

The Oregon Statesman

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"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"
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Bonneville Power

SOME friction is noted from our friends across the Columbia respecting sharing the power from Bonneville dam. When Sen. McNary submitted a bill for control of Bonneville dam's operation Washington state immediately smelled several mice. They had visions of the power being gobbled up by Portland, and held an indignation meeting with wires to their senators. And from far-off Spokane arose a rumble over the destination of Grand Coulee. Oregon, it seems, has insisted that Bonneville stand on its own bottom, and not be tied up with Grand Coulee. How does a dam "stand on its bottom" anyway? Doesn't it rather lie on its side, or on its back, and do that on the river bottom? How does a man for instance "stand on his bottom"? But anyway, there's something of a controversy respecting the juice which isn't ready to start flowing yet.

At a meeting of the joint planning commissions in Vancouver Saturday Col. Robins, district engineer, assured the people that the cost of the power would be not over 1 1/2 mills per kwh. He did not disclose how much of this was due to charging off large portions of the cost to navigation or poor relief as the Portland chamber seeks. He did say that the transmission lines would run down the Washington side of the river as far as Camas. Then a branch would cross at about Troutdale and come on to Portland; and the Washington lines would run on down to Vancouver where connection could be made with the Northwestern Electric distributing system. Another line will run up the Columbia to connect with P. P. & L.

Incidentally the cost of the lines he estimated at \$32,000 per mile. No attempt would be made to gridiron the state with transmission lines, said Col. Robins. He said the engineers had computed the cost of connecting major cities of the state at \$30,000,000. Pete Zimmerman ran with a talking point of \$12,000,000, as we recall. Power will be delivered by the government only where there is a market. Does that mean a present market, for the displacement of power already being generated by other plants; or a market which is new, as to industries? Col. Robins did predict an industrial community of a million people in the lower Columbia basin within a few decades, turning out two million tons worth of goods a year and shipping them down river to the ocean. Such a prediction must have made the planning boys inflate more than a little.

Meantime, here is the rumbling from the Spokane Spokesman-Review:

"A weekly Washington letter, circulated privately to business executives, and having a nationwide circulation, gives the purported 'low-down' on what it terms 'the new bipartisan deal' between Roosevelt and McNary, lukewarm republican senate leader, involving the Bonneville dam in Oregon. Its analysis is that the McNary bill will give the federal power commission tremendous increased supervision over accounting practices and general economic policies of the Bonneville dam project, and 'this is intended to lead to power commission authority over all federal power projects. The commission would become the overall agency to direct the government production, sale and distribution of current. It points toward outright state socialism in power—ultimately.'

"Naturally, the Portland Oregonian takes a more tolerant view of the McNary bill. It thinks the measure 'should allay fears in Oregon that have implied a lack of faith in the good business sense of the national authority. Instead of a Columbia valley authority, empowered to administer Bonneville and Grand Coulee together, Bonneville is to stand on its own substantial bottom.'

"Is it? The Portland daily reveals that the Bonneville project is not to stand entirely on its own bottom, when it urges civic organizations, local governments and 'impartial citizens' to bring pressure upon the power commission for a high allowance by the federal government of the navigation and flood control, an offset against the cost of construction. These local influences, it says, should offer what aid they can to the power commission in making a fair apportionment, and it is presumed that opportunity will be given them to be heard.

"The greater the write-off for navigation and flood control benefits, the lower will be the charges for power.

"So the Bonneville project is not to stand on its own bottom as a power project. Within reason, that will be just, for to some extent the dam will aid navigation and flood control.

"But the Grand Coulee project will be a greater aid. The report of the United States army engineers shows that it is the key project of them all, from the Canadian boundary to the sea. The official report, as reviewed by Dean Magnusson of the University of Washington, for the Washington state planning council, shows that the high dam now adopted by the government will increase the seasonal low water surface elevation nearly seven feet at Grand Coulee below the dam; five and a half feet at Triunty; nearly four and a half feet at the Dalles, and nearly three feet below Bonneville. A 151-mile lake between the dam and the Canadian line would serve as a huge storage basin, holding back the discharge of the great river. The high water season, and thus serving for flood control. Later, as the river ran low, this storage would be released for the benefit of navigation on the lower river.

"It is hoped that Senators Bone and Schwelblich will be as alert for the Grand Coulee project as the able Oregon senator, Mr. McNary, shows himself to be for the Bonneville project. Bone and Schwelblich are democrats; McNary is a republican senator. If, with that advantage on their side, they should be outwitted and outplayed by Senator McNary, it would be too bad for them when they come up for reelection."

The Path to Power

IN all the discussion of amending the constitution to give the national government more power over the business of the country it must be realized that this means a concentration of authority in Washington, and inevitably leading that power on the executive. This makes the path to dictatorship easy. The president controls the army and navy as commander-in-chief. In emergencies he could proclaim a time of crisis and take steps to subordinate the congress or make it merely the pawn to record his will (in some respects it is merely that now). If we grant that Pres. Roosevelt entertains no such aspirations, nevertheless the change in the constitution as suggested would make it easy for any of his successors so to act.

