

# SIDE OF QUESTION

ZEN EXPRESSES HIS S ON THE COOS BAY WAY PROBLEM.

Times—  
I come to express through your my personal satisfaction, as in of Coos Bay, at the very conclusion we have at last had the railroad development was held here during Fair I am glad a committee of representing North Bend and field, went over to Roseburg to see Mr. Harriman and that he with that distinguished man to Eugene and felt some of gratitude for the privilege. man is a great man. Probably most remarkable general in the of that universal genius Roger. I am glad Harriman made ar that he would build from in to Coos Bay when our people ved him that their business would four per cent on the investment. it was a very pretty, diplomatic and business like position for Mr. Harri- man to take, and was a delightful way of telling our committee to go home and attend to their business and let him go home and attend to his.

But what does the Harriman episode prove? Two years ago he or his lieutenants ordered the road extended from Drain to Coos Bay. The whole country became interested because the extension of the road to Coos Bay meant the opening up of a new seaport and development of a vast area of country which must remain undeveloped until that seaport is opened. Was the order to build from Drain made in good faith or was it a bit of strategy intended to throw other railroad companies off the track, so to speak? Certainly, Mr. Harriman's business sense was as acute in 1906 as in 1908. If his decision to build depends on his being shown that the investment will net four per cent, then he either must have been convinced in 1906 that the investment would pay that percentage, or his order was only a blind. Did the committee call his attention to the fact that in 1906 he gave an order which, according to his own logic, showed that he was satisfied then, that the road would pay four per cent? Did they show him that the business had increased since? Probably not, because the committee was composed of men who knew they were simply up against an expert railroad chess player who had this moves all in his own hand.

Now the fact is that Harriman in 1906 did not intend to build his road to Coos Bay unless he was forced to do so by the Western Pacific, the Northwestern or the Hill interests. The Western Pacific has been pocketed and nothing seems active in the direction of the Hill or Northwestern interests now. From Portland to Coos Bay or from San Francisco to Coos Bay is cheaper by water than it could be by rail. From Coos Bay by rail to the Rogue river valley, to any part of Southern Oregon or to the south half of the Willamette valley would be comparatively little and the transportation rates would result in a decided loss to the Harriman lines as now operated.

The people of Coos Bay may rest assured that they will not get a road from Drain unless they are about to be favored by some other combination. Two years ago it was believed the Harriman interests wanted to bridge the bay. That also was merely a ruse. Even the filing of a plan for a pile bridge with the war department was a "fake." No such bridge was ever intended for the simple reason that for forty years the government has not permitted any except a high bridge to span its navigable tide water inlets. It was not likely to suspend its rule two years ago, and the Harriman people knew it. But the demand served to work the people of Coos Bay up to opposition and factional bitterness. It became North Bend against Marshfield and Marshfield against North Bend, all to help out the arch railroad manipulator and over nothing. Had the joke been big enough to notice, Mr. Harriman would have laughed in his sleeve. Pity the people did not call the bluff then and "let the bridge be built." A unanimous request would not have compassed it.

The Drain road was not proposed in good faith. Another thing, Coos Bay might as well understand. No railroad will ever be built into Coos Bay. When Harriman gets ready to build he will not begin at Drain or Roseburg, but will commence just where Graham did and build out. The Hill lines will not build into Coos

Bay. They will first get their terminals and then build out. The same is true of any other transcontinental road. That is what the Grand Trunk will do at Prince Rupert. It is what the Northern Pacific did at Tacoma, the Great Northern at Everett, the Central Pacific at San Francisco and the Southern Pacific at San Diego. The tremendous importance of opening up a seaport will become evident when the first railroad goes out of Coos Bay.

The people here can well afford to help a railroad by a donation of vacant lots, for when a railroad with backing and substance begins to build out, it will force the hands of several interests which have their eyes on Coos Bay. Southern, Central and Eastern Oregon need Coos Bay and they will never be able to obtain the facilities for their proper development until the harbor of Coos Bay is made available to them. We may well extend our thanks to the committee and hope that Harriman will keep quiet for a while. Let us give our attention hereafter to the great

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