

# Great Valley Has Progress Habit

## Remarkable Chapter Added to Southland Development Story

BY CHARLES C. COHAN, Times Real Estate Editor

Just beyond the San Gabriel Mountains, at Los Angeles' northern edge, is a far-flung empire of burgeoning development—Antelope Valley, where great industrial growth, agricultural pursuits, attractive urban expansion, livability and facilities for general welfare add greatly to Southern California's strength in all its phases. Its potential contribution to the Southland is tremendous.

Forecast is a population of more than 1 million by 1975 . . . it's close to 100,000 now. It all suggests the slogan "Antelope Valley — Progress Unlimited."

The story of Antelope Valley's development and outlook adds another powerful chapter to the fabulous saga of Southern California's progress.

To know that region's achievements and possibilities you must know its inviting topography and genial climatic conditions—a land of remarkable natural resources and scenic beauty. It's not really a valley but a plateau-like semi-arid expanse of 3,000 sq. mi., larger than Rhode Island, and surrounded by sculptured mountains and picturesque hills. Aridity will yield to slated plans where needed.

### In L.A. County

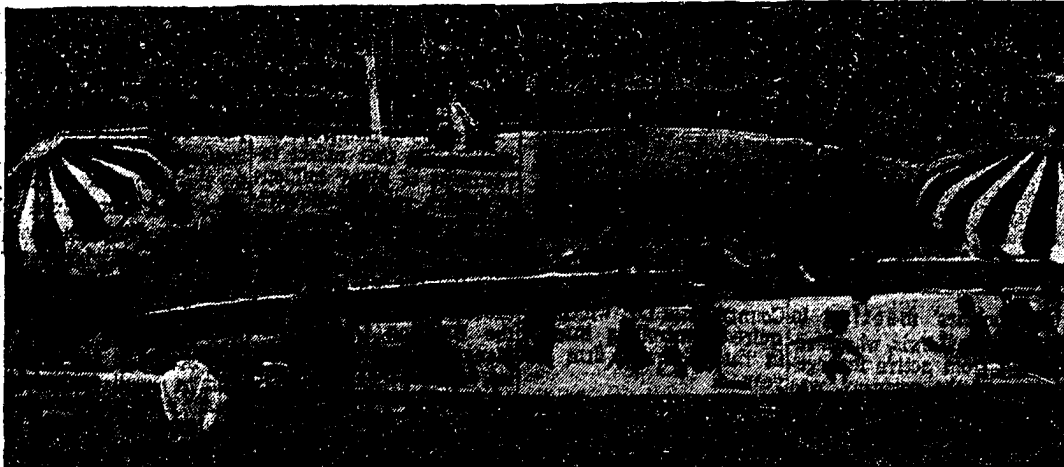
It is natural for progressing regions to have growing pains . . . Antelope Valley is on a broad road of progress. Traditionally as regards problems the Southland does not endure 'em—it cures 'em.

Most of Antelope Valley, the southwesterly part, is in Los Angeles County and, with its contiguous mountain area, represents about 61% of the county's total area of 4,071 sq. mi.—or, exclusive of the mountain region, about 37%.

A portion of the valley extends northerly into Kern County. Various other areas are so close to the Antelope Valley picture that they ben-

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**RECREATION-** Among the many varied recreation facilities with which the Antelope Valley region

is provided is the popular one that is pictured above. It is located at the Hughes-Elizabeth Lake resort.

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efit from, as well as contribute to, the valley's economy . . . as indicated in the picture on Page 1 by Times artist Oliver French.

And that vast empire of strongly-supported advance well on its way to higher eminence in Southland importance, is only 35 miles in crow-flight distance from Los Angeles' civic center. A number of excellent scenic roads form congenial links between Los Angeles areas and the valley and there is slated increase of railroad and highway service and, of course, travel via air or bus.

## Defense Aid

Every phase of the valley's development is a story of American enterprise and accomplishment — co-partners in the record of progress . . . with typical abundance of Southern California enthusiasm well-transmitted through the Antelope Valley Progress Assn., Inc., Chambers of Commerce, other groups and the citizenry in general.

