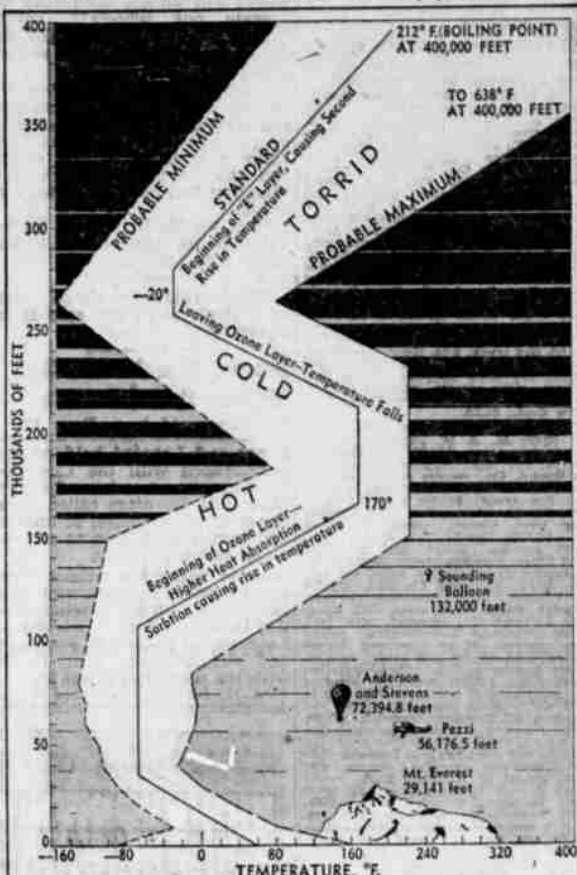


Slash in Federal Power Business is Asked in Congress

By PETER EDSON
NEA Washington Correspondent
WASHINGTON, D. C.—A new drive is on to limit the federal government's electric power business and reduce competition to the private power companies. Half a dozen bills have been introduced in Congress to accomplish this end. Most formidable vehicle is a complicated bill sponsored by Democratic Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma. It has particular interest in the

west, where most federal power projects are located. But in the long run this bill would affect every consumer of electric energy because of its indirect bearing on power rates.
The Thomas Bill would set up a new power policy. It would take away from the Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation its present rights to build transmission lines and make direct sales of electric power produced at government-built dams. Existing contracts and all operations of the TVA would be exempted. But on all future public power developments, the government would be hamstrung, if not completely stopped.
Bureau of Reclamation, Army Engineers, or other federal agencies could still build dams for

Find 'Torrid Zones' in Upper Air



Maybe you think the higher you go in the air, the colder it gets. The National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, after research, finds perpetually hot layers in the otherwise cold atmosphere. As chart above shows, there is a 170-degree hot zone extending from about 158,000 feet to over 200,000 feet. Above this, the air grows colder, dropping to below zero temperatures at about 215,000 feet. It then grows hot, reaching boiling point at 400,000 feet, present limit of investigation. Center line marked "Standard" represents probable average temperature, and serves as a basis for new construction techniques to permit aircraft operation in the torrid zones.

flood control, navigation, and irrigation projects. Where feasible, electric generators could be installed as a sideline, if especially authorized by Congress.

But the building of dams for the sole purpose of generating electricity would be banned. Building of new power transmission lines by the government would also be banned. And so would the building of government steam generating plants to "firm up" the quantity of power from hydro-electric generators in seasons of low water or peak loads.

Resale is Proposed

All government power, says the Thomas Bill, would have to be sold at wholesale, at the dam site, to distributing companies which would then resell it to ultimate consumers. Privately-owned electric power companies would be permitted to resell this current at a profit. This goes right to the heart of the whole public power question—whether any private interest should have the right to profits from a utility paid for and supported by taxes.

The Thomas Bill would transfer to the Federal Power Commission the right to sell all government power. FPC is now purely a regulatory agency. It has broad authority over the sale

and distribution of electric power in interstate commerce. It now approves all sales by Bureau of Reclamation. But to take this regulatory agency and make it the government's sole power-marketing agency is a step which FPC itself did not ask for and may not want.

