

SALT WATER RUINING MEXICAN OIL WELLS

Secretary Hughes Is Unable to Give Reliable Data.

BRITISH CONTROL EXPANDS

Producing Fields Believed Near Extinction, but Best Reserve Is Vital to America.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 14.—(By the Associated Press.) Secretary Hughes informed Chairman Porter of the House foreign affairs committee today that the government had undertaken no official investigation of the condition of the oil fields, and that it was not advisable to make public such information as it now possessed, "which might imply an official guarantee of the output of the fields."

Responding to a request by regulation for a report dealing especially with declining production and its causes, Mr. Hughes transmitted a letter from Secretary Fall declaring that interior department information was not of authoritative nature requisite to the formulation of a report to congress and to the public on a question so critical as that of the prospective output of oil in Mexico.

Salt Water Ruins Wells.
Although the state department was unable to inform the house regarding the number of wells which had gone dry, Rear-Admiral Benson, as chairman of the subcommittee, made a report by J. A. Phelan, a board expert, declaring that in the 40-square-mile producing area of the 104 wells had ceased to produce, and that salt water was filling those now in operation. Mr. Phelan stated that "not a new oil structure had been discovered in Mexico since 1914, and the proved territory, in fact, was going into salt water."

Mexican Reserve Is Huge.
"Mexico contains oil reserves that have been estimated by this department at 4,000,000,000 barrels, but the present issue relates to Mexico's ability to maintain her production from this reserve at the rate established in 1920 in response to market demand. Public concern naturally springs from the lack of unquestionable satisfactory reports regarding the results from drilling done and in progress, and the development of new fields of types that yield the present production."

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Total Depletion Predicted.
Referring to the price of Mexican crude petroleum at United Kingdom ports, Mr. Phelan said oil was being offered in the fields at 35 cents a barrel, and that this was due to the activity of competing companies to drain the proved fields.

"New straws are being inserted into the pool, which can only contain a certain amount of oil," he said, "and the day of total depletion may come at any minute."

Secretary Hughes, in referring to the various estimates of recoverable oil in the Tampico-Tuxpam fields, "the accuracy of which the department could not guarantee," said: "It appears with respect to the subjects mentioned that this department does not possess information which it would seem advisable to transmit or make public which might imply an official guarantee."

Information Not Accurate.
"You will realize, I am sure, that it has not been possible for the diplomatic and consular officers in Mexico to undertake the kind of investigation which is an accurate and well-balanced estimate of the situation. The reports which have not been published by the bureau of economic affairs, domestic commerce, and which contain information not already circulated in the press, are few in number and are of such nature that it would not seem compatible with the public interest to give them general dissemination."

The Phelan report, which urged oil development in Mexico by the American government, discussed the limited producing area and added: "Stripped of all speculation, Mexico and the United States to a large extent, as well, is depending on an oil field less than 40 square miles, half of which is developed, a field from which more than 400,000,000 barrels had been taken up to June 1. As to the amount still left, technological and economic estimates, and judging from previous estimates, prognostications are useless."

In a table on the Panuco-Topila, the Chinampas-Amatlan, Zacamitlan, Corra-Azui and Alamo-Molino fields, the Phelan report declared that of a potential production of 2,875,000 barrels, the output through November 1 had decreased 600,000 barrels and that on June 1 the decrease was 2,200,000 barrels.

Tank Company Seeks Record.
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More Property Wanted.
On December 1, 1915, Dr. Morrison wrote to the board proposing to deed to the board a tract of 79.50 acres, subject to a \$1500 mortgage. It is the contention of the defense that this was to be recompense for the failure of Morgan, former business partner of Dr. Morrison, to carry out a cultivation contract. In proof the defense points to succeeding correspondence.

On December 16, 1915, the board replied to Dr. Morrison's offer, saying that it "does not consider the net value of the property sufficient to justify it in accepting this land in settlement of all matters between you

LETTERS IN CASE OF MORRISON FILED

Record of Alleged Offers of Restitution Complete.