A significant fact is that a great deal of the industrial development has been spurred by and is tied in

with not only the welfare of the national economy but also with a vitally important segment of American defense.

The industrial magnitude now and in envisaged future is stressed by the fact that Antelope Valley is credited with having the largest single tract in the United States exclusively for industry — 16,080-acre site surrounding the Palmdale Airport — regarding which some very important details will be related herein.

Huge and naturally integrated defense activities, militarily and industrially, are pointed to by Executive Director Clifford L. Rawson of the Progress Association as a main support of the valley's general economy. Research, experimental and production testing are seen shaping up Antelope Valley to be one of the nation's permanent centers for developing major weapons. Continued expansion of the jet-rocket-missile is seen inevitable due to great land area, clear skies and other favorable conditions that permit flight testing at least 360 days of the year. Another

significant advantage is the valley's proximity to big Southland aircraft centers with their huge frame manufacturing plants, component-parts manufacturing electronic equipment plants and scientific and engineering institutions, notably the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena.

## Air Force Units

In the heart of the valley and around Palmdale Airport are big plants for final aircraft assembly and production tests. They constitute U.S. Air Force Plant 42 and bear such famed names as Lockheed, North American, Convair, Douglas and Hughes with combined employment of 4,400 persons as of late 1958.

Northrop is in process of relocating there. The modern airport is a very important part of the facilities. It is on a 5,700-acre site between Palmdale and Lancaster and is the scene of \$50 million development.

Of special importance also is that the Edwards Air Force Base, second largest military facility in the nation, also is well within Antelope Valley. It covers 300,000 acres, is a \$180 million development and has 3,491

military personnel and 8,769 civilian employees, with annual payroll of \$55 million. Additional expenditures boost that amount to \$63 million.

Its primary mission is research and experimental work in the field of jet aircraft, missiles, aircraft engines and rockets.

Its operations, together with those of the U.S. Air Force Plant 42, now have an annual payroll of \$80 million.

In the latter part of 1958, construction was started on 778 homes at Edwards base costing \$11,707,000 (a Capehart governmental project) and improvement of existing homes at cost of \$3.5 million. Also in late 1958 it was announced that the base would receive \$883,000 for a new test operation building and other improvements. A \$400,000 rocket engine facility was recently completed there.

A report, attributed to an authoritative source, said valuation at the base should reach \$284 million by 1970 . . . and that certainly points to the permanency of the vast base.

A few miles north of the Edwards base is the huge

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China Lake Navy installation. The extensive George Air Force Base, a tactical operations center, is located on the valley's east border.

Along with reported recent Air Force announcements of new defense and weapons development activities in the valley has come the information that the Boeing Aircraft Co., of Seattle, is in process of establishing its Minuteman Missile Project at Edwards base. It also has been reported that the Air Force has allotted \$1,770,000 for construction of the missile launching development testing facility there and that the program calls for an estimated 300 to 400 employees with perhaps half the number being transferred from the Seattle plant.

## Big Contracts

A \$15 million contract from the Air Force to Lockheed provides for an extensive modernization program for certain aircraft. Contracts have been reported awarded recently to North American Aviation Co., and flight testing of the new defense weapons concerned is scheduled at Air Force Plant 42. Also disclosed was "that certain component parts of the huge B-70 bomber will be manufactured at the Palmdale facility."

There are other highly important industries that contribute to the economic welfare of Antelope Valley.

Machinery Overhaul Co., located in the Palmdale Airport area, is described as in the largest building in the state under one roof, 500,000 square feet, 11 acres, and in September of 1958 the company received an additional supplemental operating contract of \$1,025,976.

The American Potash & Chemical Corp. at Trona, in the region north of the valley area, has produced more than 15 million tons of various chemicals. Brine pumped from Searles Lake, a dry lake bed in Mojave Desert, is processed at the Trona plant, where some 25 products are manufactured from that basic supply. The corporation recently announced plans to build a first large-scale \$800,000 commercial plant to produce boric oxide for use in manufacturing high-energy fuels as well as various industrial applications.

