Well clearly, one of the primary forces on San Diego has been the terrain -- the valleys, the mountains, the inaccessible parts. In addition to that has been the work of the early developers like Spreckles with his development of transportation which anticipated population growth, and in fact, induced like a magnet would, population expansion and the centralized character of San Diego's growth. San Diego, I think, has also been formed in some ways by its loss in serious issues to Los Angeles, its lack of water and thus need for external sources of water, its loss but need for intercontinental transportation. And it has also been formed, I think, in a kind of economy that developed here, a major element of that being an economy for tourists, a garden spot, to enjoy the luxury of a green spot with the ocean and warm temperatures. That doesn't require a great deal of dirty development; it requires facilities to house people, facilities to feed them, and an adequate level of transportation to get them from their housing facilities to the beaches. I think that's had a serious effect on San Diego and the kinds of employment opportunities, and the kinds of people to be employed, and job mobility that is available. In addition, the military has had a major impact in enormous numbers of ways on San Diego and that, I think, is a rather familiar dimension to it. And I think, at least in the post Second World War era, we developed in areas of high technology industry which use a very exclusive form of employee -- trained and probably a highly paid employee -- but but we don't have room for expansion in service or in semi-skilled or unskilled ways. Yet, San Diego's population is enormously packed with un- and semi-skilled persons or those persons without the high technology skills. I think the only factory I would
emphasize as molding San Diego would be the caliber of people who in the early
decades of the twentieth century led San Diego -- the actual decision makers
themselves -- people like Spreckles and the other major figures. They made
decisions that were self-serving, for their own economic interests, but beyond
that they also had visions of what the city could become, and I think probably
the most famous could be Spreckles' ideas for San Diego and how he built the
city, whether it was the development of water or whether it was the railroad
or whatever else. To give San Diego a shape, to give it coherence in terms of
his own ideas of what a major city ought to be, you can't ignore in any way shape
or form what the persons in positions of authority molded in terms of the available
resources in San Diego. And I think in many ways, San Diego's modern shape,
the city we are living in now, was probably molded by the outbreak of the
Second World War. There were things that occurred after that, but as I see
it, those are really exacerbating extant conditions rather than innovating very
much of anything.

Peter Hamlin (PH): Dr. Daniel Weinberg of San Diego State University. If
you're interested in San Diego history, one of the best sources of information
is a seven volume series of books by Richard Pourade, editor emeritus of The
San Diego Union. After all his research, he says his favorite historical period
is in the volume entitled, The Glory Years, the last part of the 1800's, the
time of Horton's development of New Town, the time of boom and bust, a period
when San Diego's leaders envisioned a great city, a major commercial port, an
important railroad terminus. But, other forces in the city's development
superseded their desires to create what was in many ways a different kind of
city than the one they imagined.

Richard Pourade (RP): They were going to be, of course, the great city of
the Pacific Coast, and they were shaping the railroads to do it. And those
great ideas lingered on for many years, but they were shaped during that period of the glory years, when this was going to be the great center of the west, which you'd think with the natural harbor and everything it would be. But it just didn't turn out that way, and that's because of the mountains, there's just no question about it. The lack of a back country -- you go to the mountains right away here -- you have no great valleys back here like you do in Los Angeles. So that would doom San Diego until, I think, the air age here, when they could span the mountains and make it different. And economics changed the situation. Los Angeles created a port -- all you had to do was go out and build a breakwater, which they did. So Los Angeles had a railroad, a port, and a back country. And they could draw on the San Joaquin Valley much easier than you could here. And strangely enough, San Diego had built the exposition to bank on the success of the opening of the Panama-Pacific Canal. That would then bring San Diego to the forefront here with the first port of call after the Panama Canal. But, it turned out, of course, that it just shortened the journey by more than half, so they went right on by -- they didn't stop and they went to Los Angeles where the goods were. So, it was all for naught and the port just never did develop commercially until the navy came here. The port was never anything; you couldn't write a history of the port and have anything until the navy came. So, it was a disappointment to all with the railroads and the port -- there was nothing here to pick up. So it never did come out like they anticipated; it went a different way. So their intentions were all good, and intents were right, and I think they were not all selfish intentions. It was just the pride of the people in those days -- if people were going to build something -- that is what lead them all west. They were going to find a new say, a new home, build a new city. And I think that spirit of the pioneer lived for a long time here, and they were always going to create a city and create it the way they wanted,
but it just didn't bend that way. You just don't create a city, I believe, entirely as you anticipated. No one would have guessed forty or fifty years ago or even when I came here that the city would look like it does today.

