

Bills Provide Federal Dam in Hells Canyon

WASHINGTON (UP) — Thirty senators and four representatives Tuesday introduced legislation to authorize federal construction of a high dam at Hells Canyon on the Snake river between Oregon and Idaho.

Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) and 29 other senators, mostly Democrats, co-sponsored the bill in the Senate. It would authorize a federal project to take the place of the three low dams in the same area for which the Idaho Power Co. is seeking a Federal Power Commission permit.

Companion legislation was introduced in the house by Reps. Gracie Pfost (D-Ida.), Don Magnuson (D-Wash.), Edith Green (D-Ore.) and Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.). Sen. Alben W. Barkley (D-Ky.) pledged his support to the "general idea" but would not commit himself to details of the measure until he studies it.

Mrs. Green told the House that the administration would be committing one of history's "most colossal blunders" if it scuttled the long-talked high federal dam for three privately-run projects.

She said the chief argument of opponents—that federal funds cannot be spared—"is sheer fiction planted by private utilities."

Mrs. Green Opposes
Protesting that the administration's ultimate objective is "the destruction of public power," Mrs. Green said:

"If the government should scuttle Hells Canyon and allow the Idaho Power Co. to build three private profit dams on sites which rightfully belong to the people of the United States, it will be one of the most colossal blunders ever committed by any administration."

3 Low Dams
In speeches prepared for delivery, Morse and other sponsors declared that the Idaho Power Company's development plan, now pending before the Federal Power Commission, would develop only a part of the river's resources. It calls for three low dams.

Morse called the high dam indispensable for flood control, navigation, irrigation, recreation and for power to feed the industry of the Pacific Northwest.

"Without it," he said, "the United States will consign 13 per cent of its land area and over 40 per cent of its water resources to incomplete, haphazard underdevelopment."

"Aggressive Use"
Sen. Warren G. Magnuson (D-Wash.) said the proposal for private power development is wasteful and contrary to the public interest. Magnuson said the Idaho Power Company's tactics "have included aggressive use of the present administration."

The Interior Department, which would build the \$57 million multi-purpose dam under the bill, has withdrawn its opposition to construction of smaller power wires along the Snake by the Idaho Power Co.

Magnuson said the power company's "underdevelopment" plan would "produce less than two-thirds of high Hells Canyon output, and at a much higher cost, to be used primarily in the company's own service area."

Sen. Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore.) said the bill raises the question of whether the Columbia River and its tributaries "will be tapped for the public or for a favored few."

"Will the power sites in the Columbia Basin be used to full capacity or to merely a fragment of their possibilities?" he asked.

All Water Rights Said Protected by Hells Canyon Dam

WASHINGTON (UP) — Rep. Gracie Pfost (D-Idaho) said Tuesday that legislation introduced Tuesday providing for a federal dam at Hells Canyon protects not only existing water rights but those that may become valid in the future.

"I would not support any bill that did not absolutely guarantee the priority of the use of water for irrigation and domestic consumption over the use of water for power production," Mrs. Pfost said in a prepared statement.

She referred to bills introduced in the house by herself and three other northwestern representatives, and to similar legislation introduced in the senate by Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.), with the backing of 29 other senators.

