

April 22, 1982

For your
information

The Editor
Peninsula Times Tribune
245 Lytton Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Dear Editor:

There have been several letters by Julie Harvey published in the Times Tribune. The most recent letter (April 21, 1982, page B 6) falsely alleges that the majority of East Palo Alto does not support incorporation and incredibly claims that opposition to incorporation is a new phenomenon. Harvey's premises are a distortion of the historical record.

The assertion that the incorporation ballot measure was defeated by a one-month, sparsely financed coalition is not supported by the evidence. The historical record confirms that there has been organized opposition to incorporation for as long as there has been a pro-incorporation movement. The record also confirms that the opposition dominated community politics and the propaganda machinery for more than a decade until several months prior to the recent election.

There are four distinct -- though not mutually exclusive -- groups who have opposed incorporation in their respective camps until merging into a single coalition following the incorporation hearings: first, selected locally elected officials; second, large property owners (principally but not exclusively absentee rental property owners); third, selected county staff (principally LAFCO); and fourth, the so-called "old guard" power brokers of the community.

The historical record confirms that, until the mid to late 1970's, the Municipal Council majority opposed incorporation unless major economic, physical, and social changes first occurred in East Palo Alto. The record confirms almost unanimous opposition to incorporation for more than a decade by elected officials of the Sanitation District. It also confirms that the Ravenswood Recreation and Park District majority has historically opposed incorporation if such required dissolution of the district. Although the majority of current RRPD officials publically favored incorporation, the Board would not issue a resolution of support.

The historical record confirms that rich, absentee rental property owners launched and sustained a drive for annexation to Menlo Park in the mid-1970's, which was subsequently supported by other large real estate interests. Their annexation campaign was lauded throughout the incorporation hearings and given considerable exposure in the Times Tribune.