PH: Richard Pourade, editor emeritus of The San Diego Union and author of a seven volume series of books on San Diego history.

Our race with Los Angeles may today take quite a different form. Where in earlier times we sought to beat Los Angeles to the glory of a great commercial center, today we point to our neighbor to the north as an example to be avoided.

Lee Grissom is the Executive Vice President of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce.

Lee Grissom (LG): This region really has a very short time in which to work to maintain its character, and I say that because I was fascinated by the entrance of The Los Angeles Times into San Diego. The corporate leadership there feels that San Diego is very definitely a suburb of that metropolitan hub. And San Diegans have often smugly, I think, thought that Camp Pendleton will serve as a buffer between this area and the Los Angeles metropolitan area. We now see proposals for the placement of an international airport on Camp Pendleton or the placement of a liquified natural gas terminal on Camp Pendleton, and we also find an interesting migration, perhaps one of the largest daily migrations in the world, between North County, San Diego and Orange County.

So, I sense that we are now finding ourselves sliding, and not slowly, into the Los Angeles - San Diego megalopolis, and that really worries me. If we have an opportunity in this area to maintain a distinct image, then I think it's very important that we do that. We won't do it in Fallbrook, and we won't do it in Encinitas, we'll do it by having a very distinct image in downtown San Diego, and I think that's why we really have to push very hard on the redevelopment of this area.

PH: Lee Grissom, Executive Vice President of the San Diego Chamber of
Commerce. If downtown redevelopment is to be a success, under whose leadership will it proceed? On this series of programs we've examined the lives of some of our city's most important leaders up to WWII, and yet today, many speak of a leadership vacuum in San Diego. Retired businessman, Orian W. Todd Jr., has lived through the accomplishments of many of the great leaders of the early twentieth century. But he says there are many things that make the nature of leadership today much different from earlier times.

Orion Todd Jr. (OJr): [unintelligible] ... San Diego came first. And maybe it would hurt John D. Spreckles or something, but he'd go along if it was good for San Diego, you see. I think perhaps what has happened in summing up what you were saying, is that the growth of San Diego has been so great that these people -- if you live in Point Loma, your life away from the downtown business is around Point Loma people or, if you live in Rancho Bernardo -- and so, there isn't the get-together. The whole life in the days that I'm talking about in the 20's and 30's was revolving around the YMCA and that board of directors and the rowing club, and just a few handful of things, you see; more centralized. And now it's all over, you see. Actually, here in San Diego, I think we've got the same kind of brain power and will power, but it's not together like it was.

PH: Businessman Orian W. Todd, Jr. With these comments, we now turn to a panel discussion with our special guests Neil Morgan and Harold Keen. Both have been careful observers of the city's growth and development since WWII, the point at which our earlier biographical programs in this series left off. Neil Morgan is a columnist with the Evening Tribune; his column has appeared daily since 1948. He's also the author of many books on San Diego. Harold Keen is a reporter for KFMB TV, channel 8, and he has for many years contributed articles on the city to San Diego Magazine. And to introduce the discussion with the first question is Dr. Clare Crane, San Diego historian and chief historical
This series "Twelve Who Shaped San Diego" really comes to an end just before WWII, and the reason we did that is that we felt that the changes that have taken place since WWII have made San Diego a different place. We had a population of something like 250,000 prior to WWII, and now it's three times that size. We had a land area that was only half what it is now. So both in terms of population, not only its size but its ethnic character, we've had changes since WWII in terms of numbers of population and this large land area. So, I think, these factors really make it a different place. And also, the quality of leadership and the opportunities for individuals to play leadership roles and to do the kinds of things that we focused on in say the Spreckles program, the Horton program and so on -- it's no longer possible for an individual to play as much of a part. And so we wanted to ask you people, who you think the leaders and shapers of today are and how do they differ from the ones that we've looked at over these past programs?

