who has been endeavoring to obtain a "duration" assignment of State Guards to local installations, said that immediate action is necessary now because of recent orders received by the Guard which are threatening the present local assignments of active service members of that unit.

U.S. Gets P.V. Site For Oil Storage Basin

Acquisition of 485 acres of land in the Palos Verdes Hills for an oil storage reservoir for the war department has been effected by the United States district attorney's office in Los Angeles, according to a condemnation action on file in the U.S. district clerk's office.

Be sure you are registered and qualified to vote July 16 is the final day . . . Use your citizenship

New Stamp



Every postage will soon carry "Win the War" message, as shown by this new 3-cent issue, to be released soon.

War Insurance Policies Offer 1000 to 1 Odds Against Japs

Insurance men, who are slickers at the business of figuring mathematical odds, are pretty contemptuous toward Japanese hopes of staging a full "Colonge blitz" on any California city or of sustaining a steady air attack on our civilian population.

As soon as the details are worked out, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and private insurance companies will issue air raid property insurance on California homes at a rate of 10 cents per \$100 of value. In other words, if and when the Japs aim a bomb at any given house or building, the insurance industry will be 1000 to 1 that they miss it—and insurance men expect to make good money at those odds.

So, though the Japs have demonstrated that they can bomb America, there should not be undue alarm because the danger is real for all of us and the threat of destruction from the skies is mysterious and fearful. Of every 1000 homes in California, the Japs may reasonably expect to destroy or damage one, the experts say. Anyway, they'll bet \$100 against a thin dime that your house won't be it.

Landier Bus Route Wins City Favor

As result of a change in bus routing by the Landier Transit Co. for its proposed line from Los Angeles to the harbor area, the city of Torrance this week withdrew its objection filed with the State Railroad Commission. It is now believed that the Landier firm will be granted a permit shortly to inaugurate the new passenger service.

STATE GUARD WANTS MEN

Many more men are needed by the California State Guard for both active and inactive service to adequately protect their home communities. The enlistment rolls are open to every able-bodied man who can pass the physical tests and wants to perform essential service to his homeland at this time.

Company H (Torrance-Lomita's own) of the Guard offers all clothing, quarters, excellent food and medical care, plus good pay, to those interested. Headquarters are located in the Torrance city park where a guardsman or officer is on duty at all times to answer questions concerning enlistment.

Low Water Rate For Garden Plots Under Study Here

Lower water rates for residents developing Victory Gardens, providing such plantings cover at least a full lot, may be allowed by the city council.

J. J. Dunlop of 1251 Apple ave., a resident here since 1921, appealed for this consideration, declaring the present domestic rate was too high for most people who would like to grow their own produce.

Superintendent William H. Stanger of the municipal water district reported that "few cities are letting down the cost of domestic service for irrigation use." Beverly Hills, he said, was charging a \$5 fee per lot for installation of a special meter and then was granting reduced rates for Victory Garden irrigation.

Stanger was instructed to obtain data on this matter from other cities and report to the council at a special meeting to be held tomorrow (Friday) afternoon at 4:45 o'clock. He said the water department was running at its peak load at the present time and a change in the rate to benefit gardeners would mean the setting up of an entirely new set of books.

Riviera Demands Action Reducing Blaze Hazard

A large delegation of Hollywood Riviera residents was present at city council meeting Tuesday night to press that district's need for immediate action by the city to reduce the grave fire hazard created by the acres of tall grass and weeds now drying to tinder-like danger. The Rivieraers were assured the city would take immediate action.

This will start a request to Clifford F. Reid, developer of the property, to either cut down or burn off the vacant areas. If Reid cannot reduce the fire hazard at once, the city will send its street department crews into the district to do the work and probably assess the charges against the property owners.

Coral Sea Fighter Home on Leave

Healthy and happy to be home again, Guy Rowell surprised his parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Rowell, by walking in on them last week at the home, 1344 Carson st. A machinist's mate, second class, in the Navy, young Rowell saw plenty of action in the South Pacific and was in the midst of the Coral Sea battle.

Observing Navy regulations, he is reticent about that and other engagements with the Japs but he is confident that the Navy will continue to sweep the Pacific and ultimately drive the Nips back to their little island.

He is hoping to get a 30-day furlough in order to be with his wife, who is making her home in Long Beach, for an approaching "blessed event."

Bill Stewart and Milo Roberts Home On Army Furloughs

Two of four local boys who enlisted in the Air Corps and left together Jan. 2 are having a fine time together this week, visiting friends and relatives, swimming and enjoying home cooking.

They are Bill Stewart and Milo Roberts. Bill has a 15-day furlough from Sheppard Field and Milo 90 days from South Carolina.

The other two were Glenn Buer, who is at Taft tank base training and Wendell Clayton who is now at Scott Field, Ill.

MacArthur Tribute Next Saturday Starts With Parade At 5 P. M.

Final Parade Instructions

Following are last-minute instructions issued this afternoon by the Moose lodge committee in charge of the "MacArthur Day" celebration next Saturday:

SERVICE MOTHERS AND WIVES: A special section in the parade will be reserved for the mothers and wives of men in the Armed services. They are requested to assemble in the park directly in front of the high school at 5 o'clock. If they have no transportation, cars will be provided for them to ride in the procession. A large delegation of these honor guests is desired.