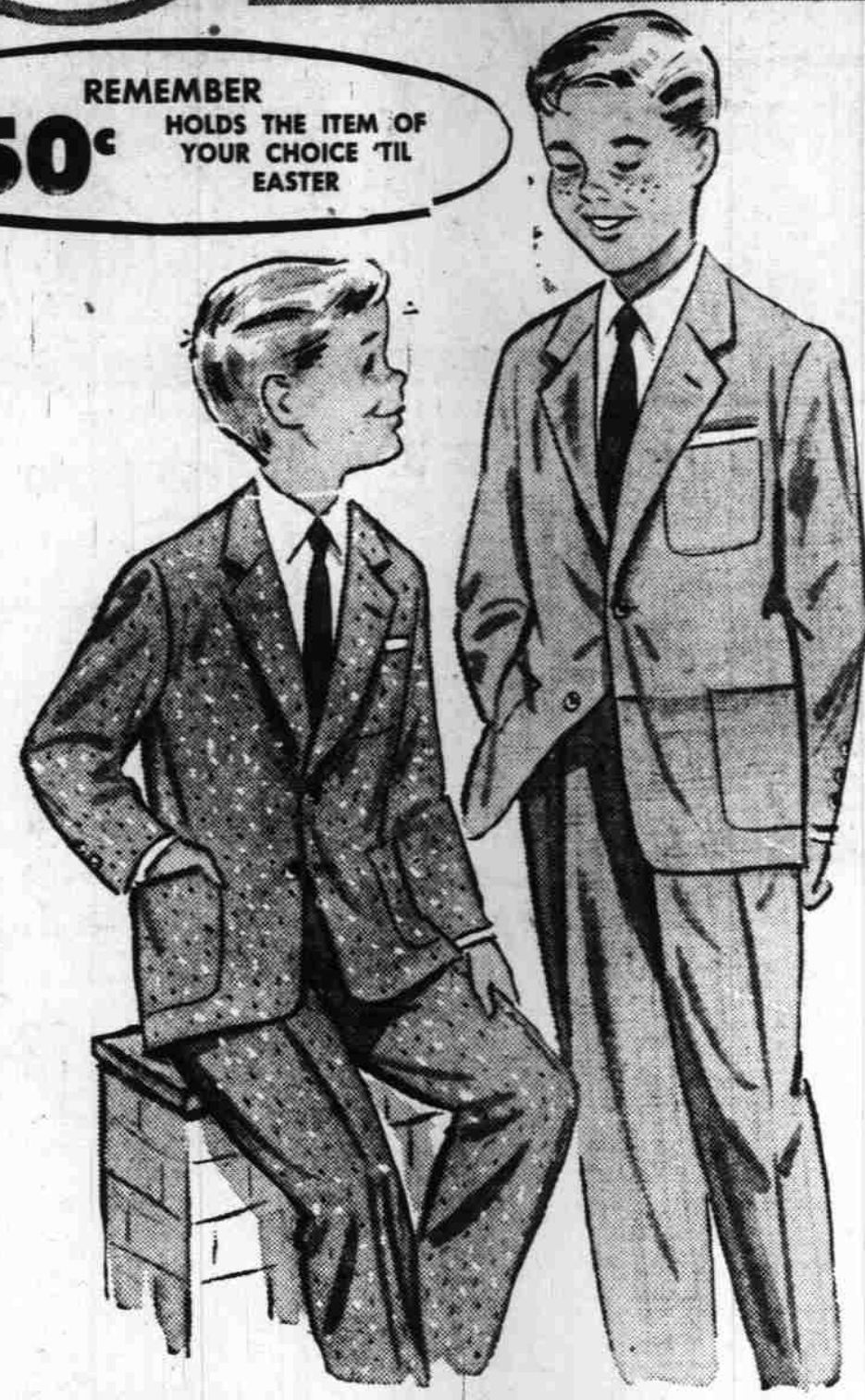
Mrs. Pfost said that the people of the Northwest actually need have no fear that there will not be enough water for both irrigation and power needs.



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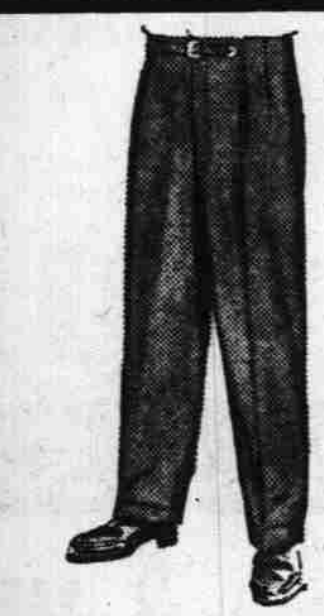
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