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Legislators Offer CVA Arguments

Mitchell Sees Need for Administration to Solve Unemployment Situation

Hall Views Suggestion As Blueprint for New, All-Powerful Agency

By Rep. Hugh B. Mitchell (Written for the United Press)

By Tom Hall (As Written for United Press)

MITCHELL ON THE CVA
The United Press has secured and there are printed in The Bulletin today arguments for and against the proposed Columbia valley administration. The argument in favor is by Washington's first congressional district representative, Hugh B. Mitchell. As senator on appointment by Governor Walgren, Mitchell introduced a CVA bill in the 79th congress.

One may suppose that Representative Mitchell gave the best that he knew in favor of the pending CVA bill. For those who know the facts there is so much in his presentation that is misleading, exaggerated, confusing and even downright wrong that his whole argument falls. His is, indeed, a sorry case when he finds it necessary to bolster it with this sort of thing.

We hope that our readers will save the Mitchell statement for reference as the discussion that we propose to undertake in this column proceeds. Space is lacking to do the job all at one time. It will take several days. Let us begin today with the first of the Mitchell assertions: 1. We have an unemployment situation three times worse than the national average... (and in Washington) employment continues to show "unmistakable signs of faltering."

To make this point Mr. Mitchell has had to go back to the figures for last winter when, we agree, there was an unusual degree of unemployment. By May, however, the situation was not three times worse. Indeed, in Washington it was no worse than the national average and in Oregon and Idaho it was better. At the same time in the heart of the TVA region it was around twice as bad as the national average. Now, according to a recent news report, the situation is worse in the New England states. And not only in Washington but all over the country "employment shows unmistakable signs of faltering."

Why does the Washington representative take selected figures and selected periods to support his argument? The fact is that the power that will energize the industry that will provide employment in the northwest will come as easily and as readily if it is provided by reclamation or engineer dams and plants as if by a CVA. All that is needed is money from the congress.

Private capital, too, can develop power and wants to do so if government agencies will permit. Look at Pelton. In any case, however, power is not going to provide constant employment. So long as weather conditions force shut-downs there will be unemployment in certain activities. For large groups, too, there will always be seasonal unemployment.

No, this Mitchell unemployment argument in support of a CVA is weak. LOYDE BLAKLEY, GAME COMMISSIONER
In his appointment of Loyde S. Blakley of Bend as a member of Oregon's new game commission, Governor Douglas McKay has made an admirable choice, one which, we are sure, will receive general approval. Long time residence in Bend, center of one of Oregon's greatest wild life areas, prominent identification with the lumber industry, in which close acquaintance with the out-of-doors and its denizens comes naturally, are among Loyde Blakley's qualifications. Beyond these, he is a fine sportsman. By this we mean not only one who enjoys hunting and fishing and who keeps within the letter of the statutes; we mean also one who is keenly aware of the importance of the state's fish and game resources and of the need for increasing as well as maintaining them—and who is willing to work to bring these things to reality.

Recognition of his ability and constructive interest has already been made in a number of ways. As reviewed in the news, his assignment on the Bend chamber of commerce board of directors has been in connection with the organization's fish and game committee. He is currently a state director of the Izaak Walton league and formerly held a like position in the Oregon Wildlife Federation. Loyde Blakley's job is a bigger one now. He is a member of a brand-new commission, equipped with new legislation. He and his associates will face problems which have been becoming more and more serious as Oregon's popularity as a vacation country increases and as its own population gains. It is a tough assignment in which the reward is the opportunity for correspondingly great achievement. But it is not his first tough job and we think he will do well at it. Our best wishes to him and to his fellow commissioners.

Fact and Fancy By Ken Hicks

Rent decontrol is becoming an issue in Oregon. Governor McKay already has approved decontrol for Ashland, but now Salem, Eugene and Medford are demanding similar treatment.

The city councils of the latter three cities have petitioned for decontrol, but considerable opposition also has developed. In the case of Medford the central labor council and the veterans council went on record as opposing decontrol.

It is understandable that some groups of our citizens feel the need for low rent, and regard the law as a means of achieving this condition. Yet it is contrary to democracy and American ideas of fair play to penalize one group for the benefit of another. And that is exactly what rent control does—now that there no longer is a war-time emergency—has done.

All other groups and classes were permitted to benefit from operation of the law of "supply and demand," when inflation was in its ascendancy. This was true of organized labor, the farmers and business men. Yet owners of rental property for years were compelled to take a "fixed price" for their facilities, in the face of rising costs for everything involved in maintenance and repair.

One result of this condition has been inequitable distribution of existing rental facilities. In thousands of instances couples today are occupying four and five room apartments, when larger families should have such accommodations. With rents frozen at ridiculously low levels there has been no incentive to move.

Another bad feature of rent control—until congress finally got around to making allowances for improvements—was the virtual "strike" of landlords insofar as renovation or remodeling were concerned. The law also took no account of the fact that furniture and equipment wore out, and that replacement costs were as much as 200 per cent above the pre-war level. Thus many "furnished" apartments—and there is real need for this type of housing—became that in name only.

Certainly money that would be spent now for refurbishing and renovation would constitute an important "shot in the arm" to business, were rent decontrol to become more general.

"What we need most are house rentals." Real estate men will attest this fact. Classified advertisements in many newspapers, offering rewards up to \$50 or \$100 for rental of "a modern, unfurnished house," affirm that a great many persons desire such living quarters.

In the big cities, under rent control, house owners found it far more profitable to sell, at inflated prices, than to rent. That created and still is creating a shortage of house rentals.

