PEOPLE TAKE RULE INTO OWN HANDS AND SHOULD KEEP IT

(By A. R. SAUER)

In all my life I never was so happy as I was in preparing the extra edition of The Herald which announced the defeat of the freeholders' charter. I was happy not only because the charter had been defeated and the way paved for a new and better instrument, but because that defeat was the sign of a new era in civic affairs here—an era in which the voice of the people is going to be heard, with a consequent silence on the part of the high-hatted Charlie boys who have been making fools out of the rest of us since Father Horton staked out the town.

I love San Diego, and I have proved that love in nearly a half century of endeavor for my city. Last election day saw that endeavor bear its greatest fruit—the awakening of the common people of San Diego to a realization of their importance and their power. One of the strangest things in the history of Southern California has been the fact that San Diego has permitted itself, almost without interruption, to be led around by the nose by a self-centered clique of bacterial growths whose only claim to fame was their overweening avariciousness. In every public movement which has arisen here, this bunch of nonpareils has seized control of the impelling factors, forced the Chamber of Commerce and the newspapers to do their bidding, and walked off with the spoils. As a consequence, we are overburdened with debt; our tax rate is a shameful thing, known the length and breadth of the land; our property owners face bankruptcy and our future is as black as the facial lineaments of Harry C. Clark.

For 20 years the same congregation of hypocrites and shams, with a sprinkling of honest men who were decidedly uncomfortable until they were released from their duties to the city, have Mussolinied us into more trouble than we really deserved. THIS SAME CROWD WAS THE CROWD WHICH DREW UP THE FREEHOLDERS' CHARTER.

The charter committee, as my readers will remember, was made up of practically the same outfits that handed us Hodges dam, that brought about the Sutherland fiasco—costing us millions of dollars—that has given us a bonded indebtedness of about $5,000,000 FOR WATER THAT HAS NOT TRICKLED TO US IN AS GREAT A QUANTITY AS ONE SINGLE DROP.

Who gave us Hodges dam—that white elephant which John Trainor got from the Santa Fe for $2,000,000 in bonds, which was a boost in price from $500,000, and which he and the bankers of the city again hoosted to $3,750,000 because they had a sucker in the person of Miss San Diego to pay the price—a dam which is weak in the knees, liable to rupture, cracked in the dome and which is showing in its youth a general senility and debility which will only be cured when the structure floats on its sins down to the Pacific Ocean? Who gave us that dam?

The San Diego Sun, the Chamber of Commerce, Jack Thompson, Stanley Hale, J. Frank Cullen, Ed Head, Robert Hamilton, L. A. Wright, the San Diego Realty Board, the Merchants' Association, the Kiwanis Club, A. E. Holloway, John L. Fox and Julius Wangenheim.

Who gave us Sutherland dam—The greatest hoax ever perpetrated upon an unsuspecting people, a municipal crime which should have landed the criminals in little iron cells? Who tried to make us build a dam where a dam couldn't stand; who grabbed the money as it was pored out by a city striving anxiously to complete an adequate water supply but doomed to be frustrated at every turn; who are sitting and watching now for another opportunity to rob us EVEN IF IN DOING SO THEY DESTROY THE CITY?

Sutherland dam was put across by the San Diego Sun, the Women's Republican Club, the citizens' committee, Jack Thompson, Stanley Hale, Fred Jewell, Jerry Sullivan, Herb Sullivan, W. E. Harper, J. Frank Sullen, Ed Fletcher and Dusty Rhoads.

Who put across—or tried to put across—the freeholders' charter? THE SAME BUNCH—ONE-THIRD OF THEM CROOKED, ONE-THIRD OF THEM INCOMPETENT AND ONE-THIRD OF THEM HONEST BUT MUZZLED. An examination of the list is simply a repetition of the same names with which we have been familiar—to our sorrow—a dozen times before. The only two lacking were those of JACK THOMPSON AND STANLEY HALE—ONE OF WHOM HAS LEFT TOWN AHEAD OF THE SHERIFF AND THE OTHER IS UNDER A FEDERAL INDICTMENT.

I have mentioned the Chamber of Commerce. The directors of the Chamber of Commerce have been, in the main, honest men. But they have been under a terrific handicap. Conscientious though they may be, they are under the thumps of a few Fifth Avenue and Broadway pirates, most of whom are listed in the Bankers' Association and the Sciots. It is these organizations—with the Sciots now at the head of the class—which are kicking San Diego in the face for two good reasons according to their standards—because she is down and because she is their mother city.

The Sciots and the bankers clamp down on the directors of the Chamber of Commerce, and when the thievery begins the people damn the directors, when in truth they should damn the men in real control—the business men who are in San Diego to get on freeholders' committees, to grab as much as they can while the grabbing is good, and who hate the common people like the devil hates holy water. Page the Bankers' Association and the Sciots again.

What, then, has happened to San Diego has not been the fault of the Chamber of Commerce directors, nor of the nincompoops in the city council, nor of the flatheads we have had in the mayor's office. It has been the fault of a particular gang of hoodlums, two of whose number are now under a cloud and the rest of which will drift into the county jail singly and doubly as time lengthens its inexorable course and justice gets a final whack at them.

Deceived by these people, the city council, the mayor and the Sciots, the unchang "citizens' committees," to handful of cooties who cont the Chamber of Commerce the weak weeklies which are deceived by the propaganda handed them, and the eight lipped pirates whose eyes are glued to the treasure chests.

The Herald was the ONLY newspaper in the city to fight the Hodges dam bonds and option. The Herald was the ONLY newspaper in the city to fight the Sutherland dam steal. I not only fought them—I gave definite reasons for every objection I raised—and every objection I made has been proved by the event. I did the same with the freeholders' charter.

Now, here is the rub: IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE FREEHOLDERS' CHARTER THE PEOPLE AT LAST HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT AND WE MAY HOPE THAT THE INFAMOUS CLIQUE IS BROKEN FOR GOOD.

At last San Diego has united against the gang which has been in secret but unassailable control here, and, as I predicted, that unity resulted in a definite victory for the men and women who pay the bills. We have whipped them decisively, and we can whip them every time they raise their heads. We could have whipped them on the Hodges dam issue, and on Sutherland. We whipped them on the first Otay pipe line fight, and in the second election we got what we wanted.

We are now riding high. We must demand a charter committee which will work WITH the people and not AGAINST them. We want a charter committee which will begin its work by sitting back and doing only one thing—ASKING THE PEOPLE OF SAN DIEGO TO SEND THEM SUGGESTIONS. With these in hand, they can get down to business. They do not need lawyers on the committee—BUT THEY NEED ONE GOOD LAWYER TO GIVE AN O. K. TO THEIR WORK WHEN IT IS FINISHED. They need to incorporate in the charter WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT IN IT—and then they can rest assured that their charter will be accepted, that they will win instant and lasting commendation, and that they will accomplish something for the continuing good of the community.

The San Diego Sun, the Bankers' Association and the Sciots need not apply.

The San Diego Union, having acted pretty decently, the