

Hells Canyon Dam Ruling Comes as Stunning Surprise to Both Sides

By A. ROBERT SMITH
Statesman Correspondent

WASHINGTON (Special) — The Hells Canyon decision of Examiner William J. Costello came as a stunning surprise to both sides that have made the controversy over a high federal dam vs. three low private dams a hot political issue here and in the Pacific Northwest.

Costello's written opinion, 79 pages of fine print based on his

summation of the facts in the case during the FPC hearings that began nearly two years ago, contained two fundamental and distinctive findings:

1. An engineering finding that the high dam offers a superior plan for resource development of the middle Snake River.
2. A political finding that the high dam can't be built in the fore-

seeable future due to heavy political opposition within Congress and the Eisenhower administration.

Costello concluded from these findings that Idaho Power Co. should be granted a license for one dam without prejudice to later approval of the other two dams.

This surprised Idaho Power officials who were confident of winning for all three dams instead of just the Brownlee project. It was equally surprising to National Hells Canyon Association attorneys who assumed that if Costello agreed with their contention that the high dam was superior, he would reject the private utility plan and recommend the federal dam to Congress.

Costello's finding: "The prospects, as reflected in this record, for the sale in the Northwest of the large amounts of excess power that would be available from the three projects at rates which would equal the cost of the power (6.8 mills) are so feeble as to be worthy of no consideration." (It was for this reason that Costello ordered only one dam built at a time as its power output could be consumed in Idaho where power rates are higher than in the Bonneville-served area.)

Costello gave as his main reason the Roanoke Rapids case, a federal vs. private power dispute in Virginia in which the FPC granted a license on grounds there was little or no prospect of federal development of the river. The Supreme Court upheld it.

Costello said the "similarity lies in the lack of likelihood of any foreseeable action by Congress on the high dam proposal within any foreseeable time, as demonstrated by the withering or the (Hells Canyon dam) proposals in the previous session of Congress, even when sponsored and rigorously promoted by the then secretary of the Interior, in political climates more favorable to acceptance of such proposals."

Costello concluded that it would be a "useless action" to recommend the high dam, even though engineering-wise he found it superior, for in this "political climate" the recommendation "would serve only to freeze the middle Snake River for hydroelectric development for an indeterminate period in the future."

Since it would not be in the public interest to "freeze" the Snake in view of Idaho Power's need for more kilowatts, the examiner arrived at his decision to grant a license to the utility. He added—in what appeared to be an oblique challenge to Congressional backers of the high dam—that if Congress wishes to insist on federal development of the Snake, it has the power to suspend the FPC authority to issue a license to Idaho Power. Costello said this has happened twice before in history, in 1921 and 1928.

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\$1,000,000 Inheritance to Leave Boy's Life, 'Unchanged'

OAKLAND, Calif. (UP) — Mrs. Frances C. Brennan, a widowed office worker, declared Saturday that a million dollar inheritance will make no difference in her 10-year old son's way of life.

The son, Frank Brennan, Friday was named an heir to the \$5,500,000 estate of his aunt, the late Lucille M. Tyler of Los Angeles, who died last month.

Young Frank and five other cousins will share equally in the estate, coming into more than \$900,000 each.

But the whopping bank account will mean little to Frank right now, she said. "I don't want him away, his mother said."

"Money does not necessarily make for happiness or good people," she said. "I don't want him spoiled by this. He'll continue to go to school and play with the other boys just like this didn't happen."

The boy's father, who died several years ago, was a brother of

Mrs. Tyler. The wealthy aunt was the widow of John C. Tyler, a founder of Farmers Insurance Corp.

Other principal beneficiaries include Curtis Brennan, 8, of Inglewood, Calif., and Joseph, 19, Patricia, 22, Elizabeth, 21, and Joan Brennan 18, all of Seattle.



Heir

Marion County Incomes Top U.S. Average

NEW YORK (Special) — A nationwide study of earnings in general, with particular reference to the distribution of income, shows that Marion County has a relatively high proportion of families in the upper brackets.