Why are not more new houses built for rent? Well, the standard rule of investment, of one per cent a month, plus current construction costs of around \$10 a square foot, just about eliminates such building. A good three bedroom house, with basement, today will cost from \$10,000 to \$12,000, depending on square footage. That would necessitate from \$100 to \$120 a month rent—unfurnished and without utilities! Only the exceptional family can

Seattle, July 21 (AP)—Why does the Pacific northwest need a Columbia valley administration? Today we are considering this question under the shadow of the gravest problems in our region's history.

Let's take a look at these problems, which threaten the future of all of us in the Pacific northwest. 1. We have an unemployment situation three times worse than the national average with approximately 200,000 persons out of work.

Twelve per cent of Washington's labor force was idle this spring, and the latest release from the state employment security department says employment continues to show "unmistakable signs of faltering."

Industries Turned Away
What does this shortage mean to our wage-earners? Last winter, 155,000 men were laid off because of the power brown-out. And the Bonneville power administration had to turn away 20 new industries in 1948 because it couldn't promise them an adequate power supply.

3. We have the second worst soil erosion conditions in the nation, according to the U. S. soil conservation service. Last year 100 million tons of our precious topsoil washed out to sea, and each year the problem gets steadily worse.

4. We have increasingly serious flood problems. Each year some portion of the Pacific northwest is run over by rampaging flood waters. And we always face the threat of other vapors.

33 Agencies
Today we have 33 federal agencies attempting to manage northwest resources. No one of them has the over-all authority to direct this complex job. As a result, we have bureaucratic bickering and jurisdictional strife impeding the progress of our region.

If you were an employer, would you put 33 men to work on an important job without a definite plan and without supervisory direction? We are doing just that

afford to pay such rentals. Eliminate rent controls, however, and many of the older houses now being offered for sale will come back on the rental market. And with only \$5,000 or \$6,000 invested in these houses, owners can afford to rent them at a more reasonable figure. Certainly \$50 or \$60 a month rent is not exorbitant, for a good house, compared to other prices nowadays.

Rent control served its purpose, during the war emergency, but the time has come to eliminate it. This already would have been done, we suspect, were it not for the fact that controls are politically popular. In other words there are more tenants than landlords!

Olympia, July 21 (AP)—The Columbia valley administration proposal is presented by its proponents as a master-plan for the development of the Columbia river region and its resources.

Actually, it is a blueprint for an all-powerful superstate empowered to reshape and control virtually every aspect of the economic and industrial life of the people of the Pacific northwest.

All this is to be accomplished—not by deliberate, self-imposed discipline and evolution through established democratic processes—but by regimentation under the dictatorial powers of a sacrosanct federal corporation, insulated from public opinion, operating without adequate controls, empowered to reshape and control virtually every aspect of the economic and industrial life of the people of the Pacific northwest.

Encroachment Seen
But let's be specific. Let us take a long and thoughtful look at the bill itself and see in what myriad ways it encroaches upon the economic and social life of this entire area and how deeply it affects Mr. Average Citizen.

Under the terms of the pending legislation, C.V.A. would be empowered to "construct, operate and maintain" projects for the promotion of navigation, for flood control, for reclamation, and for the generation of power; for

in the northwest today. To place responsibility and assure direction, President Truman asked congress to create the CVA. He asks this to provide the needed mechanism to make the federal agencies function together.

Record Cited
This fear is expressed merely to confuse the problem. The long record of the Tennessee valley authority is a complete answer to this charge. The TVA has the endorsement of that region's seven governors, its leading businessmen (republicans and democrats alike), its workers, farmers and clergy.

Like TVA, the CVA will apply the sound principles of business management to our natural resource problems. It will be a dynamic, democratic way of getting the job done—the power provided for more industry and the floods and erosion checked.

Instead of having all decisions made by cabinet officers in Washington, D. C. (who are responsible to all 48 states), CVA will bring responsibility home. By establishing CVA, we will have for the first time a government agency that will work exclusively in and for the Pacific northwest.

We who advocate a CVA believe it is the only proved way to make regional resource development by the federal government more efficient, more democratic and more responsive to the needs of the Pacific northwest.

Out on the Farm By Ila S. Grant

July 21—The barley got its final sprinkling last night. The Chief says that, from now on, moving the sprinkler pipes would do more harm than good. The grain is ripening, and the stalks are getting brittle. If the field were irrigated, he would irrigate once more.

The barley field is turning yellow in streaks. In a few more weeks, it will be ready for threshing, and just as surely as night follows day, Indian summer will be upon us.

Last night we pulled up one of the potato plants, to estimate what the yield will be. There were ten little potatoes in the hill. Not very big, but smooth and round. The Chief says that they're just starting to grow, and will be sizable by digging time.

I put the tiny tubers in my pocket and took them to the house, ostensibly for the kettle. Thought I'd look tonight for two or three pods of peas to go with them.

The gophers are wreaking havoc in the potatoes. In an area about 10 feet square, they've worked underground, cutting off the potatoes and leaving the tops to die. They've cut down little patches of barley, too. They must have stored the grain in their tunnels, because the straw was left near the mounds that cover their front doors.

We'll have to put out poisoned grain. We had hoped we could get along without it, because sometimes a dog or cat will eat one of the dead rodents and die from the poison, too.

FOREST CLOSED
Roseburg, July 21 (AP)—Only persons with permits will be allowed to enter the area west of Roseburg along the top of the Coast range from Elkton south to Reston and west into Coos county.

The Douglas Forest Protective association announced today the area will be closed because of three recent forest fires.

as I maintain we must—cautiously reject this excursion into regimentation and autocratic control?

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