

OIL MEN MOVE TO WRECK DERRICKS

'Mockery' Flayed As Victor Benstead Quits Board Council 'Files' Realtors Letter

CITY CIVIL SERVICE USE IS RAPPED

Flaying "futility and mockery" existing in the affairs of the Civil Service Commission, Victor E. Benstead resigned from that body Tuesday night.

In a letter to the City Council, he said "this commission has not been permitted a free hand and a right to independent action, and at times there has been a complete disregard of its recommendations."

The resigned civil service body member was defeated in the spring municipal elections of last year for City Council by a few votes. A contest of the election of Willys Blount resulted in a recount which found Blount safely seated in office.

Benstead said in his complete statement:

"I am hereby resigning from the Civil Service Commission of Torrance.

"While serving on this commission, I have appreciated the great honor bestowed on me, and the importance of adhering to conditions and regulations of the Civil Service Act as enacted by the people of Torrance. But I have also felt, with apprehension, that this commission has not been permitted a free hand and a right to independent action, and at times there has been a complete disregard of its recommendations.

"In view of this futility and mockery in the face of the important work and decisions, I can not remain on the commission.

"It has been pleasant for me to be associated with the other members of this commission, and I trust they will continue and serve in their usual fair and impartial way."

There was immediate reaction to the resignation, with some interests viewing the situation with indignation that the City Council will not let the Civil Service Commission do its job.

Sherman Miller, chairman of the City Workers Union, said: "I feel it is a shame the way things are being done now, and that Benstead's views are absolutely correct.

"The City Council uses evasive tactics to fit the situation."

Other members of the Civil Service Commission are Fred Cook, G. A. Mothersell, Dan Desmond, George Downing, and Everett Rowan.



TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1951
SECOND YEAR No. 44



VICTOR E. BENSTEAD

REPORT MONDAY

25 Local Men Inducted Into Army

Twenty-five local young men will have to travel to 5803 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles by 6:45 a.m. Monday morning, Feb. 19 to be inducted into the United States Army, according to J. G. Caldwell, chairman of the local draft board.

Inducted by the local draft board, No. 117, the twenty-five registrants will be transported directly to Fort Ord by bus. This draft board covers the area of Torrance, Gardena, Lomita, Harbor City, Palms Verde, Waverly, Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach, and Manhattan Beach.

Coffee and doughnuts will be served to the boys by the Red Cross or the South Bay Chapter 92 of the Disabled American Veterans.

Each will receive a box containing packages of candy.

City Water Project Gets Federal Aid

The City Council was notified Tuesday night that the requested advance of \$56,700 to assist in the planning of improvements to the city's water works expansion has been approved by the federal government. City Manager George Stevens reported that the estimated cost of the improvements is approximately \$2,000,000 for which there will eventually be a bond issue.

The planned improvements include new storage supply and distribution mains. The existing three municipal water districts will be combined with added territory. The loan was based on urgent civilian needs in a center of large production activity.

At present, three municipal water districts and five private companies are supplying water to Torrance, all of which is obtained either from wells or the metropolitan water district of Southern California.

The present storage capacity of 2,000,000 gallons is considered inadequate to meet the needs of Torrance.

The federal planning advance is interest-free but must be repaid to the federal treasury after construction of the improvements begins.

City Manager George Stevens applied for the federal grant and James M. Montgomery of Pasadena has been retained as consulting engineer for the project.

Bus Drivers Hit Policy Of Dept.

The City Council Tuesday night received a letter from the City's Drivers Committee protesting the city's revoking all passes to the bus lines of bus department employees, protesting the violation of seniority rights of drivers, and also upbraiding the city for the "dilapidated and antiquated" equipment the bus lines use.

City Manager George Stevens advised the City Council that a survey is now being made to determine the cost of new and adequate equipment to replace old bus equipment.

In a letter from the Civil Service Commission, it was recommended that the usual seniority system be regarded. The matter was referred to the next agenda meeting.

Local Realty Board Joins New District

Inaugurating the newly formed Twenty-first District of the California Real Estate Association was a dinner held Wed., Feb. 7 at the Torrance Civic Auditorium attended by more than 150 realtors. Guest speaker of the evening was Willard L. Johnson, president of the California Real Estate Association. The Twenty-first District includes Torrance, Lomita, San Pedro, the South Bay, and Inglewood.

According to Chris Sorensen, chairman of the public relations committee of the Torrance-Lomita Realty Board and member of Alter Realty, the future outlook of real estate in California for 1951 and how realtors will meet the challenge was the keynote of Johnson's speech.

