

\$2,492,000 IN BONDS TO BE VOTED FOR TOMORROW

SOME FACTS FOR VOTERS IN VOTING FOR BONDS

Central Park Proposition Carefully Reviewed--Vote For the Good and Reject the Bad Features of the Bond Ordinance.

Unfortunately the campaign in behalf of the municipal improvement bonds has been waged more in behalf of the proposed Central Park than for all the other projects embodied in the bond ordinance. Everything else has been subordinated to that one proposition and the merits of the other features of the public improvement scheme obscured by the persistency with which it has been sought to make approval of the park scheme the sole test of loyalty to progress.

To this mistake has been added another still more distracting and mischievous. An injudicious effort has been made to silence objections to the Central Park scheme by personal attacks. Detraction and politics have been dragged into the controversy, provoking ill feeling, arousing dormant resentments and stirring up antagonism to features of the improvement scheme that have not even been criticised.

By making Central Park the head and front of the bond campaign, and importing personal issues and factional politics into the controversy respecting its value and availability, the whole public improvement scheme has been placed in jeopardy. This is a

most regrettable phase of the situation, but it was made inevitable by the attempt to browbeat objectors to the Central Park purchase.

From the first THE TRIBUNE has endeavored to give all sides a fair hearing and to eliminate politics and personal bitterness. It has refrained from attacking men's motives and has declined to publish communications assailing men personally for the views they have expressed. It believed that sentiment in behalf of the bonds could not be created by such tactics, and the disturbed and resentful state of the public mind on the eve of election has confirmed that conviction. The public is neither to be deceived nor bullied.

THE TRIBUNE'S unqualified support has been given to all the projects embodied in the bond ordinance save the Central Park scheme. In regard to that we have permitted a free debate in these columns, desiring that the truth should be known. A variety of opinions has been set forth, and there is abundant reason to believe the opposing views have been carefully scrutinized and analyzed. As THE TRIBUNE has been the only paper to give all sides a full hearing, it columns have been studied with unusual diligence. Whatever the result this paper will

have nothing to regret.

On no account should the children's playgrounds, the small parks, the Polytechnic School and the bituminous crosswalks projects be permitted to go down to defeat.

As to Central Park, such men as Assessor Henry J. Dalton, Henry Rogers, vice president of the Oakland Bank of Savings, and John Nicholl, state positively that the property is worth only \$300,000 if sold for \$150,000 to \$50,000. These men are large property-owners, thoroughly conversant with land values in this city and personally familiar with the property in dispute. Their statements are supported by the assessment roll and successive appraisements in probate.

But aside from the question of value, the objections raised by Mr. John McLaren, superintendent of Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, a disinterested authority of the highest standing, appear to be conclusive. Mr. McLaren said the high points on either side of the proposed site should be included, otherwise the park would be shut out from all view, being confined in a narrow gully between steep bluffs.