Harold Keen (HK): I think perhaps we ought to look at some of the currents that have occurred here in the last 30-40 years. Until about a decade or so ago, growth was the subject not open to debate. It was a cardinal creed of this community; anything that would expand our economic base was a religious creed. We had to go for it. But, that has changed in the 70's, and the environmentalists have gone into their own, and different personalities also have come in as a result of this, including what I call the "young Turks" in the economic community. PH: What exactly do you mean by that?

HK: Well, that was an economic revolution that began in the mid-60's. The "young Turks" such as Dick Silverman who is now Chief Advisor to Governor Brown and his partner Bob Peterson, and Food Maker, the parent company of Jack in the Box, seizing control of one of San Diego's oldest and most conservative
financial institutions at a very rapid and surprising stock rate -- the First National Bank, now Southern-California First National Bank. I think that was kind of a watershed, almost a signal that a new breed of entrepreneur was coming in to take over from the old established patriarchal type of people here. And then another watershed occurred in the early 70's when Ed Miller was elected City Attorney over C. Arnholt Smith's virtual hand picked candidate, Bob Thomas, who was supported by the "young Turks." This was the beginning of the end of the power of C. Arnholt Smith and the people that he worked with in the community, and it signaled the beginning of the major crack of the old establishment.

But then even prior to that, there still was another watershed, and I think that was a very important one. It was the entry of the May Company into Mission Valley. This signaled the defeat of the long entrenched downtown power interest that for so many, many years virtually dictated the way the city was run -- it had tremendous influence over the city council -- the big names like Marston, and Jessop, and Whitney, those were the names you heard all the time as the movers and the shakers. And when Mission Valley zoning was changed in an epocal decision by the City Council to allow the first major regional shopping center to be built in San Diego, that weakened downtown's economy and it strengthened and it actually developed an entirely new character to our economy in San Diego and, of course, you know what it did to San Diego's last really remaining urban area of open space -- Mission Valley. Then, finally, the pendulum began to swing in the other direction. The environmentalists came in very strongly in the 1970's. Jack Walsh on the City Council and later on the Board of Supervisors was one of the leaders of this movement. More recently, of course, Pete Wilson, and he, I think, sort of ushered in when he was elected on a control growth platform, very strong growth control platform, over Mayor Curran who
was riding high during the pro-growth period. That, I think, ushered in that new era which I've called in the past, the "Wilson era." So, the environmentalists then began riding strongly and saved the Cabrillo Freeway from being widened — do you remember that big battle to widen it and desecrate part of the park — prevented La Jolla from becoming a high rise center like Miami Beach, although some high rises were built and they were able to institute a 50' height limit. So, the pendulum has swung in the other direction, and now there's a battle going on between the environmentalists, the conservationists and those who favor strong economic growth.

