

# CITY COUNCIL VOTES 3-2 TO SUSPEND FIVE-MAN CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED 1914

## TORRANCE HERALD

PRINTED AT 1619 GRAMERCY AVENUE IN TORRANCE

Published Monday and Thursday—Entered as second class matter Jan. 30, 1914, at postoffice, Torrance, California, under Act of March 3, 1879.

SERVING:

Lomita - Harbor City  
Walteria - Hollywood Riviera  
Seaside - El Nido - North  
Torrance - Pacific Hills  
Keystone - Avalon Village

10¢ per copy

30¢ per month by Carrier

### Legality Of Action Studied

A majority of the City Council voted this week to dismiss the five-man Civil Service Commission as an outgrowth of that body's action in a court case involving the city.

The action, initiated by Councilman Albert Isen, was approved by Councilmen Willys G. Blount and Mervin M. Schwab, but was opposed by Mayor Nicholas O. Drale and Councilman Victor E. Benstead Jr.

Action of the Council in ordering the seats held by the five members of the Board vacated is being studied by City Attorney James M. Hall for compliance with city ordinances governing appointment and removal of the members. Hall told the Council following the 3-2 vote that he didn't think they could "go that far" and later said it appeared that a 4-1 vote was needed to remove members from the panel.

Target of the ouster move was Chairman Gordon Mothersell of the Civil Service Commission and members George Downing, Steve Schmidt, Charles Schultz Jr. and Mark A. Wright.

Affidavit Signed  
Councilman Isen based his motion on the report that members of the Commission had signed an affidavit which had bearing on the petition for a writ of mandate filed by James S. Dresser, former city building inspector and Cecil Smith, Dresser's former assistant, demanding that the city reinstate them to their former positions.

City Attorney Hall told the Councilmen Tuesday evening that the members of the Civil Service Board had signed a petition presented to them by Attorney John McCall, who represents Dresser and Smith in the case, and that the affidavit was prejudicial to the city's case.

Action Sought  
"I think their action was highly irregular," Councilman Isen said before moving for the ouster of the board members who signed the affidavit.  
The affidavit was signed at a special meeting of the Civil Service Board on Dec. 8, 1954, and all members signed it, according to the minutes of the meeting.

Chairman Gordon Mothersell told the HERALD yesterday that he felt that the affidavit signed by the members of the board was a statement of truth and that there was nothing wrong with it.

"We made the original decision and I think it reflects our standing on the matter," he said.

Findings Reported  
At the completion of a hearing in April on the Council's dismissal of the two city officials, the Civil Service Board issued a statement of findings which recommended that Dresser be restored to duty after a 60-day suspension. The Council overrode the recommendations and ordered both dismissed.

Superior Court Judge Arnold Praeger will begin hearings tomorrow on the petition for writ of mandate demanding that the city restore both men to duty with back pay to March 10, the date of the suspension from city service.

A counter-affidavit setting forth the Council's contention that a bill of particulars read before the Council constituted the true findings and recommendations of the Civil Service Board has been filed with the court by City Attorney Hall.

A decision on the validity of the Council's ouster move will be presented to the Council next week by Hall.

### Meanest Thief Takes Kids' Christmas Box

Someone stole a Christmas box for his three children that he had just picked up from the express office, Charles Hansel Merritt, of 1144 W. 209th St., told sheriff's deputies Monday.

He had parked his car near 208th St. and Normandie Ave. Merritt said, and the package was removed from the car. Also missing were his car keys, he said.

### WEATHER

Variable high cloudiness, with patches of early morning fog. Little change in temperature. High yesterday was 68, and low was 53.

### Firemen Collect \$3288 in March For M-D Drive

Torrance firefighters were among the top collectors in the county in the "March for Muscular Dystrophy" conducted last week, County Chairman Jerry J. Crompe revealed yesterday.

Local chairman Glen Price of the Torrance Fire Department, said Crompe has notified him that only one or two other cities in the entire county will top their \$3,288.08 contribution to the drive. The firefighters here went on a door-to-door visit to nearly every Torrance home raising funds for the cause.

Price, and Jerry Hollomon, fire department drive publicity chairman, immediately issued a statement to all Torrance homeowners expressing gratitude for the support of the community.

"It is gratifying to know that the community is behind us when we ask their cooperation in a major project," they said. "The Torrance firefighters felt that this drive was of vital consequence, as so little is known about the cause for MD, a fatal disease. Our part, we know, will go to help save someone's life."