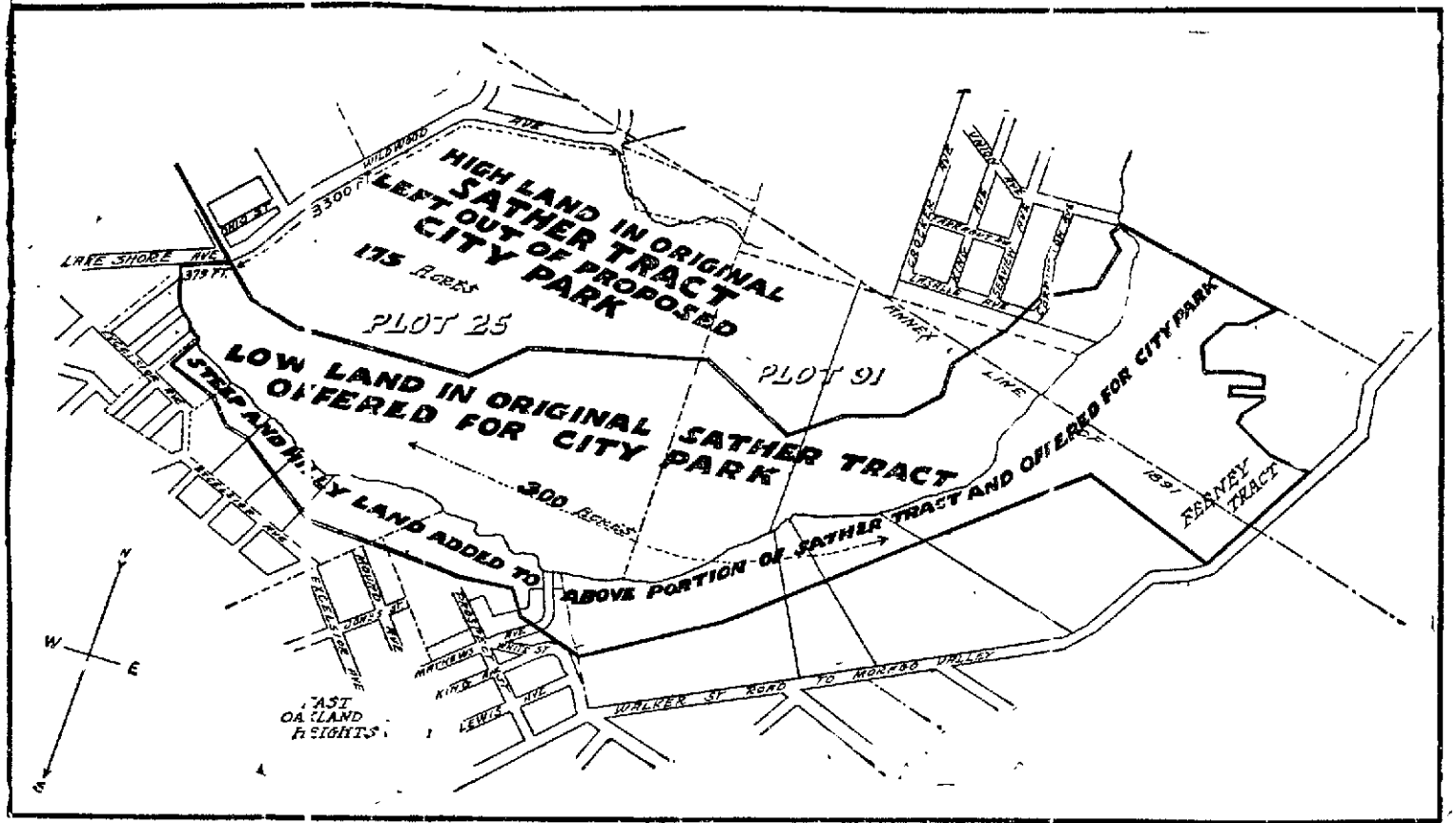
He said a railroad should not, under any circumstances, be permitted to run through the park, yet we are informed by the owners of the property that a right of way through it has already been sold to a railroad corporation, which is now surveying the line of construction.

Mr. McLaren also objected to the entrance as being too narrow and not opening toward Lake Merritt. Finally, he declared the plateau portion of the Sather tract, comprising its larger and better part, should be included in the park site. This touches the heart of the controversy and will be decisive in the minds of a large proportion of taxpayers.

The effect of the bond issue on the tax rate is germane in every respect. The effort to stifle discussion on this point was a mistake which it is now too late to rectify. The taxpayers have an indefeasible right to know what the proposed improvements are going to cost them.

Therefore, Assessor Dalton's presentation on this point was perfectly legitimate, however much exception any one might take to his conclusions. It is noteworthy that his statements as to the effect on the tax rate have not been successfully controverted. Indeed, his critics have devoted more attention to attacking his position and his motives than controverting his statements.

The very best showing that has been made by the bond advocates figures out a tax rate of \$3.15 for the first year. Dalton places it



MAP SHOWING THE TRACT OF 305 ACRES WHICH THE REALTY SYNDICATE HAS BONDED TO THE CITY FOR \$300,000, AND WHICH ASSESSOR DALTON SAYS IS WORTH ONLY \$45,000, SHOWING THE PORTION OF THE SATHER TRACT EXCLUDED.

at \$3.26—not such a great difference after all.

If the Central Park proposition be omitted the aggregate of the bond issue will be reduced nearly half a million. To be exact, the amount will be reduced from \$2,492,000 to \$2,042,000. This would cut \$29,250 off the first year's tax levy.

Here is what Mr. McLaren says about the Central Park site:

WHAT M'CLAREN SAYS

"Are not those high ridges included in your park site? You must get them. If you do not control the ridges people will build on them and shut out all of your beautiful views."