_Niel Morgan (NM):_ I agree Harold, except I think that it might be helpful in the long view to remember that every change you have described there mirrored a trend nationally. The investigative reporting boom of the 1970's was closely associated with the demise of Arnhold Smith. The gentle trend toward corporate acquisitions was nation-wide at the time when San Diego's oldest companies began to be acquired by out-of-town companies. The strength of the conservationists and the environmentalists was nation-wide, even world-wide, even though sometimes California does seem to be a little in the lead at a time when it became very difficult to continue the conventional growth and became, in fact, unfashionable not only in San Diego, but in many parts of the nation, wherever the environmentalists have shown strength. I think the earlier remark of Orian Todd about how it's not all together now, about how it once was on the YMCA board — he also happened to be, I believe, on the board of directors of the First National Bank which, as Harold rightly says, the "young Turks" took over quite suddenly. As a matter of fact, Dick Silverman came in one morning to the Chairman's office and says "Like I's your new boss." And it was a great surprise. So comfortable was the old San Diego feeling that they really weren't aware that they were even under threat. What this adds up to is that San Diego, while we tend to be introspective
and quite narcissistic, need very much to recognize what is happening to us in terms of what's happening to America, and to realize that while it may happen here first, or to a greater extent, really we're not that much different from the rest of America. And the same troubles are descending here as are elsewhere and the same antidotes probably will have to work here that will work elsewhere and we all have to sort of struggle together to find them.

CC: I think that's very true, that the two major changes that I see are part of nation-wide trends since WWII. One of them that we haven't really talked about much yet, but that I hope we'll get into, is the whole concept of the system has to open up to let more people into it, so that the rising voice of minority groups, of women, of the elderly, of various sorts of special constituencies has become much more important that it ever was in San Diego or anywhere else in the United States prior to WWII. Politicians and economic and social leaders now have to pay attention to many more different groups than they used to. The other thing is this concern for the environment, as you both mentioned. The concepts of protecting our coast lines and doing something about managing where residential and industrial growth takes place, this is, of course, not unique to San Diego but, I'm happy to say that I think we're in the forefront of trying to do something about that.

NM: The entrepreneur has been virtually foreclosed in America by legislation and regulation. The entrepreneur is what we're all talking about in terms of San Diego's growth, up until yesterday seemingly. This happens to be now -- thirty years since I last started writing a daily column; Harold and I were together on the Tribune in those days...

HK: I remember when you walked into the San Diego Tribune office in 1944 looking for a job right out of the Navy.

NM: Exactly. And in preparation for this conversation, I opened up my first
scrapbook of columns that attempted to do thirty years ago much the same thing I attempt to do today, and that is to give in fifteen or twenty short items a glimpse of what the community is feeling or talking or laughing or worrying about in a given day. And, my goodness, a social anthropologist can dig back through thirty years of daily columns and find at least two or three cities buried underneath the debris. I suppose that would suggest you could find two or three columnists buried under there too.

PH: That's an interesting point and maybe we could pursue it in more detail. You bring to mind an article that Harold wrote about pointing our the "Fleet" era by the "Smith" era followed by the "Wilson" era that you just talked about. And I was wondering what different cities did you notice in your columns as you looked at them from 1944 to the present.

NM: I had come from a small town in North Carolina via the Navy, and I was immensely comfortable in San Diego in 1946, 7, and 8, when I began my columns. We were a small town of transplanted Mid Westerners, Southerners, and a few Easterners. I saw just a sort of emancipated North Carolina by the sea.

The same jokes that seem a little corny in retrospect and the same weighty items that seem a little trivial in retrospect were of vast importance in those days. We have grown immensely in sophistication -- the educational communities have helped to do that, the scientific research growth of San Diego has helped to widen our base. There are seventy-four booksellers in San Diego County now, who for the first time are organized and will be holding their initial organizational meeting this month; that is certainly a symptom of change.

SIDE II

HK: I think what has been lacking in San Diego ever since the so-called "Spreckels" era is a coterie of very wealthy, philanthropically-minded people
such as exists in some other towns, as in Detroit, for example, where the Ford family might decide that there's going to be a renaissance center, and they go ahead and build it. Looking at the linear history of San Diego, Spreckels, of course, was a dominant personality and he's the closest we have ever had to being a philanthropist wealthy enough to say we've got to have this sort of thing and be able to effect it. Then came the aircraft era; we then became a sort of semi-industrial town during World War II where one plant, Convair, had forty-four thousand employees in this little town. You can imagine the impact it had on a town that had less than 200,000 people before 1940. That was the "Fleet" era, and yet, a major fleet didn't have the tremendous impact on San Diego that Spreckels did, I don't think. The industry itself, and all of its ramifications had a tremendous amount of influence over what was happening in San Diego.