President of the Torrance-Lomita Realty Board is C. J. "Paddy" Ryan, of Alter Realty.

Price Stabilization Committee Asked

Under consideration at the present time by Mayor Bob L. Haggard is the formation of a citizens' committee to aid the nation's price stabilization program, he announced.

Appointment of such a group here was asked of Mayor Haggard in a communication from Michael V. DiSalle, director of the Emergency Stabilization Agency.

Street Corners To be Decorated With Contestants

Street corners in downtown Torrance will be decorated with pretty Miss Torrance of 1951 contestants this Saturday morning.

The City Council Tuesday night complied with the request of the Torrance Junior Women's Club to erect booths on the street corners of downtown Torrance, so that each Miss Torrance of 1951 contestants may sell votes.

All money collected through the Miss Torrance of 1951 contest will go toward the YWCA building now in progress on Carson St. and Plaza Del Amo.

"IT'S A BARGAIN!"

Each week, the Torrance Press offers the "Best Buys" and values in the Classified section. An example of this is the ad below which is listed under classification 36—Real Estate. Check the Press classifieds every week for values in every type of merchandise.

... IT'S A BARGAIN ! ! ! ! !
We're not in the real estate game, but we have an excellent buy on a piece of land—365 ft. frontage on paved street x 331 ft. deep (the equivalent of 18 FHA size lots.) Slopes gently, requires no leveling for building. Water and gas lines to property. May be zoned residential, light industrial or agricultural. Land lays directly at rear of our business, just off Torrance Blvd. and adjoining new Torrance Gardens tract. Accessible for railroad spur.
We are interested in cash only, therefore, the land is priced to sell quickly, for \$6500.
... FRONTAGE ON ...
75 ft. frontage on Torrance Blvd., 300 ft. deep water and gas in.
LEVEL GRADE—Next door to us. \$4500 cash.
See Dutch or Jack at Paramount Bldg., 3401 Torrance Blvd. Frontier 4-7371.

11,190
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NEW COMMUNITY CHEST DIRECTOR HERE — is Frank L. Miller, left. Sam Levy, of Levy's Department Store in Torrance and Chest campaign chairman for the Harbor Area, is shown greeting Miller, who will head welfare work and Red Feather campaign activities here. The Community Chest Service Center in Torrance is located at 1103 Sartori Ave.

Requirements For Fire Chief Stretched

The elastic civil service regulations concerning fire chief requirements were stretched by City Council action Tuesday night. Councilmen Bob Haggard and Nick Draie voted against the measure.

Complying with recommendation of the Civil Service Commission, the new regulations concerning fire chief requirements are as follows: the applicant must have (1) had 12 years of schooling or equivalent, (2) must have at least five years of progressive responsible full time experience in a fire department, and (3) must have spent three of those years in a supervisory position over a fire company or the equivalent.

Previously the requirements called for at least 12 years of school education, five years of progressively responsible full time experience in a fire department and three years in a supervisory position over a fire company.

It was said that on the eligible list to take the fire chief examination are Capt. Roy Winters, Acting Fire Chief Jake Benner, and Capt. Gordon Northington.

Also asked for by the Civil Service Commission was that an examination be given for the position of assistant plumbing inspector.

Owners of oil men themselves have decided that some oil derricks should be removed from residence sections, it was revealed to the Press this week.

Charles T. Rippey, attorney who has interests in the local field, said:

"I think that in time all of the derricks should be removed because it is a danger in residential sections to the nearby homes. This would, of course increase the operation of the wells from \$200 to \$300 a month. When you pull a well and have to rent a movable derrick, the cost is from \$40 to \$50 a day.

"As far as the liability is concerned, no derrick owner can be liable in the case of the storm because it is an element, an act of God. We are all under the control of the State and have to comply with State regulations.

"Earl Robinet, and I, who each have half interest in about 15 or 16 wells have decided to take down two of our derricks which are close to homes. We have discussed the question of taking all our derricks down and think that in time we will do that."

Meanwhile, the City Council Tuesday night "filed" a letter from the Torrance-Lomita Realty Board demanding liability insurance for the oil derricks to protect owners of property nearby from damages due to falling derricks. Eleven of the old wooden derricks fell in a recent windstorm causing considerable damage.

J. R. Thomas, engineer of the Department of Oil and Gas of the State of California: when asked by a Press reporter if he knows whether any liability insurance covering oil derricks here exist and if so, are any of the local derricks covered by such an insurance, replied, "I don't think that any insurance such as that exists. If it does, I have never heard of any liability insurance."

