

## Aluminum Plant Reopening Hopes Raised By Visit Of Eastern Operator

Hopes for reopening of the two Torrance aluminum plants, operated during the war by Aluminum Co. of America and Bohn Aluminum and Brass Corp., were seen this week after visits Saturday to the plants by eastern interests and conferences with the Los Angeles Bureau of Power and Light regarding power costs.

Inspecting the plants was Arnold Troy, co-owner of the Eastern Metal Products Co., Tuckahoe, N. Y., an aluminum factory employing some 500 workers. With him was L. A. Schaeffler, chief engineer of the now closed Alcoa plant.

In conference with officials of the city's Water and Power department and Schaeffler, he told of a project for production of aluminum from the alumina of bauxite ore and in addition the rolling, forging, extrusion and foundry operations by which the metal is made ready for the fabricator.

"This will mean permanent employment for thousands," Troy said. "The Alcoa plant, for instance, will use about 1500 workers for the electrolytic production of the metal itself. In time, with the increase of facilities for making sheets and other shapes, this number will swell to far greater size."

"To this worker force, add the literally thousands of others who will find employment in aluminum fabrication fields which surely will be located within easy access to their supply base."

### Covers 128 Acres

The D. P. C. plant managed by Alcoa is evaluated at some \$7,000,000, it was disclosed. Containing nearly 1,000,000 square feet of floor space, the factory spreads itself over some 128 acres of land.

With the Bohn plant, valued at about \$8,000,000, an aluminum production of 150,000,000 pounds a year is possible. While both factories are now deserted except for maintenance crews, their long vistas of ghostly corridors contain types of the world's most modern aluminum producing equipment.

"The entire Southwest will benefit by establishment of a permanent aluminum industry here," Troy declared. "Los Angeles and the region of which it is the center holds all the ingredients of success of such an undertaking—fast-growing population, intelligent and industrious people, a progressive spirit, the desire of high living standards and, of course, a fine climate."

### Large Power User

The city itself and through it, the taxpayers, also would bene-

fit directly by the proposed development, it was pointed out. According to Water and Power Department spokesmen, the two plants consumed during their wartime operation about 52 per cent of all industrial power used here.

Annual consumption rate of electricity alone ran to the millions of dollars, it was disclosed.

Troy said that while general market prices on aluminum will govern sales of the metal made here, "the fact that one more segment of the industry is in operation will mean that much more competition and this will tend to force prices down."

Pressed for more details on the expected bid, Troy commented that the pattern established in the steel industry—60 per cent under wartime cost—"may be considered fair enough."

He warned, however, that there are economic facts to be faced in the aluminum industry which may or may not apply to steel.

### Production Explained

Briefly explaining the production of aluminum, Troy said that most United States bauxite, the basic ore, is mined in Arkansas, that it is reduced here to alumina, or aluminum oxide. The oxide is then sent to Los Angeles for electro-chemical conversion into aluminum.

Troy will appear before the surplus property subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs at a hearing set in Washington tomorrow. He will return to Los Angeles next week. He disclosed that Henry Kaiser Sr., R. S. Reynolds of Reynolds Metals Co. (aluminum) and I. W. Wilson, Alcoa executive, also will testify before the committee.

"I am positive that a successful light-metal industry operation in this area could become the start of an industrial empire not exceeded anywhere," Troy declared during his tour of the plants.

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