

Disputed Al Sarena Mines Discussed By Owners

U.S., Britain To Help Build Dam

Washington — (U.P.) — The United States and Britain have offered to help Egypt build the huge \$1,300,000,000 high Aswan dam project on the Nile river, it was announced Saturday.

The state department said the United States and Britain have assured Egypt they will support the project.

The two countries offered to grant Egypt an unspecified amount of money to help with the first stage of the work which involves construction of a coffer dam, foundations for the main dam and auxiliary work.

In addition, the United States and Britain promised "to consider sympathetically" financial help for later stages of the dam project.

The program is designed in part to block Russia's drive for influence in the oil-rich Middle East. Russia recently offered to help build the dam, taking payment in Egyptian cotton.

Egypt said, however, that she would prefer getting Western help.

Roberts Named Manager Of Dairy Breeders

Corvallis — (U.P.) — Fred Roberts of Corvallis has been named manager of the Oregon Dairy Breeders association, President Vernon DeLong of La Grande announced Saturday.

Roberts has been acting manager since February. He has been associated with the association for 10 years.

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McDonalds Resent Charges That They Are 'Fake Miners'

BY DICK JEWETT
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

"We resent the charge that we are 'fake miners'..." We are 100 per cent against people snitching timber."

Those are declarations of two Medford brothers, H. P. McDonald Jr., and Charles McDonald, associated with Al Sarena Mines, Inc., Trail, an Oregon corporation and a family enterprise which is now caught in the "hot box" of national politics.

A hearing has been called for January in Washington, D. C. by the Democratic Congress to hear explanation of Eisenhower administration officials concerning the patenting of 15 disputed Al Sarena mining claims in the Rogue River National Forest in 1954. Since the patenting action by Secretary of Interior Douglas McKay, the case has been the subject of charge and counter charge between opponents and supporters of the administration.

Timber Issue

A total of 23 claims in the Elk creek mining district of Jackson county are involved in the case. The United States forest service had no objection to eight but contested the other 15 on grounds that minerals were not found in sufficient quantity to constitute a valid discovery. Since then the timber on the property, rather than the minerals, apparently has become the main issue of the case.

Charges have been made that \$100,000 worth of timber have been cut and that \$400,000 more worth stands ready to be cut on the Al Sarena claims in a Republican administration "give away." The McDonald brothers challenge those figures as misrepresentations made in "veiled" political charges. They said that complaining witnesses in the recent hearings on timber management policies set the value of the timber on the disputed claims at \$77,000.

"When we (Al Sarena) first went into the area, you couldn't give away the timber," they remarked. They pointed out that, while the mining law makes no mention of timber, Al Sarena inquired about it at the time it was given the green light to apply for patents. The firm was told, they said, that the timber made no difference.

"Badly Wrong"

Only a little timber, about 2,000,000 board feet, has been cut since patents were obtained, the brothers reported and most of it from claims other than the 15 disputed. The funds were

needed because of the drain on the firm from nine years of litigation in the case. While the McDonalds feel that the exact amount realized from sale of the timber is not public business, they declare that the \$100,000 quotation is "badly wrong" and "several hundred per cent off."

"We feel our integrity has been challenged," the McDonalds said. "It's politics and we're caught in the crossfire." They maintain that many misrepresentations and half-truths have been published about the Al Sarena case.

Coined Name

But the McDonalds present the name of their mining firm, in addition to the records of their case, as a proof of their integrity. "Would people going out to steal timber name their business after persons they most love?" they asked.

Al Sarena is a coined word, the brothers stated. The firm is named for the brother, Alfred, the sister, Sarah, and the mother, Rena, of the original incorporators of the business, H. P. McDonald Sr., and William G. McDonald, father and uncle of the Medford men. The three were deceased at the time of incorporation. William is since deceased. The elder H. P. McDonald, president of Al Sarena, lives at Mobile, Ala.

Al Sarena is a 20-year-old corporation but the history of its 23 claims begins in 1897, well before there was a federal forest service. That year Peter Applegate, Jackson county surveyor, did some prospecting in the Elk creek area. He, Mark Applegate and J. L. Grubbe filed the first mining claims in May. By the end of the year they and their associates had filed seven more. The 10, known as the Buzzard mine, were taken later by Pearl Mining company.

Extensive Exploration

William G. and H. P. McDonald Sr. entered the picture in the 1920s. William, with a background of similar work in Canada, made extensive mineral explorations in the area adjacent to the Buzzard mine into the early 1930s. He interested his brother who worked with him in the period and claims were located.

