

# Irrigation Attorneys Condemn Proposed Water Resources Board at Hearing

## Benson Unlikely To Take Reappointment To Agriculture Post

Washington—(U.P.)—Secretary of Agriculture Ezra T. Benson has made it clear he doesn't like his job.

Benson strongly indicated at a news conference late yesterday that he could not be persuaded to serve another term in the Cabinet post even if President Eisenhower is elected to a second term next year.

"I didn't seek this position," Benson said, "and I will be very happy when I am relieved of it."

Benson quickly added, however, that he "certainly hopes" that President Eisenhower will run for reelection in 1956.

Benson had revealed earlier that he had to be persuaded by Mr. Eisenhower to remain in the Cabinet post even for the duration of his present appoint-

ment.

"I made only a two-year commitment," Benson said. "I had it out with the President and I'm still on the team."

Benson also told reporters yesterday that he is making "no deliberate efforts" to put more Republicans in his department's top policy-making jobs.

**Leaders Displeased**

Republican leaders are reported to be disgruntled because 43 of 76 top Agriculture Department policy jobs are filled with Truman holdovers.

Asked if he planned to appoint any GOP leaders to policy level jobs still not filled, Benson replied: "We are anxious to have people sympathetic to the administration in policy-making jobs. But we don't think anything should be done along this line in a drastic manner."

## Around Hollywood

Hollywood—(U.P.)—Jack Benny celebrated another 39th birthday yesterday but next year, he promised, he'll be 40.

For 11 years, Benny has been 39 on his radio and TV shows, a running gag that has turned the veteran comedian's age into a national institution.

Actually Benny was 61 on Valentine's Day. In 1956 he will reluctantly add another year to the only age he'll admit on his program.

"I considered becoming 40 this year, but my birthday was too far away from my show. Next year it will be closer so we can make a national event out of it," said Benny, a smart showman even when it comes to birthdays.

**No Work After 43**

"By the time I'm 43 on my show I won't be able to work," he smiled.

Benny was sitting in Romanoff's, an upholstered eatery where you often can see celebrities plowing into \$6 lunches. But even in Hollywood the fancy restaurants have home town touches. Between courses Benny exchanged notes, dispatched by a patient headwaiter, with a diner on the other side of the room, Humphrey Bogart.

I thought Bogie's notes were funnier. But, then, Benny is the first to admit he surrounds himself with the best of TV-radio writers.

"People say I could just stand on the stage and be funny," said Benny. "I've been in the business a long time. I know better. You have to have material. And it must have a fairly believable premise."

The age gag, believable because Benny doesn't look his years, was introduced into his

show in 1943. Benny then was supposed to be 36. The following year he became 37 but five years ago stopped at 39, and has vigorously resisted turning 40 ever since.

The joke is so well known now that when Arthur Godfrey recently asked a TV contestant his age, the audience howled when the man answered, "thirty-nine." Even Benny's show business colleagues are mesmerized by the gag.

**Staying Young**

"You should see some of the movie scripts I get," said Benny. "I'd had to be 39 to play them. Recently I was offered the role of a baseball pitcher! And they wanted me to do 'Seven Year Itch' on the stage. They don't think I get any older."

"This may be because radio and TV are like a comic strip. You hear the same voice, see the same face. Entertainers don't grow or sound older to people."

Benny has a simple formula for keeping his youthful looks: Diet, and stay in show business.

"In this business you keep looking young," said Benny, who has the relaxed, healthy air of a big success (he is No. 1 on radio and in TV's top ten).

"You work all the time and are always around young people. Why, when I walk on the stage I feel as I did when I walked on 30 years ago," he said, and sauntered off to go to a golf course.

**Five of Nine McLaren Escapees Captured**

Salem—(U.P.)—State police said today they had captured five of nine youths who escaped late yesterday from MacLaren school for boys at Woodburn.

Officers said the escape was discovered almost as soon as it happened. The youths apparently picked a lock to gain entry to the third floor of their dormitory where they took a fire escape to the ground.



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## Most Witnesses Tell Opposition To House Bill 25

By BILL FORCE  
United Press Correspondent

Salem—(U.P.)—Irrigation attorneys from the four corners of Oregon joined forces here yesterday to condemn a proposed state water resources board with such broad powers "it could turn this capitol building into a fish hatchery if it wanted to."

The House Commerce and Utilities Committee heard three hours of testimony from more than a dozen witnesses, most of them in opposition to House bill 25, the measures that would set up a board empowered to coordinate state water policies and with powers of absolute control over water uses in Oregon.

The proposed legislation was the result of nearly two years of interim study by the State Water Resources Committee. A companion bill would set up a statewide ground water code.

Some witnesses favored the bill as the most effective solution of what was termed an impending crisis in water supplies in the state. Favorable witnesses were from the State Fish and Game Commissions and the Oregon Farm Bureau Federation.

But objections came from George Brewster, representing central Oregon irrigation districts, and from Robert Lytle, representing Vale and Warm Springs irrigation districts. They were particularly critical of what they called a "dangerous" clause in the bill giving the proposed board the right to condemn property by eminent domain even property now set aside for public use. Lytle said such a board "could turn this capitol building into a fish hatchery if it wanted to."

They asserted that the bill also contained an unconstitutional delegation of legislative authority to an administrative body. And Lytle said the proposed right of the board to control impounded waters after they were released into a natural stream was "either very dangerous or a nullity."