CIVILIAN DEFENSE UNITS: All Air Raid Wardens and Messengers who can participate in the parade are asked by Chief Warden Hallanger to assemble at 5 o'clock on Manual ave., between Carson and 218th sts. to join the parade at that point, wearing their steel helmets, gas masks, whistles and armbands. Police Chief Strohm wants all of his Auxiliary Police, in full uniform, and Messengers in white shirts, to meet on Watson st. in front of the high school assembly hall at 5 o'clock to march out from that point. Fire Chief McMaster asks his Auxiliary Firemen to assemble at the same location—Watson st.—at the same time.

OTHER ASSEMBLY POINTS: Local organizations planning to march in the parade should have members assemble on Carson st. in front of the American Legion clubhouse, Post or Cota ave. near Carson for prompt formation.

Narbonne Principal Leaving For Naval Air Training Post

John L. Abbott, principal of Narbonne high school in Lomita, leaves the end of this week for Annapolis where he will take a 30-day course in indoctrination, preparatory to being assigned to an air training center.

Enlisting at the age of 17, Abbott, saw service in the Navy during World War I and was assigned to a destroyer when the Armistice was signed.

Re-enlisting, recently, in the service, he received his call this week so it is no longer Principal Abbott but Lieut. Abbott. For the present Mrs. Abbott and family will remain in Los Angeles.

As school term will end with graduation June 25, no appointment is likely to be made to fill the vacancy at Narbonne this semester, Miss Beatrice Whittlesey, vice-principal taking over the duties of principal for the remainder of the term.

Since coming to Narbonne as principal in September 1938, Abbott has taken an active part in Lomita affairs. He is a past president of the Kiwanis club, a director of the Lomita Chamber of Commerce, and was first head of the Co-ordinating Council in the community. He is a member of the Harbor Post American Legion and of the Masonic lodge.

66 Will Graduate At H.S. June 25

In keeping with wartime economies, commencement for both the Senior and Junior high schools here this month will be restricted as to program and advanced as to time. The graduation schedule of events is as follows:

Thursday, June 18—Annual awards assembly at 10:30 a. m. Wednesday, June 24—Junior high school commencement at 2 p. m. in assembly hall. Baccalaureate service for approximately 66 Senior high graduates, their families and friends that evening at 8:30 o'clock.

Thursday, June 25—Senior breakfast at 8 a. m. Commencement program at 6:30 p. m. Friday, June 26—Term ends for all schools.

TEN-MONTH RESIDENTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO REGISTER NOW

Thousands of young aircraft workers who have emigrated to California within the last 10 months will be eligible to vote at the coming August primary election if they register as voters within the next five weeks, according to Michael Donoghue, acting registrar of voters.

July 16 is the deadline for registration for the August 25 primary, when a new record total of voters is expected to be reached for this community and the rest of the county. Practically every section of the county has gained in population recently.

The law requires that the new resident may vote if he has been in the state for one year

700 Will March In Torrance

Gen. Douglas MacArthur in far-off Australia may never hear of the Torrance-South Bay tribute to him next Saturday afternoon but he will be upmost in the minds—and the hearts—of more than 700 people who are expected to participate in the parade in his honor. Spectators of the procession and patriotic program to follow will likewise link the loyalty demonstration to that gallant soldier of Manila, Bataan and Corregidor.

The Torrance Moose lodge, sponsor of the "MacArthur Day" observance, is not concerned with whether or not the far-away honoree learns of the event but it is anxious that every organization in this area joins the 5:30 p. m. parade as living salute to the Commander of Allied Nations Forces in the Southwest Pacific. For that reason, Chairman A. H. Bartlett today declared:

"Every organized group—social, civic, fraternal, labor or service—which participates in the 'MacArthur Day' parade will be honoring one of America's men of destiny and in joining their fellow-citizens in this demonstration will be reflecting credit upon themselves and their community."

In addition to the parade and patriotic program, which will be held at the reviewing stand located on the northeast corner of El Prado and Arlington ave., there will be free showing of interesting motion pictures in the high school assembly hall at 8 p. m., followed by a benefit dance in the Moose hall, 1961 Carson st., whose proceeds will go to the city ambulance fund.

The cities of Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and other communities have been invited to participate in the tribute to Gen. MacArthur, while residents of Lomita, Welteria and Harbor City are likewise expected to join the celebration either as marchers or spectators.

Col. Robert L. Ingersoll of Redondo Beach, parade marshal, and his aides will form the procession on Carson st. near Torrance high school. Various units are asked to assemble on intersecting streets at 5 o'clock preparatory to joining the parade which will move off promptly at 5:30 Saturday afternoon.

The review will lead from the high school down Carson st. to Cabillo ave.; over Cabillo to Sartori ave.; up Sartori to Post ave.; west on Post to Arlington ave.; south on Arlington past the reviewing stand at El Prado and disband. The parade will not move over Cravens ave., because the streets reserved for emergency movement of military or Civilian Defense services at all times.

Two bands, Torrance municipal and high school, and possibly the San Pedro bagpipers will furnish music for the procession which will include many organized units such as the Civilian Defense forces of Air Raid Wardens, Auxiliary Police and

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What effect, if any, these new defense workers will have on the coming election is being weighed by political observers. Many of them are from Nebraska, Iowa, Oklahoma, Texas, and other middle-western or southern states.