The study brings out clearly what is normally concealed behind the term "average income." It makes possible a more refined analysis of purchasing power, according to Sales Management, which presents it.

In Marion County, 44.3 per cent of the family units have spendable incomes, after taxes, of more than \$4,000 a year. In comparison, throughout the nation, only 43.7 per cent of the families are in that bracket.

This marks an improvement since 1951, when only 37.4 per cent had such earnings.

Of the local families, 11.8 per cent have earnings in excess of \$7,000 a year and account for 32.0 per cent of the total earnings in the county.

"Luxury Market"

It all adds up to a luxury market. Fewer families have to ask themselves "Do we need this?" or "Can we afford this?" than do those in most counties. For a larger number of families the question is "Do we want this?"

The bigger incomes make themselves felt in greater expenditures for cars, clothes, homes and in overall scale of living.

The plus \$4,000 families in Marion County, the copyrighted survey shows, account for 70.7 per cent of all income in the county.

Those having incomes from \$2,500 to \$4,000 comprise 26.3 per cent of the families and garner 20.2 per cent of the total earnings.

Incomes Up

The changes in the national economy in recent years, as it affects the individual family, is brought home by the analysis. Incomes rose rapidly since 1947 with the result that the number of families living on less than \$4,000 has decreased by 20 per cent. The total family income in that period has gone up 50 per cent.

Although part of this increase was lost because of higher prices, there has been a net gain in the direction of better living, it is shown.

Parents Urged to Help Halt Series of Bomb Threats

PORTLAND (UP) — Multnomah County Sheriff Terry Schrank has asked parents to aid in halting a series of bomb threats which have closed several Portland area schools in recent weeks.

The sheriff said such closures, even though temporary, had cost a considerable sum of money. He asked parents to sit down and discuss the seriousness of such pranks with their children.

Sheriff Schrank said such phony bomb threats would not be considered as practical jokes by his office, and promised to use all facilities at hand to apprehend such offenders.

He said the juvenile court treats such acts as serious offenses.

OAKLAND, Calif.—Frank Brennan, 10, of Oakland, Calif., is suddenly just a fraction short of being a millionaire. He has just been notified he will share the \$5,500,000 estate of his late aunt, Mrs. Lucille M. Tyler, with five other cousins. Frank's mother, Mrs. Frances Brennan, a widow of limited means, says the money isn't going to make any change in her young son's life. (AP Wirephoto.)

Get Power Faster

Argument No. 3: Because Idaho Power's dams could be built faster, they would supply a large block of surplus power to the power-starved states of Oregon and Washington.

High Dam Supported

Argument No. 4: The high dam would be a "monument to government stupidity," as Washington Gov. Arthur B. Langlie once put it, conceived by an empire-minded bureaucracy.

Points to Dixon-Yates

To support his evaluation of the current "political climate" which he implied is unfavorable to federal power development, Costello cited the Eisenhower administration's insistence on the Dixon-Yates contract for private rather than federal development of additional power in the TVA area. Other factors contributing to this climate are Secretary of Interior Douglas McKay's expressed opposition to

Costello's finding: "The prospects, as reflected in this record, for the sale in the Northwest of the large amounts of excess power that would be available from the three projects at rates which would equal the cost of the power (6.8 mills) are so feeble as to be worthy of no consideration."

Costello's finding: "The high dam project would stimulate throughout the Pacific Northwest (a) power-load development, (b) greater utilization of power in industry, agriculture, commerce and community and service activities, (c) new business and employment opportunities, (d) expansion of production and productivity, (e) development of minerals and other materials important to the regional and national economy and to national security, (f) strengthening of the regional and national economy."

Costello's finding: "For the high dam project, the unit cost per kilowatt of salable firm power would be approximately \$23.80. This cost would not result in affecting the current Bonneville rate of \$17."

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MAY 15, 1955

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