**No Appeal Right**

Lytle also questioned whether a part-time board, serving without pay, could do the job the bill set out for it. He predicted that if it were established, it would be back in the Legislature in 1957 asking for a full-time, salaried board and a much larger appropriation.

Roland Boles, attorney for the Isaak Walton League, said the bill failed to provide for the right of appeal from board decisions, thus giving it what he said was unconstitutional judicial functions.

**Could Remedy Weaknesses**

Frank McCulloch, member of the interim committee which drafted the controversial bill, conceded that it may have constitutional weaknesses but he declared they could be remedied without weakening the board's powers to contend with the state's water problems.

He emphasized that Oregon's population could be expected to reach three million in 20 years but that there would be no more water to serve them. Already, he said, so much water had been appropriated out of the Willamette that if all the users took the water they were entitled to at the same time, there would be no water running under the bridges in Portland.

**Washington U Vetoes Hiring Oppenheimer**

Seattle—(U.P.)—Dr. Henry Schmitz, president of the University of Washington, has vetoed the proposed hiring of Dr. H. Robert Oppenheimer, atomic physicist, as a Walker-Ames lecturer in physics at the university. It was reported today.

The university's physics department had recommended the hiring of Dr. Oppenheimer, whose security clearance was withdrawn by President Eisenhower.

Dr. Schmitz said "bringing him here at this time would not be in the best interests of the University."

**Uranium Deposits Said Found in East**

Chicago—(U.P.)—A geologist has revealed that several uranium deposits have been found in eastern states.

Thomas N. Walthier yesterday told the opening session of the annual meeting of the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers that "about two dozen uranium occurrences of some significance are known."

Of these, he said, 10 are in New Jersey, six in Pennsylvania, five in New York and others in Florida.

Walthier, a former geologist for the Atomic Energy Commission, said the AEC and the U. S. Geological Survey have undertaken a systematic exploration in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

David E. Lillenthal, former AEC chairman, will address the conference, attended by some 2500 persons, tomorrow.

**California Woman Injured, Flown Home**

Mrs. Sophie Johnson, 72, Antioch, Calif., was flown to her home city by a Mercy Flights air ambulance plane today.

She suffered multiple fractures to her leg on Sunday, and was treated at Community hospital before being taken to the airport for the flight home. She was the 326th patient to be carried by the non-profit air ambulance corporation.



**GOING IT ALONE**—H. R. Searing (above), president of Consolidated Edison Co., Inc., told a joint congressional atomic energy committee in Washington that his company will build an atomic power plant without financial help from the government. The committee, praising Searing's initiative, commented that no other witness has been willing to push ahead with plant construction without government assistance.

## Diplomatic Break With Russia Would Cost U.S. Valuable Listening Post, Solon Claims

Washington—(U.P.)—Sen. Charles E. Potter, back from a visit to Red-run East Berlin, thinks breaking diplomatic relations with Russia would cost the United States a valuable source of military intelligence.

The 38-year-old Michigan Republican also said in an exclusive United Press interview that the atomic-armed forces of the free world could defeat a Russian attack in Europe—and Russia knows it.

Potter said the United States maintains a 14-man military mission in the West zone.

With the security consciousness of the Communists causing normal sources of information to be bottled up, Potter said, "Our mission provides an excellent means of intelligence."

**Good Listening Post**

"It is of more value to us than their mission is to them, for a democracy can't maintain such secrecy as a tyranny can."

"We can get 50 per cent of our intelligence on East Germany from that military mission."

"Senator, do you think the United States should break relations with Russia?" was asked. "No, I don't," said Potter, "for the very reasons I'm citing."

"That listening post in Potsdam—even though it's restricted—does provide intelligence. While the Soviet embassy here is probably their intelligence headquarters in the United States, as a democracy we can't maintain the same secrecy as a dictatorship. Most of the information they get would be available to them anyhow, even if they didn't have an embassy here."

**He's Legless Veteran**

Potter, a legless infantry veteran of World War II who wears in his gray flannel lapel a tiny emblem of the Silver

## Ashland Dairyman Named President By State Milkmen

Richard Westerberg, Ashland dairyman and manager of the Jackson County Milk Producers league, was elected president of the Oregon Milk producers at a meeting in Eugene last week.

Other officers include J. W. Adamson, Troutdale, vice-president, and A. L. Hawn, Eugene, secretary-treasurer. Lester Adams, of the Applegate valley, who moved to Portland last fall to assume duties as manager of the OMP, was retained in the post and will move his office to Eugene.

**13 Directors**

Arthur Ireland, retiring president and now a member of the legislature, heads a new OMP finance committee. The 13 directors of the organization represent some 1,600 Grade A milk shippers in Oregon.

Among those attending the meeting were Fred Richards, president of the Southern Oregon Milk Producers; Carl Hoover, Medford; Ed Gerhing, Eagle Point, and Jennings Pierce, Medford.

The organization plans to act as a unified group in speaking for milk producers throughout the state, rather than have dairy industry representatives speak for individual groups. Plans for an extensive advertising program were discussed.

Lung cancer deaths in the United States increased to 27,000 in 1953, compared with only 3,900 in 1930.

heavy leather chair. He told of thinking the Soviet Union knows a lunch with Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther, North Atlantic treaty commander in Europe, and with military representatives of the Netherlands, France, Britain and Italy.

"What about the military strength of Western Europe, senator?" he was asked.

"We're strong," he said. "I'm convinced that if trouble started there, we would gain a military victory."

"Do you mean we'd hold 'em, senator, or lick 'em?"

"Lick 'em," he said. "And I



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