Al Sarena was formed in 1935 as an Oregon corporation with the brothers as chief incorporators. The firm purchased the Pearl Mining company claims. Eleven claims held by individual members of the corporation were bought and consolidated into the company in the period up to 1939. That year the last two of the firm's 23 claims were located.

The claims are on 454,129 acres, mostly in sections 29 and 30, township 31 south, range 2 east of the Willamette meridian. Some parts are in sections 19, 20, 21 and 28 and the locations are some 18 miles northeast of where Crater Lake highway crosses Elk creek.

According to the younger McDonalds, the claims are contiguous, not separate, and cover a vast low grade broad zone ore body of possibly 190,000,000 tons. Included are gold, silver lead and zinc. There is a 125-ton pilot mill at the site. One mile of tunnels have been made on the property. These with roads and other mine develop-

ments amount to an investment of around \$250,000 the McDonalds said. There is an estimated 67 years production in the ore body.

War Effort Aided

During World War II, the experimental pilot plant was in actual commercial production of lead and zinc to help the federal government meet vital war needs. Peak employment during the war, the brothers said, was 56 men. This production halted in 1945 when attention was turned to securing patents. Twelve men were employed at the site during the past season, mining, making open cut exploration and doing geophysical work.

The McDonalds said that the hearings, appeals, the suit in federal court and the work connected with them have crippled their operation over a five year period.

After 1945 preliminaries in which the bureau of land management and forest service were contacted, Al Sarena asked for a field survey in 1946. It was started in the spring of 1947 and completed in the fall of 1948.

Protest Filed

The McDonalds reported that Al Sarena felt the way had been cleared for patents when the firm formally applied on Oct. 1, 1948. Charles and H. P. Jr. maintain that the forest service had indicated that it would not protest. (The property was in the Rogue River National Forest.) However, on May 1, 1950, the forest service got a protest served on the 15 claims. The McDonalds charge the deadline was ignored.

Samples of the claims were taken by a BLM man for the forest service as basis for its case. Al Sarena, according to the McDonalds, challenged the sampling as substandard and inconclusive. The company was authorized to make supplementary samples which were assayed in three laboratories. Some were spot checks of the BLM man's work and disputed his results, the McDonalds asserted.

They said that the company samples were acknowledged and that Al Sarena was advised that they were being made part of the record. However, according to Charles, a "confidential jacket" was placed on the records and access refused to the com-

pany and its representatives.

A hearing in September 1950 and subsequent appeal both resulted in decisions adverse to the company. After the second and final appeal, this time to then Secretary of Interior Oscar Chapman, the brothers said "fatal defects" were discovered in the records by Al Sarena. This was on June 15, 1951.

The McDonalds charged that assays of their samplings and references to them had been "stripped" from the files, removing evidence favorable to the patent applicant. Al Sarena notified the interior department solicitor of the discovery. When no action was taken, the brothers said, a suit with Chapman the defendant was filed by the company in federal court.

McKay Defendant

Efforts to take the case out of court were resisted, the McDonalds said, because the forest service petitioned that the disputed claims should be null and void. Adverse decision on their appeal, they said, would have lost them the claims.

When Chapman took no action before going out of office, the new secretary, Douglas McKay, became defendant in the suit. Under his administration a new and independent study was made and McKay in 1954 granted patents on the advice of Clarence A. Davis, then solicitor and now undersecretary of the interior department.

On the charge of absentee ownership, the brothers point out that they are taxpayers here. H. P., secretary-treasurer of the firm, is a registered voter in the county. Charles, the project engineer, reports that he has no stock in the firm. The two said that, their father and their uncle have contributed more than 100 man years to the mining venture.

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Blown Fuses May Cause Serious Fire

Salem — (U.P.) — A blown fuse may be a warning of a serious electric overload often put on home wiring systems during the Christmas holidays, W. R. Volheye, chief electrical inspector for the State Bureau of Labor, said Saturday.

Volheye said the next 10 days bring more fire and life risks from use of electricity in the home than any other time of year.

The practice of using pennies or any other means of bypassing fuses is considered an open invitation to danger. Home owners are advised to regard the purpose of a fuse to limit the electric current safe operation.

Volheye said the common elements of safety should not be sacrificed by devising holiday ornamental schemes, either indoors or out. Lighting for outdoor decorations should include only what is approved for outdoor use.

Some \$200 Given To Burned Out Family

More than \$200 was given by residents of the Mobile Home Lodge, 2495 West Main st., to the Ted E. Shura family after their trailer home was destroyed by fire Tuesday night.

William Mitchell, a resident of the court and president of the Jackson county mobile home owners, said that collections also are being taken for the family at other courts in the area.

The Shuras lost the trailer and possessions in the fire.

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