Rates at which government power could be sold would by the Thomas Bill have to be set high enough to pay back to the U. S. Treasury within a reasonable time the cost of the power project plus interest on the government's investment. This is practically the requirement of present reclamation laws, except that now interest equivalents do not have to be paid back to the Treasury.

Net effect of all these proposed changes would be to set rates for power produced by government generators at the highest levels the traffic will bear, instead of at lowest rates possible.

Rates Boost is Factor
If government power rates were thus raised at wholesale, distributing companies might have the way cleared for raising rates to consumers.

One of the few things which has not gone up in price during the war is cost of electricity. A principal reason has been the competition between public and private power. Nobody seems to have lost any money by these low rates, for the consumption of electricity has increased steadily all through the war and is still going up.

Some private power companies might like to raise rates, but all feel it would be politically dangerous. What private power companies fear is that if rates are raised, municipalities will want to take over and operate the utilities under public ownership. Anything private power companies can do to check the growth of publicly owned and operated power is to their advantage.

A broiler weighs no more than 21 pounds, according to U. S. Department of Agriculture standards for dressed chickens. A fryer weighs between 21 and 31 pounds, and a roaster weighs more than 31 pounds.

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Telephone Strike Without Excuse, Manager Asserts

During the telephone strike, the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co. will "do what it can" to keep service going. Emergency calls will get "all the attention" that can be given them. Those were the promises today of R. J. Henwood, manager of the company here.

Arbitration of the union's wage demands, "fundamental issue" in the strike, is still offered by the company, he said.

"There is just no excuse for this strike," he stated.

"We believe that the public interest comes first. We do not believe that it is in the public interest to give blanket agreement to union demands which would add an average of \$45 a year to a customer's telephone bill."

"Our customers, we believe, should not be so heavily burdened with additional costs of service," Henwood continued. "We could not justify to telephone users an annual increase of \$100,000,000 in the cost of providing telephone service."

"We want wage rates to be all that can be reasonably justified," he said. "We offered to renew the liberal contracts under which employees were working. The unions refused."

"Then, recognizing that the public interest must come first and to attempt to prevent a disastrous work stoppage, we offered to arbitrate the wage issue. But the unions refused again and a strike is the result."

"We are keeping open our offer to arbitrate. This seems to be the only course that is fair both to the telephone user and the telephone employee."

"The effects of this strike on public welfare and security are serious. But we feel that, no matter how long it may continue, it is better to bear the burden of a work stoppage until an agreement can be reached that fully reflects the interests of telephone users as well as those of employees."

"A settlement on any other basis would be unfair to those who pay the bill," Henwood stated.

Italian Girl Third Wife Of American Admiral

ROME, April 8. — (AP) — Rear Adm. Ellery W. Stone, 53, former head of the Allied Control Commission for Italy, whose second wife divorced him in February, was married yesterday to Contessina Renata Arborio Melia di Santella, a vivacious Italian in her twenties.

Stone, a pre-war communications executive now on terminal leave in the United States Naval Reserve recently entered the Catholic Church.

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The Telephone Strike Does Not Make Sense

This telephone strike seriously affects public welfare and security. In our opinion, it's unnecessary and just doesn't make sense.

We believe that the public interest comes first. We do not believe that it is in the public interest to grant union demands which would add an average of \$45 a year to your telephone bill.

Telephone employees are well paid. That's the way we want it. It is to the advantage of our customers and our employees that wage rates be all that can be reasonably justified. We could not, however, justify to our customers, agreement to union demands which would add \$100,000,000 each year to the cost of service.

Since collective bargaining discussions began in February we did all we could to avert a work stoppage. We offered to renew the liberal contracts under which employees were working. The unions refused. Then, in recognition that the public interest comes first and to attempt to prevent a disastrous work stoppage, we offered the basic issue of wages. But the unions again refused and a strike is the result.

We are keeping our arbitration offer open.

We recognize the seriousness of a strike, but feel it is better in the long run to bear the burden of a work stoppage until agreement can be reached that fully reflects the interests of telephone users as well as those of employees. A settlement on any other basis would be unfair to those who pay the bill.

The Public Interest Must Come First

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