When asked about derrick inspection, Thomas replied, "The Industrial Accident Commission inspects derricks about every year or so. If they see anything out of line they notify the operator."

BOROUGH GOVERNMENT MORE LIKELY

Reaction toward a borough system of government for the Shoestring Strip, San Pedro, and Wilmington appeared more favorable this week.

Mayor Fletcher Bowron last Friday came out strongly in favor of a borough system for the city, Assemblyman Vincent Thomas reported after a meeting in which he explained to the mayor the workings of the plan.

Thomas said Bowron endorsed but added that the entire county could profit from being divided the plan not only for the city into boroughs, which would enable local problems to be settled on a local level.

Thomas, who is chairman of the assembly committee on borough government, announced that public hearing on the proposal has been set for Feb. 26 in the state building, Los Angeles.

Members of the UCLA political science department and the Haynes Foundation of municipal government research are scheduled to be present to give their views on borough government.

City councilmen, businessmen and suburban Chambers of Commerce will be invited to attend. (Continued on Page Two)

Red Feather Director Named Here

The appointment of Frank L. Miller as director of Community Chest Service Center, 1103 Sartori Avenue, and of the Center in San Pedro, is announced by Floyd Y. Snyder of San Pedro, chairman of Harbor District Board of Welfare Federation of Los Angeles Area. Sam Levy of Levy's Department Store is Community Chest campaign chairman for the Harbor area.

Miller also will direct Fall Red Feather campaigns in the Harbor District. He succeeds Alan Fite, previous director, now serving with the Pasadena Welfare Council.

A native of California, Miller comes to his new post well-grounded in both welfare and fund-raising activities. A graduate of University of Southern California, he received his master's degree from his Graduate School of Social Work. He enlisted in World War II, served four and a half years in the European theatre of war, and left the armed forces with the rank of major.

During the 1950 Red Feather campaign, he produced the training film used locally in many of the large plants and business houses, and also assisted with the Chest's technicolor film "Doubling Thomas" shown to hundreds of Harbor District volunteers. Previously, he worked in Chest campaign in San Francisco and Indianapolis, and conducted the campaign of American Cancer Society for Marion County, Indiana.

Distribution Of Atomic Attack Leaflet

Under the Fire Protection Services of the Civilian Defense program, distribution of "Survival Under Atomic Attack," a state publication will take place Saturday morning in the west east section of Torrance by members of the Y.M.C.A.

Under the supervision of acting Fire Chief Jake Benner, the (Continued on Page Two)

American Legion Plans Vaudeville Show March 10

The Torrance American Legion Bert S. Crossland Post No. 170 is sponsoring a benefit professional show "Hollywood Varieties" Saturday night, March 10th, according to Vice Commander Joe Platt. The proceeds of this benefit show will be used for Veterans Rehabilitation work and their building fund. N. T. G. of television fame, is expected to act as master of ceremonies for the two hour variety show consisting of the finest acts on the West Coast. Due to the necessity of a large stage, the show will be presented at the San Pedro High School auditorium.

Tickets at \$1.50, tax included, may be obtained from members of the Post and Auxiliary. Ticket Chairman Stanley Heiman says that as a special feature children under 12 years will be admitted free with their parents, and he urges everyone in the area to plan to attend this affair

Man Attempts Suicide by Cutting Wrists

Reported recovering from an attempted suicide is Harold Wesley Gossett, 33, years old, 17114 Ardath street, Torrance.

Taken to the Harbor General Hospital, Gossett is said to have attempted to cut his wrist with a razor blade at 3 a.m. last Sunday, Feb. 11, at his home. His wife discovered him, conscious, but bleeding badly at 4 a.m. He is now recuperating at (Continued on Page Two)



REALTORS—of the California Real Estate Association who attended the inaugural dinner of the newly formed Twenty-first District of the association Wed., Feb. 7 at the Torrance Civic Auditorium are pictured above. Left to right, they are C. J. "Paddy" Ryan, president of the Torrance-Lomita Realty Board; Willard L. Johnson, president of the California Real Estate Association; Gene Conser, secretary of the California Real Estate Association; and W. E. Bowen, of Torrance, regional vice-president of the Twenty-first District of the California Real Estate Association. Bowen is the only representative of the Torrance-Lomita Board who has ever had the honor to be officer of the state association. Press Photo

DEL DODSON—Manager of Firestone rolls a tire into the new Cravens avenue entrance of the store. Located at the corner of Cravens and Marcelina, included in recent beautification of the Firestone store was the new Cravens entrance shown above. There is also an entrance to the store on Marcelina Street. Press Photo

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