There is more danger of the fascist development in this country than the communist. Power is already very much concentrated. A few swift strokes and our political scenery could shift swiftly. It has already.

Talk of a dictatorship sounds silly in this country. It is here in fact more than we realize. Pres. Roosevelt endeavors to be benevolent, but his mistakes have been numerous and costly. And his successors may not be so "benevolent".

So long as the constitution limits the power of congress and the supreme court is there with recognized authority to maintain those limits, liberty will be preserved in this country. We can in the heat of battle for social reform so alter the constitution that the boon of liberty would be abandoned, to be regained only after prolonged struggle.

There are other weapons than politics to curb excesses. Publicity for example has done more to stimulate higher ethical standards in business than anything else. Keeping the white light of publicity playing on business practices is more potent than laws which may be evaded or violated.

The country will hesitate long before it alters the fundamental frame of our government as vitally as is proposed.

Californians Visiting With Mrs. Zimmer

MEHAMA, July 29.—Mehama visitors are Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Ward of Los Angeles, at the home

of her mother, Mrs. Waldo Zimmerman. Mrs. Ward will be remembered as Alice Wagner. Miss Talotta Voigt of Moscow, Idaho, who was in a hospital dietitian, is visiting her parents, Mrs. Marie Osborn of Omaha, Nebraska, is visiting at the Lee Dickson home.

The Great Game of Politics

By FRANK R. KENT

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Punitive and Political

Washington, July 29.

NO more cruel delusion can be fastened upon a nation than the idea that the rich can be made to pay the bill incurred by government to a

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Bits for Breakfast

By R. J. HENDRICKS

More markers and monuments; Gay brick house; Applegate cemetery;

(Continuing from Sunday.)

"Bacon's Oregon History tells a slightly different story: says Gay and Bailey appeared opposite the mission. (That would be on the west bank of the present Beaver

slough.) And that Bailey plunged into the stream and struck for the mission on the opposite shore, but the current was strong and the swimmer weak

from his wounds and the fact that for 15 days he had eaten nothing but roots, and so he would have perished had not his companion, Gay, saved him. That while the two battled in the water the missionaries sent a canoe to their rescue. Bailey made his way to Fort Vancouver, for Townsend, the naturalist, who, with Nuttall, came in 1834 with the

James Le party, was there and described his condition as terrible. But Dr. Bailey soon became attached to the Jason Lee mission, and there began his practice of medicine in the Oregon country.

Dr. Bailey is classified in the Blue Book as a governor of Oregon. He was one of the three members of the executive committee of the provisional government for 1843-1844; the second one, with O. Russell and P. G. Stewart. And in 1845 he was a strong candidate for governor against George Abernethy, the victor. That was the first Oregon election at the polls for chief executive.

"George Gay returned to California with Blacum and helped bring the first brand of cattle to Oregon—thus rendering the Oregon of that day comparatively independent.

"Alone in the early '40s," said Nesmith, "he was the wealthiest man in Oregon outside of the Hudson's Bay company, his herds of cattle and horses roaming over what is now the southern end of Yamhill and the northern end of Polk county. In 1843 he built the first brick house in Oregon. It was the first brick dwelling west of the Rockies and north of the California line. The brick was burned on the ground. Nesmith had evidently learned brick making before he shipped on the whaler Klitty. Added Col. Nes-

mith:

"He entertained Commodore Wilkes and his officers, and subsequently the officers of the American man-of-war Pascoek and the Shark, and the British man-of-war that visited the Columbia in the early days. His house was a general resort for travelers and immigrants in early days. He dispensed a rude but unbounded hospitality, to which all comers were welcome."

"Nesmith might have, very appropriately, added a good deal concerning the visits of the British naval officers at the Gay home—and more especially about the fact that Lieutenant William Peel and his party were entertained there in August, 1845, at the time they were visiting the Willamette valley, when they called upon Jesse Applegate, who then Yamhill county home near present Ellendale, Polk county."

"Peel was the third son of Sir Robert Peel, then premier and leading statesman of Great Britain. That visit went far in deciding young Peel to hurry home to advise his distinguished father to decide for peace and avoid a third war with the United States. The British fleet sailed for Honolulu and Valparaiso in September—but Lieutenant Peel took the shorter route, by Vera Cruz and Havana to London, where he arrived February 9 or 10, 1846.

He laid the whole case before his father, and this resulted in the agreement on the vexed boundary question that clearly threatened war. That agreement was on the Atlantic ocean bound for Washington in time for its ratification by the United States senate June 15, 1846—and for over 89 years the 3000 mile line it established has been the longest one in the world. In all history, of its kind without a wall, a fort or a hostile ship.

So the Gay house, in the divine ordering of events, was a house of peace, a beth el; a house of God.

"And the divine ordering of events was timely again, for Premier Peel resigned in that month of June, 1846, and came to his death about four years later, from a fall while riding a horse."

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