Local 1138, International Assn. of Fire Fighters, composed of Torrance firemen, sponsored the campaign in this city.

### Tantow Makes Insanity Plea

A "not guilty by reason of insanity" plea was entered in Long Beach Superior Court yesterday by Carl Tantow, charged with assault with a deadly weapon against Carl Graper of Lomita, on Nov. 21.

Judge Joe Rayercraft ordered two psychiatrists to examine Tantow, and set trial for Jan. 18. Public Defender William H. Samsen represented Tantow.

Graper, who lives at 26329 Normandie Ave., could advance no reason for the attempted shooting. He told sheriff's deputies that he answered a call to his door to find Tantow standing there, gun in hand. His wife accompanied him.

Mrs. Tantow was released after the shooting.

### \$31,600 Appropriated For Work on Hospital

An appropriation of \$31,600 for improvements to Harbor General Hospital was authorized Tuesday by the Board of Supervisors, County Supervisor Burton W. Chase, announced.

According to Chase, the appropriation will provide for the covering of open walks to 14 corridors of the hospital. Chase said that Tuesday's approval of the appropriation and plans and specifications for the work means that bids for the project will be called for in the very near future.

**EGAD!**  
8  
Shopping Days  
Left Before  
CHRISTMAS



**BREAK ACCIDENT**... Fireman Bill Russell works with a resuscitator on two-year-old Dave Taylor, while his father, Paul Taylor, looks on anxiously. The boy choked and passed out. Firemen revived the lad and he was taken to Harbor Hospital by police yesterday morning.

### Tot Hit by Ball Fights for Life

A two-year old boy is fighting for his life at Harbor General Hospital today following a strange accident in which the boy first choked, then fell unconscious to the floor.

The boy's father, Paul Taylor, of 23026 Kathryn Ave., said the lad was playing with his older brother in the kitchen when the older boy apparently bounced a rubber ball off the tot's head. Taylor said he heard a noise, rushed into the room and saw Dave, flat on the floor, choking.

Firemen Bill Russell and Bobbie Franklin responded with a resuscitator and succeeded in reviving the tot. He was unconscious when they arrived at the scene.

Taylor said the small child may have had bubble gum in his mouth, and the impact possibly drove the gum down his windpipe.

Police rushed the boy to the hospital where it was said he suffered head injury, convulsions, and possibly other injuries. X-rays were taken to determine the exact nature of the injury.

The hospital reported late yesterday the boy had gotten over his choking trouble, however.

### Fire Damages Trailer

A fire of undetermined origin did \$350 worth of damage to a house trailer owned by Clyde Kenn Doyle, of 22203 S. Vermont, late Monday. The breakfast room, clothes closet, and front part of the trailer were damaged.

### Suspect in Safe Swiping Ordered Held for Trial

A Hermosa Beach man who police say tried to make off with a safe but was tripped up when a flat tire on his auto brought two helpful police officers, was held to answer on burglary charges by Judge Otto B. Willett, this week.

Scheduled to appear for trial in Long Beach Superior Court on Dec. 27, the suspect, John William Klase, was freed on \$1500 bail.

Torrance Traffic Officers Myles Hamilton and Tom Patishall looked up Klase when they spotted the heavy safe in his auto. They had stopped to give him a hand as he drove down Hawthorne Ave. with a flat tire. The heavy safe had been hauled out of a tavern at 3103 Pacific Coast Hwy., police say. It contained \$300 in cash.

### Bank Manager Appointed to Chamber Post

Arthur Otsen, vice-president and manager of California Bank here, was named to the Torrance Chamber of Commerce board of directors Monday by vote of the elected directors.

Otsen, who came to Torrance when California Bank acquired the Torrance National Bank, has taken an active role in Chamber affairs since becoming a part of this community, according to Chamber President Paul Loranger.

At the same time Otsen's appointment was announced, President Loranger reported that the January breakfast meeting of the Chamber would be held at the YWCA Building on Jan. 11. John Ebbinghouse of American Rock Wool and D. M. Soule of National Supply will serve as chairman for this affair.

### School Enrollment Will Double in Three Years

Members of the Torrance Educational Advisory Committee got a look at the city's future school needs Monday, and uttered a collective gasp.

Present estimates indicate that within three years, the present 12,000 school population of Torrance will have doubled. The estimates are based upon expected building figures.

