

# THE SENTINEL EDITORIALS

## New Freeway Connection

With the opening of the new eight-mile stretch of freeway between Los Gatos and Bascom avenue in San Jose, the heart of the Santa Clara valley is within 35 minutes driving time of Santa Cruz.

It will take a while before the significance of this new freeway is felt in the Santa Cruz area, but within a few months we should begin to feel the effects of the improved highway connection.

There is a strong possibility that the highway may bring many new residents into the Santa Cruz area who will be working outside of our area.

A few years ago it would have been difficult to comprehend that Santa Cruz might become a partial bedroom city or even a refuge for the long range commuter.

Today we have commuters crossing the Santa Cruz mountains daily and in ever-increasing numbers.

At the ceremonies last week when the new route was opened several San Jose area residents told us they were considering purchasing a home in the Santa Cruz area and commuting to their jobs in San Jose.

Of course, a highway is a two-way thoroughfare and it means that the San Jose commercial area is going to be that much closer to Santa Cruzans.

We don't anticipate any mass exodus across the mountains from San Jose to Santa Cruz in search of new home sites, but we do believe that we will gain a number of new families who will prefer to commute across the mountains.

There are several factors that will have a bearing on the future growth of the area in regards to commuters.

One of no little importance is smog. The Santa Clara valley is addicted to air pollution. Long-time valley residents are probably more affected by the loss of clean air than newcomers and they definitely appear headed for the coast to get out of the air pollution areas.

Another factor is cost. The tremendous growth that has doubled the population of the Santa Clara valley in the past few years has also brought great increases in land valuation. Many families may prefer to move into a less congested area where they can purchase property at a more reasonable figure than now exists in the Santa Clara valley.

A third factor is the attraction of the coast. Many families prefer coastal living but they were not able to commute before because of the time element. With the new freeway and an adequate highway across the Santa Cruz mountains, they can commute with a minimum of discomfort.

The drive across the mountains is leisurely compared with commuting inside the valley itself.

Of course, we won't realize the full capabilities of the new highway until we improve the section between Santa Cruz and Granite Creek road in Scotts Valley.

The Fredrickson and Watson Construction company is now at work on the 3.4 mile stretch between the city limits and Glen Canyon road and should have this piece built to full freeway standards by next summer.

The relocation of the freeway from Granite Creek road to Glen Canyon road has been designed and some of the right-of-way acquired. It should be included in the state highway budget for 1960-61 which means that construction could be started after next winter.

It is imperative that Highway 17 be improved in this area so that we do not have a dangerous bottleneck on the approach to Santa Cruz. The highway now carries from 10,000 to 15,000 cars a day and upwards of 30,000 or more on a good weather weekend.

From a Santa Cruzan's viewpoint, we would not like to see too much merely residential development in the communi-

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worthy of study in the next few years.

Thus far, the area has been able to absorb the commuter families without any particular strain upon the school system or public facilities.

However, our inward growth has also become accelerated so that any changes in the current patterns will have a decided effect upon our local problems.

In the past few years we have been growing between 3 and 4 per cent a year. If this figure should climb rapidly, we will be having all sorts of new growth problems at almost every segment of local government and service.

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Raw beef doesn't help a black eye  
but many a beef has caused one.