

Floods Expected To Be Stimulant To Congress for New Legislation

By A. ROBERT SMITH
Mail Tribune Correspondent

Washington — Nothing was more certain from remarks of members of Congress this past week as they convened for a new session than that the floods that have hit the nation from Oregon to New England will be a major stimulant to legislation affecting flood threatened areas and people.

There is little doubt now that this congressional session will see a major river and harbor improvement bill compiled and enacted into law, thereby authorizing the appropriation of many millions more for flood control purposes.

This has frequently been a favorite legislative action in election years, for nothing goes over with greater success in the home districts of virtually every member of Congress than approval of a new project in which federal funds are promised for future dredging, levee building, dam construction or harbor work.

Flood Control Bill

The floods of recent months are expected by many lawmakers to give extra impetus to speedy approval by members of both parties of a big omnibus flood control bill — especially since it will not be followed by immediate appropriations which might serve at the moment to increase government spending and decrease chances of a personal income tax cut.

Sens. Wayne Morse and Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore.) emphasized their intent to push for funds for dams in the Willamette River basin, as did Reps. Harris Ellsworth and Walter Norblad (R-Ore.).

There was this distinct difference, however—Morse and Neuberger hope to get federal funds to build new dams in western Oregon; Ellsworth wants private funds to be approved for new dam building.

Ellsworth said he will try to gain acceptance of "partnership" legislation which would permit local utilities to put up about \$40,000,000 toward construction of Green Peter dam on the south fork of the Santiam river and Cougar on the south fork of the McKenzie river. Pacific Power and Light Co. and Eugene Water and Electric Board respectively are the utilities that would put up the private money which, along with \$55,000,000 in federal funds, would cover estimated costs of both dams.

Available Immediately

"It would speed up flood control by a couple of years," contended the Republican congressmen, "because the \$40,000,000 of non-federal money would be available immediately and we wouldn't have to continually go to Congress with a tin cup to try to get all the money out of the committees (on appropriations)."

Congress last summer appropriated a half million of federal funds to get Cougar dam started as an all-government undertaking. While Morse and Neuberger hope to get more federal funds to keep its construction going in the coming fiscal year, Ellsworth hopes to get his "partnership" bill enacted so that the project would be converted to a local-federal endeavor.

Northwestern Democrats, who oppose the administration's "partnership" power policy, are expected to try to keep Ellsworth's bill bottled up in committee.

Senator Neuberger, on another aspect of flood concern, said he is working on legislation that would provide disaster insurance for the victims of rivers that get out of control and inflict heavy damage to private property.

Insurance Only Fair Aid

Neuberger said at present Oregon flood victims can only get government loans to help them finance homes and businesses that were wiped out by the flood.

"The only really fair aid to these unfortunate people is insurance," declared Neuberger.

He argued that a man who has just paid off the mortgage on his house and then sees it carried away by floods doesn't want help in the form of a new mortgage, but rather he wants cash by means of insurance to build anew without having a heavy debt hanging over his head.

Proposals for flood insurance were first voiced on the congressional floor last fall shortly after the disastrous New England floods of August. Sen. Herbert Lehman (D-N.Y.) said he would back a disaster risk insurance plan when Congress resumed action this month. Massachusetts' two senators, Leverett Saltonstall (R) and John F. Kennedy (D), teamed up with another similar proposal. And Sen. Prescott Bush (R-Conn.) asked

the staff of the Senate Banking Committee to draft a flood insurance measure.

That committee, through this past November, held hearings in the flood stricken areas of New England, New York and North Carolina (hit by hurricanes) to gather information on which to act when Congress reconvened. A staff aide said that further hearings are to be held soon after the administration submits its views on this issue.

Most observers feel confident Congress will act positively to write a new act of some sort that will offer insurance protection to individuals who have at present no means of shielding their investments in private property against floods or other disasters caused by the natural elements.

A Nichol's Worth of . . . Comment On This and That



By HARMAN W. NICHOLS
United Press Feature Writer

Washington—(U.P.)—The second session of the 34th Congress opened with the traditional presidential message a century ago.

The leader of the day, Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, must have had something to say. But you couldn't tell what it was from the public prints. There were all sorts of editorials about the speech, pro and con, but no real hint about what he said. No text, no stories.

Like as not the issue had something to do with slavery, since 1856 was working up fast to the war between the states.

Pierce, a man who didn't want to run in the first place, played both ends against the middle after he was nominated. He let it be noised about that he was in favor of the 1850 compromise on the slavery issue. That prompted one historian to say that the President was "liked by the South and the North tolerated him because of his northern background."

Papers Cheaper

The papers of the time were, of course, much cheaper than they are today. For instance, the Daily Intelligencer advertised it could be bought for \$10 a year, and "country papers for \$6."

The going rate now, including the fat Sunday editions, is about \$1.95 a month, or about \$23 a year.

The Treasury Department gave its estimate of what the federal balance would be on July 1, 1857. It was \$29,672,497.78, "including \$12,000,000 which is estimated will not be expended."

Since the clouds of local war appeared to be gathering, the secretary of war in 1856 authorized strength of the Army to be

increased to 17,867 officers and men, "whilst actual strength as of now appears to be 15,752."

The House of Representatives, starting a new session, got a nice build-up in one of the local papers, which said, editorially:

"Some members of the House have expressed their readiness to enter upon this test of physical endurance and at least one night scene may be expected."

Mail Stopped

Weather was pretty rough at the turn of the year 100 years ago. The papers were complaining about the postal service.

"None of the mails due last evening in this city, either from east, west, north or south were received. . . the snow drifts probably preventing locomotion."