Then came the era of the entrepreneurs, who have faded away since, many of them due to either indictment or perhaps collapse through bankruptcy or simply being disgraced by being sent to prison for income tax evasion or that sort of thing. And that was the "C. Arnhold Smith" era that everybody's acquainted with, in the 1960's -- the era in which the business community was virtually riding herd on our city government. Now it's the other way around; the business community is reacint to what our city government decisions are. Then, of course, the current "Pete Wilson" era which has had its ups and downs. So, we haven't said very much yet about the Navy. Don't you think the Navy, Neil, was a dominant influence in San Diego back in the 30's and, of course, World War II into the middle 40's?

NM: The payroll is down from something like 35% of the San Diego payroll to 5%. There's the firmest indicator, and also the military is not held in the same worshipful esteem.

HK: That's true. Whatever the Navy wanted, the Navy got; there was no question
about it because what was good for the Navy was good for San Diego, like what was good for General Motors was good for the country. And a good example of our new orientation towards the Navy is this new big battle currently going on over whether the Navy should be allowed to swap land in Balboa Park for Florida Canyon. You know we'd fall over and say "go ahead and take it."

CC: In violation of the City Charter, I might add.

HK: And that's what the strong environmentalists are demanding: that at least a vote of the people be allowed, which would require a two-thirds vote to permit that acquisition of that Florida Canyon land.

PH: You're saying that in previous times the vote would be hands down in favor of the Navy?

HK: It was. Yes, there were several votes in which it was proforma practically in which the people said, "gee, if the Navy wants it, it must be real good, let them have it."

NM: And there's a great pressure on the Pentagon at this time to merge the Marine Corp Recruit Depot into Camp Pendleton, so that the port can buy that land and realign Lindberg Field.

CC: And we may then, be able, as Lynch and Appleyard suggested in their report, to get back for other uses some of the land that surrounds the harbor of San Diego that has been dominated for so long by what they call military and industrial complex, and not all of those things need to be, of course, right on the shore of the harbor.

NM: That would be one nice little solution to the airport noise thing because instead of the Loma Portal and Point Loma people suffering quite so much, the realigned runway would come in over the harbor and leave over Mission Bay, and it would be those thousands of tourists sleeping at night on Mission Bay who would get that noise, but they don't form a constituency.

[Laughter]
HK: What it comes down to, I think, is that today there is no really strong directional force like there was when Spreckels was living in San Diego, or when the Navy was dominant. And there are many different elements in the community which are having a tug-of-war between each other, each attempting to get its influence expressed. We don't seem to be moving, you know, in a very positive or definite direction, and one of the reasons for that is the many government requirements -- the environmental impact reports; it now takes eighteen months to two years, maybe three years to get a subdivisions or any project going from the time they start planning it. So, this has perhaps been a good thing because it has slowed down some of the 'willy-nilly' growth that would have occurred or that did occur in the 1960's. And then also, there's a different way of doing things today because of all those requirements. Neil, you may remember the behind the scenes maneuvers that led up to the creation of the Community Concourse. In the early 1960's, San Diego downtown was threatened with becoming a desert because of the May Company's moving out and retail business virtually collapsing. So San Diegan's Incorporated, which was a combination of downtown businessmen, decided that we were going to have a Community Concourse -- a civic center downtown, which would revitalize downtown and which, of course, it did. It revitalized downtown north of Broadway; it did not revitalize south of Broadway which is what we're looking at now.

NN: But today, the District Attorney's office would have broken open that thing before it could have ever happened.

HK: Absolutely, there would have been indictments and a Grand Jury investigation. What happened in the 1960's under one of our most progressive, at least thought of at that time, and a doer type of a City Manager, George Bean, a very much maligned man who was ridden out of town on a rail almost, was that Ewert Goodwin, one of the town's real leaders at the time in the real estate insurance business,