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With the production by the plaintiffs of the original letters written to the board of school trustees of the Episcopal church concerning the land deal involved in the suit against Dr. A. A. Morrison, on trial before Circuit Judge Gatens, the record was made complete yesterday so far as alleged offers of "restitution" were concerned. The trustees allege that Dr. Morrison as secretary-treasurer of the Walnut Grove company sold to the school board at a time when he was vice-chairman, in 1908, a tract of 100 acres worth not more than \$10,000,

and the board," and suggests that additional property be deeded to the board to square things. Under date of January 2, 1916, Dr. Morrison replied with heat that he did not understand what the board meant by the language of its letter. "I am not aware of any matters between me and the board," he wrote. "The offer made was purely a gratuity upon my part. Unless I am notified of your acceptance before February 1, you may consider the offer withdrawn."

Note Is Curt.
On February 11, 1916, the board wrote Dr. Morrison that at recent meeting no action had been taken on his offer. There was no further correspondence until March 28, 1917, when the board wrote Dr. Morrison to the effect that if he still had any "offer of compensation" to make that the board would be glad to consider the same. In a curt note written April 10, 1917, Dr. Morrison informed the trustees that "I desire to say that I cannot make any further tenders to the board."

Defense Scores Point.
The defense scored an important point in the case during the afternoon when Judge Gatens upheld an objection to the introduction by the plaintiffs of a signed statement purporting to relate occurrences at a meeting of the board of school trustees at which Dr. Morrison was present. It was signed by Bishop Sumner and others of the board and alleged that Dr. Morrison had told inquirers into the financial interest of the rector in the tract of which the 100 acres sold for the school was a part that it was none of their business.

The judge held that the statement on the witness stand was the best evidence of what had transpired at that meeting, and that nothing had yet developed in the case making the document competent evidence at this time.

Huge Slide Blocks Highway.
MORTON, Wash., June 14.—(Special.)—No time was lost in removing the slide on the National Parks highway (the Mountain road) after it occurred, which was Saturday forenoon at about 9 o'clock. It was a tremendous slide. It covered the road in about the middle of the canyon for a distance of 200 yards; was from 60 to 70 feet deep on the road, and extended up the mountainside for 500 feet. Whole trees were left standing erect and carried to the center of the road. The slide was at a point which overhangs the railroad.

Moose Delegates Visit Itach.
ABERDEEN, Wash., June 14.—(Special.)—About 1500 northwest Moose and their friends made the trip by automobile and train to Pacific beach, Sunday, to spend the last day of the convention session, official sessions of which ended here Saturday night. No set programme was followed by the excursionists, most of them finding plenty to do on their own initiative.

High Water Prevents Fishing.
WHITE SALMON, Wash., June 14.—(Special.)—The high water of the Columbia, which did about \$25,000 of damage to truck gardens, has also interfered with the salmon fishing. The Klickitat Indians and those from the Yakima reservation who annually visit these waters for their spring catch, because of the flood waters are deprived of it this season.

Job Holders Cautioned.
Warning Against Propaganda Is Sounded at Washington.
WASHINGTON, D. C., June 14.—Government employees who actively oppose the administration's government reorganization plan will be dismissed, the president and his cabinet decided today. The decision was said to have resulted from activities of some employees in spreading propaganda against the reorganization policy.

Specific orders are to be promulgated immediately by department heads. It is understood they will be aimed particularly at bureau chiefs who are said to have been bringing influence to bear on congress to prevent a readjustment of their particular bureaus.

President Harding is understood to have been emphatic in his instructions that any one using his official position to tighten his hold on his salary envelope should be dismissed immediately. At the same time, the president is said to have declared he did not wish this policy to interfere with free expression of individual opinion.

Naval Base Experts Arrive.
ASTORIA, Or., June 14.—(Special.)—William H. Foster, outside superintendent and chief draftsman, and J. J. McKinnon, chief clerk of the force of assistants to Commander Church in the surveying and construction work on the proposed naval station, arrived from Washington, D. C., yesterday afternoon. Mr. Shapiro, chief surveyor, accompanied by his wife, arrived this morning. The men entered upon their duties this morning and active work in the field will begin as soon as the necessary crews can be assembled.

OREGON MINES ARE SOLD.
Blue Mountain Company Takes Over "East E" Property.
BAKER, Or., June 14.—(Special.)—What is considered as the most important mining transaction that has taken place in Baker county for several years was closed tonight in this city. The property of the E. & E. Mines company at Bourne was taken over by the Blue Mountain Mines

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