

Anxiety of Southern Democrats Factor in Hells Canyon Fight

By A. ROBERT SMITH
Mail Tribune Correspondent

Washington — A major factor in the outcome of the dramatic Hells Canyon dam fight in the Senate last week was the anxiety of some southern Democrats to trade their votes on the bill with anyone who would pledge to stand with them against the civil rights bill.

Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.), who was chief sponsor of the high dam bill. And in the end, seven southern Democrats (plus Frear of Delaware) joined Republicans in killing the Hells Canyon bill—more than enough to seal its death warrant.

Key Post
Welker has a key post from which to make such trades, for he is a member of the Senate Judiciary committee to which all civil rights legislation is referred. The committee chairman is Sen. James O. Eastland (D-Miss.), a leading opponent of civil rights bills.

During the stretch drive on Hells Canyon when the Democratic leadership in the Senate was using full pressure to line up all Democrats for the bill, Eastland reportedly went to Sen. Lyndon Johnson (D-Tex.), the Democratic floor leader, and said in substance:

"I'd like to go along with you on Hells Canyon but I can't go back on Welker, because he has promised to stick with me on civil rights."

Major Effort
Eastland's major effort is in trying to keep civil rights bills bottled up in his committee, an effort in which Welker can be of great assistance to him.

When Sen. Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.) was approached by representatives of rural electric co-ops in Georgia and urged to support Hells Canyon, reportedly his reply was that he would be pleased to do so if Morse would go along with him in preventing Senate action on civil rights legislation. Morse turned him down cold.

Both incidents occurred during the week-long debate in the House at the opposite end of the Capitol on the administration-backed civil rights bill, which southern lawmakers were doing their best to block. Even though it appeared certain the civil rights bill would never get through the Senate, where the filibuster is the major weapon of the minority, it was the hottest issue in the minds of most members of Congress from south of the Mason-Dixon line.

Southern Drawl
Several weeks prior to this, C. Girard Davidson, Democratic national committeeman from Oregon, came to town and made the rounds of southern senators, talking to them in behalf of the high dam project. In his unmistakable southern drawl which he acquired honestly in his native Louisiana, Davidson never failed to point out the political significance in Wayne Morse and the party in Oregon of the outcome on Hells Canyon—a factor which could be reflected in whether Democrats control the next Congress and its committee chairmanships held by so many southerners.

Concoction Served in Ceremony Kills 11, Hospitalizes 34

Bogota, Colombia — U.P.—The governor of Magdalena department told Colombia government officials Friday that 11 persons died and 34 were hospitalized from drinking a deadly liquid served during a religious ceremony in the small town of Pailas 10 days ago.

However, eye witnesses said at least 50 persons died and 250 others were made seriously ill by the strange concoction which villagers drank from a large tank through rubber hoses.

Authorities arrested several members of the committee which organized the annual celebration held in honor of Our Lady of Carmel. Among those arrested was committee Chairman Fernel Mendoza.

Described as Beer
Witnesses said a sign described the tank's contents as "beer," and invited the celebrants to help themselves. Organizers of the celebration also urged the villagers to drink, the witnesses said.

Cesar Vega, one of the eyewitnesses who was a visitor in Pailas, described the effects of the brew as "terrible." He said some of the victims became blind shortly after drinking the mixture. The victims included several boys about 12 to 14 years old, Vega said.

He said panicky villagers threatened to lynch members of the organizing committee. Victims were rushed to the only hospital in the nearby village of Tamalameque, which was jammed far beyond its capacity, he said. Authorities seized a quantity of the "cocktail" at the home of Mendoza and shipped it to Bogota for chemical analysis.

Fish Facilities Near Completion at Pelton

Madras — U.P.—Portland General Electric company officials said Saturday that fish facilities at the Pelton dam site on the Deschutes river would be completed by Aug. 1. A fish barrier will be completed five days later, they said.

Work on the dam itself hinges on completion of the diversion tunnel which will carry waters of the Deschutes around the site while work is in progress. Engineers said the concrete lining for tunnel has been completed, and the transition gate structure at the upstream entrance has been finished.

Meanwhile, the PGE project field office has been moved from

Log Worker Earnings Soar to Record High

Salem — U.P.—Weekly earnings of more than 60,000 logging and sawmill workers reached a new high of \$101.17 in June, the state unemployment compensation commission said Friday.

However, the hiring of several thousand temporary cannery employees at lower rates held average pay of Oregon's 130,000 production workers at \$92.04—the same as May and only \$1.08 above June, 1955.

downtown Madras to a recently completed building at the site. Resident Engineer Larry Kelsh, John D. Dotterer, Ebasco service construction superintendent, and their staffs have occupied the new office building.

Police Arrest Three For Shoplifting

Ashland — An Ashland housewife and two young girls were arrested here Thursday and have admitted stealing goods from several Ashland and Medford stores in past months, according to Ashland police.

Arrested were Violet Lee Searcy, 30, 1167 North Main st., and two companions, 15 and 17 years of age. The three were taken into custody as they walked out of an Ashland store with stolen articles in their possession.

The youngest girl will appear before juvenile authorities. The other two will be arraigned in

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circuit court on a charge of larceny from store buildings Wednesday. Stolen goods which were recovered from the three included clocks, an electric razor, drapes, and clothing.



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