United States Borax & Chemical Corp. at Boron, at the valley's northern border, gets its basic material for manufacture from borate ore extracted from what is described as the "only open pit borate mine of the sort in the free world."

## Largest Plant

The California Portland Cement Co., located at Mojave, also at the valley's northern border, operates a \$20 million plant, said to be one of the largest cement plants in the U.S. The Crescent Carbon Co. has a \$3 million plant at Rosamond in the valley where also is located the U.S. Rubber & Tire Co. testing plant. In the list of plants are: Bendix Corp., electronics, on a 10-acre site with testing facilities for aircraft components Rykeshosch Poultry Food factory, Monolith Cement Co., Micro-matic Hone Co., and sand, rock and gravel companies.

Mother Nature smiles benignly on Antelope Valley in many ways. One of the evidences of that fact is the vast importance of the region's agricultural output. Wheat, alfalfa, fruit, almonds—other products on wide reach of fertile land, poultry production—all produce an income in excess of \$26,000,000 annually. Cattle raising is

also a source of income there. The valley is a noted pear and peach country. Reported also is that 70% of California's almond supply comes from Antelope Valley orchards... an annual almond festival is a notable valley event.

## Development

Population increase impressively attests the importance of Antelope Valley—a growing population with ideals expressed in urban and rural developments of those things that make for the kind of livability so distinctively American.

The valley's portion of Los Angeles County had a population of 16,084 in 1950... today it is 63,600. Adding contiguous areas of the Newhall, Saugus, Soledad sections and the San Gabriel Mountain areas northward gives a population total of 84,065, according to census information compiled by the County Planning Commission.

Adding the East Kern County portion of the valley brings a reported total of 94,800. Seen by 1960 for the valley's L.A. portion is 157,000 and 1 million by 1975.

At hand is a report that since 1950 there has been an average gain of 423 new residents a month for a total population increase of 223%. The L.A. County portion of the valley comprises six census tracts beginning at the San Bernardino County line on the east to Ventura County line on the west and from Kern County border on the north to the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains on the south.

## Community Centers

The valley has several community centers, none of them incorporated. These include Palmdale, Lancaster, Quartz Hill, Littlerock, Pearblossom, Rosamond, Mojave and Boron. Other development areas include Elizabeth Lake, Lake Hughes, California City, Antelope Acres, Ana Verde Valley, Desert View, Hi Vista, Juniper Hills, Pearland, Wilsona, Roosevelt, Fairmond, Willow Springs, Four Points and Llano.

According to census tract figures reported, the Lancaster area population in 1950 was 8276 and, according to County Regional Commission estimate, reached 32,748 in 1958. The Palmdale area's population of 2746 in 1950 increased to 18,096 in 1958. And there have been other population increases indicative of the growth that spurs building activities of all essential kinds geared to meet needs of population increase trend. Likewise, utilities are being expanded to meet requirements.

Here's a gauge of building activity: Construction launched last year totaled approximately \$38 million, led by valley public works projects of federal, state and county origin, amounting to \$23 million.

## Building Activity

A total of \$15 million represented residential, commercial and school construction. New dwellings completed numbered 649.

Evidencing the energetic progress of the valley are the accomplishments and plans regarding school construction. And indicative of the spirit of educational furtherance is the fact that the Antelope Valley Joint Union High School District is described as one of the largest school districts in the nation. Recently reported and illustrated in the real estate section of The Times was the architectural concept of the new Antelope

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Valley College to be developed on an 11-acre site in the Palmdale-Lancaster-Quartz Hill area with eventual total investment including buildings, site development and equipment amounting to \$6 million. Target date for completion of the first units was given as September, 1960. Plans call for enrollment of 2500 students when the new junior college is completed.

Antelope Valley, already with a splendid assortment of utilities, is slated for a lot more of them as the years unfold. There are underground water and surface lakes deemed sufficient to take care of the needs of 1 million people. Future plans include supplies for 3 million.