A report issued to the delegates indicates that with seven new elementary schools and a new high school to build, and improvements and additions to existing facilities to be made, \$6,837,523 is needed. Of this \$1,318,701 is available.

\$4,668,660 Needed  
This leaves nearly \$4,000,000 in funds to be obtained from some other source.

Superintendent J. H. Hull declared that the best source to get the funds may be through additional taxes. Federal funds are unlikely to provide enough, he said, while state aid is more expensive and less satisfactory.

Robert I. Plonert Jr., representative of the Torrance industries tax committee, praised the work of the school board, and declared that Torrance industries are willing to do their "fair share" in supporting schools. Careful consideration will be given to future tax problems of the schools, he said.

Mrs. Grace Wright, president of the School Board, expressed the board's thanks for the cooperation of industry and other civic groups. Talks with board members from other districts have convinced her that there is much more cooperation between school officials and local organizations than in most areas, she said.

Low Operating Expenses  
Other figures show TEAC members indicated that Torrance has one of the lowest per-pupil operating expenses in Los Angeles County. Part of this is due to the newness of the district, Dr. Hull said.

The representatives of local organizations also heard music presented by various school groups, and heard explanations of the place of music in the school.

Girls glee clubs from Seaside Elementary School presented choral Christmas selections.

All Are Included  
Mrs. Doris Cressler, instrumental music teacher, explained that an effort is made to interest the child in taking part in musical activities. Each school has an

orchestra, she said, plus city-wide and area orchestras which meet in various local schools.

Instrumental groups from Walteria and Perry Schools were presented.

In presenting a clarinet quartet from the High School, Director Marty Baus pointed out that there are three vocal groups and four instrumental groups at the high school.



**SNIPPERS**... Mrs. Clara Conner, Torrance postmaster, clipped away at a red ribbon and the North Torrance postal station was officially dedicated yesterday. On hand to view the ceremonies were, from left, Councilman Willys Blount, Mayor Nicholas O. Drale, Mrs. Conner, Station Superintendent Herbert Stullenburger, Assistant Postmaster Louis Deisinger, and Superintendent of Mails George Hansen.



**FIRST COLLECTION**... Sergeant Bill Evans pours the pennies and nickels from Torrance's brand new parking meters into Officer H. G. Tressler's collection car. Installation of the meters is complete, except for a few on Gramercy Ave., it was indicated. Collections will be made twice a week during the Christmas shopping season.

### Ribbons, Faces Red at New Postal Station Dedication

Everyone and everything showed up for official ribbon cutting ceremonies at the new North Torrance postal station yesterday, but the ribbon.

Armed with a sharp pair of scissors, Postmaster Clara Conner was prepared to snip open the new postoffice, as fifteen civic and postal officials beamed with pride, when someone discovered they had forgotten to bring the ribbon.

A hurried call to the police department, brought Motor Officer Dave Cook on the run with ten feet of the colored serpentine and the rest of the day went off without a hitch.

Watching the postmaster officially dedicate the new structure were Mayor Nicholas O. Drale, City Manager George Hansen, Station Superintendent Herbert Stullenburger, Assistant Postmaster Louis Deisinger, and J. A. Ferrie, owner of the building; Raymond A. Jean, building

### Doak Workers Get Pay Hike

Hourly employees will receive an eight-cent-per-hour wage increase, and salaried personnel will get a three per cent increase at Doak Aircraft Co., Inc. E. R. Doak, president, announced yesterday.

The increase will be retroactive to Dec. 13, he said. The announcement was part of wage hike plans announced by several large aircraft companies.

### Traffic Toll Down in S-D Day Campaign

Torrance traffic officers still were holding their breath last night, but up to 5 p.m., no traffic accidents had been reported to the local police department during the final hours of S-D-Safe Driving Day.

And only three non-injury highway mishaps had been reported to the Compton office of the California Highway Patrol, serving the entire southern part of the county.

Elsewhere in the nation, however, traffic deaths continued to pile up, but at a far lesser rate than "usual" for this time of year, officials said. Up to 8 p.m. EST, yesterday, 26 persons had met violent death on the highways.

Last week, 61 persons were killed in a single day, and the average was listed as 67 per day.

The President called on all Americans to observe S-D Day, asking that people make every effort to reduce the highway death toll during the Christmas season, December usually is the "black" period of the year for traffic injuries and fatalities.

Traffic officers last evening said that the number of reported accidents yesterday was extremely low for this time of the year.