"I, moreover, advise you not to permit the Oakland Transit Company, whose surveyors I see here at work, to run their line through the park, as appears to be their intention. You will always regret it."

"I also advise you to secure the entire portion of the Sather tract which has been left out of the present site. You need it all in your park."

"Another question which should interest you is your water supply for irrigation purposes. If, as you tell me, you can get it out of the creek, and can sink wells, well and good, but you will need a great deal of water."

"So far as the money to be expended in improving the property is concerned, you can probably make a fine showing with the appropriation of \$150,000. The place has many natural beauties, and the soil, to me, seems good."

"JOHN M'CLAREN."

WHAT ASSESSOR DALTON SAYS

"I believe the entire tract, which is proposed to buy for \$300,000—or \$1000 per acre—would be sold at from \$40,000 to \$50,000; in

vice president of the Oakland Bank of Savings, says about the value of the site:

STATEMENT OF HENRY ROGERS.

"This is an outrageous attempt to foist a lot of worthless land on the people of the city. In the first place, a lot of deception is being practiced, for it is not the original Sather tract that the people are being asked to vote on."

"Now, I am well acquainted with the land in question and there is a large portion of the site that is being offered to the people of the city for \$1000 an acre that I would not give \$150 for. Out of the 300 acres that are being offered there are but ten acres that are worth anything. As a matter of fact, the land is rugged, and especially is this true of the upper portion lying along Indian Gulch."

Do you want to pay \$300,000 for a Park and then have a Railroad run through it with a Trestle 80 feet high? The City will have absolutely no control of that portion of the Park.

"In all justice to the people of the city the line separating the proposed park site from the Sather tract should have at least been drawn straight. As it is, anybody can see that the lines of the section are zigzagged like the teeth of a saw. If the entire Sather tract had been included in the park proposition the scheme would not have been so bad."

WHAT ASSESSOR DALTON SAYS

"I don't consider the property included in the park lines, as a whole, worth \$200 per acre."

fact, if it were offered to any other buyer than the city for \$50,000, I believe there would be many a weary day of waiting for a purchaser. In the course of my duties as Assessor I valued the Sather tract as a whole this year at \$358 per acre, averaging it all over. Nearly every valuable acre of it is outside of this proposed park. In putting this valuation on it I endeavored to rate it at its cash value, as I did all other properties."

STATEMENT OF JOHN NICHOLL

John Nicholl, proprietor of the Nicholl block at the corner of

"I have been led to believe that there was running water in the creek. I did not find any. There is not water enough in the creek to give a goat a drink."

"The park lines as drawn put me very much in mind of taking several chunks out of a dollar and then attempting to sell the dollar for two dollars."

"I have been a resident of Alameda county since 1853 and I am familiar with real estate values. I have been in favor of improvements, bonds and advancement, and was in favor of the Central Park proposition until my attention was recently called to it."

Here is Assessor Dalton's analysis of the bonding proposition so far as it financially affects the taxpayers:

EFFECT ON THE TAX RATE

To the People of Oakland: Tomorrow the people of the city of Oakland are to vote on a proposition to bond the city for \$2,492,000.

This is a very large sum. So large, that it will, if carried, increase the amount of money to be raised annually by the amount necessary to pay the 4 per cent interest, which is \$99,600, and one-twentieth of the principal of the bonds, which is \$62,250.

This makes a total of \$161,850 to be added to the tax levy the first year.

After the first year the interest will decrease annually by the comparatively trifling sum of \$2490; but the \$62,250 to be raised for payment of the principal of the bonds is a constant quantity to be levied every year for the entire forty years.

And the large sum of \$99,600 for interest is to be lessened every year only by the trifling sum of \$2490.

The assessed value of the property of the city of Oakland is about

PROJECTS ON WHICH PEOPLE WILL VOTE

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| Central Park | \$ 450,000 |
| City Hall and Additional Land for Same | 650,000 |
| Park and Playgrounds | 570,850 |
| Boulevards | 301,670 |
| Sewers | 121,440 |
| City Wharves | 15,000 |
| Dredging Lake Merritt | 48,400 |
| Concrete Culverts | 49,640 |
| Bituminous Crosswalks | 127,000 |
| Polytechnic High School | 143,000 |
| Public Library | 15,000 |
| Total | \$2,492,000 |