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...UR 9c Head

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24-Oz. Bott. 23c

4 No. 1 Can 25c

2 Carton Of 50 27c

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City Grows to Giant, Still in Short Pants

Ed. Note: This is the third and last in a series of articles on the the Torrance Fire Department. In the last installment, it was shown that Torrance has grown at such a great rate during the past few years that the various City Departments have not been able to keep up with the population. This has caused a serious situation to exist in the Fire Department on whose protection human lives and property depend.

Marv Hall

The huge influx of people into Torrance since 1940, when the population was 9,950, has created a situation wherein this city has become a giant in short pants.

With a population befitting a city, Torrance has a fire department not large enough to protect a small town.

Actually ,the fire department has grown just as fast as any department in the city and is second on the city's budget this year, but still, the population stays far ahead of it.

During the last six years members of the fire department have received raises in salary each year and have progressed now from a five to a three step salary plan. That means that a fireman obtains a raise each year during his first three years, plus general raises. Recently, for example, every city employee was granted a five per cent general pay increase.

Certainly this seems fair — why then, is it difficult to obtain enough firemen? The budget is one reason, but even if it were raised sufficiently to allow Chief Benner to hire 100 firemen, there would still be a joker in the deck.

The Saddest Fact

The sad fact, perhaps the saddest fact, is that a city is restricted to its own population in choosing civil service employees. The only time that a city can throw these tests open to residents of the state of California is when not enough applications are received from the residents of the city.

If the civil service tests for the Fire AND Police departments were open to anyone in the United States, the men who scored the highest marks on the tests—no matter where they lived—could be given the jobs.

By throwing all examinations both in the Fire AND Police Departments, open to the whole state, or the whole United States, it is believed, top notch men who are seeking civil employment in a town such as Torrance would be given a chance to compete for these jobs.

This would not only help the city hire the very best men in the entire country for openings, but it would also bring men from the top strata of the country's civil service to Torrance to live.

If this law is designed to give local residents the first crack at good jobs here, as it seems to be, then a point preference system could be used, giving extra points on the examination to those who live here, as is done with veterans. Veterans get extra points on the examinations over those who are not veterans, if they get a passing grade on the test.

This point system would open the local job field to the entire nation and still give local residents a better than fair chance of scoring high enough to obtain the jobs. But, if someone who does not live in Torrance takes the test—with the slight point disadvantage—and still scores the highest, he can be hired.

It is assumed that the people of Torrance want the men who score the highest on the examinations to serve them as city employees, whether they live in Torrance or in Chicago.

Alternative Plan

Another alternative would be to establish a six months probationary period, requiring those who are hired as city employees to establish residence in Torrance within six months of their date of hiring.

Many of this nation's top grade firemen, now working in a town which does not suit their needs, would probably jump at a chance to come to Torrance to work and live. The California climate alone would be a convincing talking point to men who now shiver in the frigidity of the Eastern States, or broil in the Southern. It has been firmly proven that a man would rather cut a lawn in pleasant 80 degree warmth than stoke a furnace when the temperature is around zero.

We believe the law requiring one year's residence before being allowed to apply for a job here is antiquated and should be replaced. Many city officials agree heartily with this.

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