It was past the holiday season, but the advertisements still advertised "gifts." One Jesse B. Wilson said that he had a batch of "good" whiskey—pure old rye. Five barrels of it, aged from the years 1845, 1849, and 1851. Wilson was offering this grog for sale, according to how long it had been sitting around at \$2, \$2.50, and \$3.50—a gallon.

The Democratic National Committee had a meeting at the National Hotel, attended by 21 members. The upshot was an announcement, buried among the buggy ads allowing that the national convention for the party would be held in Cincinnati starting on the first Monday in June.

The Republicans apparently hadn't made up their minds yet.

Bob Cook Appointed To Gold Hill Council

Gold Hill — Appointment of Bob Cook to fill a Gold Hill city council vacancy was approved at a city council meeting last week.

Cook was appointed by Mayor Milton Stienmetz to fill a vacancy left when Stienmetz was appointed mayor when Harry Smith resigned in December.

City committee appointments included finance committee, Floyd Lance, Ernie Cooper and Bob Cook; sanitation, Carl Whitford, Ernie Cooper and Delos Walker; water and lights, Fred Lewis, Carl Whitford and Bob Cook; nuisance, Delos Walker, Ernie Cooper and Bob Cook; fire exposure, Carl Whitford, Fred Lewis and Delos Walker; equipment, Ernie Cooper, Fred Lewis and Floyd Lance; police, Ernie Cooper, Delos Walker; streets, sidewalks and drainage, Floyd Lance, Ernie Cooper and Delos Walker.

13-Year-Old Catches Shark Bare-Handed

Miami — (U.P.) — A 13-year-old boy said Saturday he captured a nine-foot shark bare-handed and displayed the 250-pound monster to skeptics.

The 93-pound boy, Tony Belcher, said he spotted the shark swimming toward him while sailing his pram in South Biscayne bay. He said he grabbed the big fish by its wide-flanged tail sticking out of water and held it over the side of his sail boat.

Two other boys came along side and helped Belcher loop a rope around the shark and haul it to shore with their motor launch, he said.

Deported Because Of Ball Point Pen

Washington — (U.P.) — Sebastian Vermiglio, a Chicago narcotic peddler arrested Friday, has been deported because of a ball point pen.

The Immigration Service said Vermiglio claimed U. S. citizenship and offered a 1912 baptismal certificate to show that he had been baptized in a Chicago church. The service branded his story false, however, and put him on a plane for Italy.

The Immigration Service said the baptismal certificate was signed with a ball point pen, something not in use until 1945.

Portland Group Launches Drive To Block Center

Portland — (U.P.) — A group of east side Portland business men have launched a two-phase drive against the city administration in an attempt to block construction of an \$8,000,000 exposition center on the west side of the city.

The group headed by Joe Dobbins, east side used car dealer, hoped to block construction at the so-called south auditorium site chosen last week by the mayor's Exposition-Recreation Center commission.

Site Illegal

The drive included complaint for an injunction against expenditure of funds on grounds that the south auditorium site is illegal, and a proposed amendment to the Portland city charter that would allow voters to decide which side of the Willamette river would be used for the E-R site.

The complaint for an injunction claims the south auditorium site selection was illegal because a previous resolution picking a Vanport site was never rescinded and thus was in full force and effect. The city council vetoed that site.

The complaint also alleges that all acts of the E-R commission since the resignation of J. H. Polhemus are void because Polhemus's successor, Thaddeus B. Bruno, is not a legal resident of Portland.

ACCIDENT FATAL

Guaymas, Mexico — (U.P.) — An Albany, Ore., woman was killed and her husband seriously injured in an automobile accident near here Thursday night. Authorities identified the dead woman as Mrs. J. A. Kaufman. Her husband was reported in critical condition in a local hospital.

Emergency Ferry Assists People Blocked By Slide

Reedsport — (U.P.) — An emergency ferry service was to go into operation Saturday to help some 267 persons cut off from jobs and schools in Reedsport by a huge mud slide.

Douglas county officials Friday reported that a mammoth mass of 100,000 yards of mud that oozed across Highway 38 during the Christmas holiday flood prevented some 450 persons from reaching Reedsport, where many of them worked.

More than 117 of the persons claimed unemployment compensation Friday because they could not reach their jobs. County officials said 150 children were cut off from their schools by the slide.

Goos Around Slide

The ferry service, set up by the State Highway department, the county Civil Defense agency and local industries, began operations about 5:30 a.m. It will

carry isolated residents around the slide.

Southern Pacific railroad said it will begin operating a special train Monday to take isolated children to schools which they have not attended since before Christmas. The schools are at Reedsport and Gardiner.

County officials estimated that more than 150 loggers employed at Long-Bell, E. K. Wood Lumber and independent logging operations will be affected by the ferry. The Umpqua River Navigation company's tug, Cathlamet, a former Columbia river ferry, will operate some 13 hours daily until the road is reopened.

A ramp and floating docks were put into place at Dean's Creek, about four miles east of Reedsport, to serve as the upstream embarkation point.

KEYS STOLEN

Miami Beach, Fla. — (U.P.) — Oda Sutton, who told police last Monday that thieves had taken a pistol, strongbox and duplicate set of keys from his auto, reported Friday that the car had been stolen.

GOOD AID

La Paz, Bolivia — (U.P.) — President Victor Pas Estenssoro Friday credited United States economic aid for helping to pull Bolivia through recent difficult times.

Canby Woman Killed Along Edge Of Road

Canby — (U.P.) — A 70-year-old woman, clad in black clothing and walking along the edge of the highway at New Era was struck by a car and fatally injured Friday night.

State police reported that Mrs. Anna Dallas of Canby was killed instantly when struck by a car driven by Walter Werronen, 48, also of Canby. The death was the first traffic fatality of the year in Clackamas county.

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