## Utilities

Electricity is supplied by the Southern California Edison Co. and Pacific Gas & Electric Co. Completed in 1957 was a \$33.5 million natural gas pipeline westward from Needles, at the California-Arizona border, through the Antelope Valley and on to Newhall in L.A. County. It is operated by the Southern California Gas Co. and jointly owned by the Southern California and Southern Gas Cos.

Modern dial systems of the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Co. and General Telephone Co. serve the valley.

There are a number of complete shopping centers.

The valley is served by four major banking institutions.

One of the two main lines of the Southern Pacific railroad in California traverses the valley from Palmdale north through Lancaster and Mojave. Proposed is a Southern Pacific line from Palmdale southeasterly to Cajon Pass.

The main line of the Santa Fe, along the eastern edge of the region, gives further railroad accommodations to Antelope Valley.

The valley has a daily newspaper and a number of weeklies. The Ledger Gazette is published daily at Lancaster. The Valley Press, a weekly, is published in Palmdale. There are three radio stations and television service from Los Angeles and Bakersfield.

## Churches and Schools

In the valley are more than 50 churches, four high schools and a junior college, 22 elementary and parochial schools, eight more planned for completion by 1960.

The valley is afforded a wide variety of recreations. There is the charm of scenic localities—in the valley and in mountain areas and there is the allure of adjacent desert whose fame is told by its name—Mojave.

There is horseback riding, hunting for quail and other game, swimming, boating, golfing, fishing—45 minutes to mile-high summer and winter mountain sports areas, 1.5 hours to Hollywood glamour and two hours to world-famous California beaches.

## Projects Listed

A report on public works projects presently under way in the Antelope Valley recently released by Joseph Pollard, administrative assistant to Supervisor Warren Dorn, revealed \$23 million in public works projects in new construction started during the latter part of 1958.

These include: Antelope Valley Civic Center site, development buildings and facilities, \$989,000; County parks, land acquisition, equipment and improvements, \$373,550; William J. Fox Airport, grading, run-

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way paving, lighting, fencing, etc., \$1,331,890; Edwards Air Force Base, Capehart Housing Project plus other buildings and equipment, \$16 million; U.S. Air Force Plant 42, control tower, fire stations and other buildings, \$469,000; County sanitation facilities, expansion of treatment plants, sewer trunks, \$582,782; County waterworks, land acquisition, pumping plants, etc., \$375,161; Fire district buildings and equipment, \$16,800; County buildings, equipment, shops, animal shelter, etc., \$813,218; State and county roads, a total of 13 projects on roads, bridges, maintenance, traffic signal installation and right-of-way purchase, \$2,474,600.

## Effective Agency

Only 15 months old, the Antelope Valley Progress Assn. enjoys a high rating as an effective civic agency promoting the assets and advantages of the valley presently expanding in north portion of Los Angeles County.

John Valentine, president, is publisher of the Valley's daily newspaper, the Ledger-Gazette. The treasurer is Lamont Odett, publisher of the Valley Press. Vice-president Charles Colby is a director of the Lancaster-Palmdale Savings and Loan. Robert Lee, secretary, is former president of the Antelope Valley Real Estate Board. Other directors include Ralph Boyd, realtor; Richard Robinson, CPA; Leo Seltzer, president of Portal Heights Development Co.; J. Shelton Gordon, general contractor, Samuel Krepack, president of Lancaster Distributing Corp.; John Lion, general contractor, Nick Rini, president of National Ready-Mixed Concrete Co.; Victor Ryckebosch, president of Ryckebosch Poultry Enterprises, and Ruel Williams, realtor.

These men are also active leaders in chambers of commerce, realty boards, improvement associations and trade organizations.

The 13-man board of di-

rectors and its 10 operating committees establish policies and programs geared to speed the growth of Antelope Valley.

The association has produced and placed advertising copy in newspapers, printed various brochures, prepared statistical data and regularly provides informational kits to industrial prospects.

Executive director Clifford L. Rawson declares that the association engages only in realistic promotional plans, confident that all the claims and projects of the Antelope Valley are understated and underestimated.

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