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DAILY EDITION

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1919.

AGAINST A BONE DRY RIVER.

On its face the recent announcement that the reservation of water by the state for irrigation purposes made it impossible for the local power company to proceed with projected electrical development on the Deschutes above Bend is merely of interest to irrigationists and the individuals who own the power company. A closer view, however, shows that there is another vitally interested party, the city of Bend. It seems to us that before the position of the state is completely acquiesced in the people of the city should consider carefully what it means and decide where their own best interests lie.

As we understand the situation, the state of Oregon, through its engineer, says that plans are under consideration for the use of all the waters of the river for irrigation purposes, and that whoever builds a power plant on the river does so at his own risk, that the state will permit no vested right to accrue from such construction, and, if and when all the water is taken for irrigation and no more comes down the river to turn the generators of the power plant, the people who invested in that plant, in this way rendered useless, will receive no compensation for their loss.

Officials of the Bend Water, Light & Power Co., faced with this situation, have said that the company wished to do nothing that would interfere with irrigation development and have considered placing their next electrical development elsewhere. Undoubtedly, they were also led to their decision by an unwillingness to enter into a controversy with the state. If it should appear, however, that the interests of the public as well as their own demand that a fight be made, and if the public were ready to back them up in their fight, we imagine they would be willing to go in.

Bend is vitally interested in the irrigation development of Central Oregon. Every plan looking to the use of the waters of the Deschutes for irrigation purposes has met with favor here. Only last winter the Commercial club spent much time and money in an agitation for the Benham falls project and has received with satisfaction the news that a government geologist will come here this spring to study the

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reservoir possibilities of the Benham falls site.

Bend is also vitally interested in the use of the Deschutes in power development. Water power has always been listed as one of the town's great assets. The Deschutes river has been described as having as great power possibilities as any river in the United States. The future of the city has been linked in the minds of all with power development on the Deschutes river.

In short, the combined possibilities of irrigation and water power have always been considered as among the great assets of the city.

Now we are told that the river is for irrigation only, that there can be no power development.

Now this thing is sure: That electric power will always be sold in Bend. So long as sufficient can be produced nearby for the needs of the town it will be so produced. When the demand grows beyond the point of local production it will be produced elsewhere and brought in on high power lines. But high power lines are costly and since the public utility laws of the state permit sufficient charges for service to warrant a return on the investment the people must pay for the more costly service a higher rate than they would pay for current produced nearby. So it is to the interest of the people of the city to keep the power plants nearby.

Furthermore, we need cheap power to attract more industries. If power production becomes expensive the new industries may not be attracted. The state's position amounts to saying that except in the irrigation season not a drop of water is coming down river. That for all but, say, seven months in the year every drop of water in the Deschutes above Bend will be stored at Benham falls, and there will be absolutely none for any other purpose.

Now that seems somewhat extreme. We expect to see saw mills operating on the river near Bend for some years to come. They want, if they do not need, water for their ponds. Bend people want the beauty of that stream flowing down through the town the year round. Anglers want the river for their sport and recreation. Why cannot the state of Oregon agree that a certain amount of water may come down river all the year round? These other interests need water as well as our thirsty lands. Divide it. Let our development be symmetrical and the interests of all be served. And if we are right in saying that the matter is to the interest of the city as

well as that of the power company let the Commercial club, the city council, the Labor council and other bodies look into it and work for a correct solution now.

AT THE HOTELS.

- Pilot Butte Inn.**
N. A. Collamore, Portland.
G. W. Greulich, Portland.
Huston M. Reems, Portland.
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Hotel Cozy.
P. L. Smith, Moscow, Idaho.
Lenore C. Bester, Shevlin-Hixon Camp.
I. Fitzgibbon, Brooks-Seanton Camp.
Al C. Davis, Portland.
J. A. Snoderly, Bakersfield.
Mrs. C. L. Evans, Millican.
Mrs. L. R. Schmorl, Millican.
Leonard Osborn, Redmond.
F. Benedict, jr., Portland.
Hotel Wright.
J. A. Soder, Portland.
Elizabeth Evans, Brothers.
H. W. Schroeder, Portland.
Nick Chase, Libby, Mont.
Walter Bradnury and family, Libby.
F. Gustafson, Klamath Falls.
A. J. Webb, Klamath Falls.
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