

Federal Hells Canyon Dam Project Dead; Mourners Merely Delaying Its Funeral

Washington.—The Federal Hells Canyon dam project is dead. The mourners are merely delaying its funeral.

Its death is a victory for the administration in the Public vs. Private Power battle, with the administration on the private side.

The victory was assured from the time two Southern Democrats lined up with the solid front of Republicans in the House Interior committee against a Senate-approved government "high dam" project.

Maneuvering by Democrats has prevented a final negative committee vote. But even if the committee and the House itself should pass the bill, it would face a certain presidential veto which its boosters lack the votes to override.

Supporters of the Federal Hells Canyon project were not ready to admit complete defeat. They were sure to propose another government hydroelectric and conservation project elsewhere in the Northwest.

Dream Dissolving
But their dream of a gigantic federal power plant in the Snake river gorge near the Oregon-Idaho border was dissolving.

In its place will be the three Idaho Power Co. dams, sponsored by the Eisenhower administration, licensed by the Federal Power commission. They are the Oxbow, Brownlee and Low Hells Canyon units on the Middle Snake—sites which would have been flooded out if the high dam had been built. Two of the private dams already are being constructed.

The end of the Hells Canyon battle came shortly after proponents of the high dam had achieved their greatest victory.

On June 23 the Hells Canyon bill passed the Senate, causing public power advocates led by Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) to predict equal success in the House.

But opponents of the federal dam, uniting in one of the most concentrated efforts to kill legislation ever seen in Washington, lined up the votes needed to nail the lid on the Hells Canyon coffin.

Although Idaho Power acquired the original Oxbow site in 1916, the Hells Canyon story actually began 11 years ago. A big government dam on the Snake river was first proposed in a 1946 report by the director of the Reclamation bureau.

Apply for Permit
In June, 1947, within a month after the Corps of Engineers announced hearings on plans for

developing of the Middle Snake, Idaho Power applied to the FPC for permission to start a new project at Oxbow.

The company subsequently sought approval for private development of the Brownlee and Little Hells Canyon sites.

The Truman administration's Interior department, headed by Oscar L. Chapman, opposed granting the private licenses. But Chapman's successor, Douglas McKay, an Eisenhower appointee, withdrew the department's objections on May 5, 1953.

The FPC granted the licenses to Idaho Power on Aug. 4, 1955.

The Democrats seized on the Hells Canyon case as a political issue. The controversy played a part of unknown dimensions in the sweeping political changes in Idaho, Oregon and Washington in the November, 1956, elections.

McKay Resigns
McKay resigned his post and, although armed with White House backing, failed to win Morse's Senate seat.

Frank Church, a public power advocate, won a surprise victory over Sen. Herman Welker (R-Ida.) a long-time opponent of the federal Hells Canyon dam.

Refreshed by these and other political victories, the Democrats launched new efforts on behalf of the federal high dam when the 85th Congress opened last January.

They were given another boost in May when the Senate Anti-Trust and Monopoly subcommittee, headed by Sen. Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.) started an investigation into rapid tax amortization certificates issued by Idaho Power for construction of the low dams.

The special privilege, awarded on grounds that the power projects were important to U.S. defense industry, would have permitted Idaho Power to write off, as a deduction from its taxable income, part of its investment over a five-year period.

Fast Write-Off
Democrats on the subcommittee charged that the company would save up to \$85,000,000 by its use of the fast write-off as compared with the normal 50-year tax amortization plan.

On the eve of the Senate vote, Idaho Power returned the tax certificates to the Office of Defense Mobilization in order to "clear the air" so the Hells Canyon issue could be "settled on its merits."

The move failed to sway Senate Democrats, who voted June 23 for a federal high dam, in-

stead of the private development.

The story was different in the House Interior committee where two Democrats joined the Republican minority to block the bill.

The federal dam's supporters will have to wait for two more years—until the 86th Congress—to reintroduce the same legislation.

'Missing Witness' in Sheppard Murder Case Telephones Florida

Deland, Fla.—Dr. Samuel R. Gerber, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, coroner, declared today that Donald Joseph Wedler did not tell the truth when he confessed to the 1954 murder of Marilyn Sheppard.

Deland, Fla.—A sheriff's deputy said today that a widely sought "missing witness" in the Sheppard murder case telephoned to Florida early today from Waterloo, Iowa.

The call came as Cleveland authorities began grilling bushy-haired Donald Joseph Wedler, 23, here about his "confession" in the 1954 murder of Marilyn Sheppard.

Three Ohio officials who helped prosecute the victim's husband entered Wedler's jail cell. They were Coroner Samuel R. Gerber, Detective Dave Yettra and James McArthur, retired homicide chief.

Gerber, who has been doubtful of Wedler's "confession," was asked about a report he already had made up his mind in the case.

"If I had already made up my mind, I wouldn't be down here," he snapped.

Sheriff Rodney Thurst said the call came during the night. He said it was taken by a Daytona Beach deputy and the caller identified himself as merchant seaman Ernest James Kolofolias, Long Beach, Calif.

Nervous Motorist
Kolofolias told investigators in Cleveland three years ago that he was picked up by a man there who acted nervous and bore stains that might have been blood. It was about the time the wife of Dr. Samuel Sheppard, Cleveland osteopath, was slain. Sheppard is serving a life sentence for the crime.

In Columbus, Ohio, meanwhile, mystery writer Eric Stanley Gardner, active in the Sheppard case in an unofficial capacity, said he has a "very important new clue" in the case. He refused to give details.

Gardner and his associates have been in Deland where they said after a test on Wedler that he was telling the truth apparently when he said he probably killed Marilyn Sheppard during a robbery attempt.

Thurst said he did not personally take the call from Waterloo and that he was now awaiting further word from the caller. By mid-morning nothing

further had been heard, however.

Test Called Off
Gardner's so-called Court of Last Resort had planned to give Dr. Sam a lie detector test in Ohio Penitentiary, but Gov. C. William O'Neill, who had authorized it, ordered it postponed until he is convinced that Wedler's story is true.

Gardner insisted when he arrived in Ohio Monday night that the investigation would go on. But after talking the matter over with his associates he said "we may and we may not investigate."

Kolofolias was supposed to have been hitchhiking in Cleveland on the day of Marilyn's death.

At the time Sheppard was convicted for his pregnant wife's death no other suspect who might have been the motorist could be found to confront Kolofolias.

There was the possibility that the merchant seaman might identify Wedler as having been in the Cleveland area.

McArthur, retired chief of the Cleveland homicide squad who directed the Sheppard murder investigation, promised a thorough study of points of conflict between Wedler's story and the way police believe the murder was committed.

'Curious' American
Says Chinese Smiles Changed To Hostility

Seattle — "A 'curious' American who sneaked into Red China three months ago says Communist smiles changed to hostility when they found out he was a businessman and Korean war veteran."

Donald K. Blackwood, 24, his Korean wife, Juny Sukhee, 23, and their son Robert, 10 months, landed here Monday night aboard a Northwest Orient airliner from the Far East.

Curious About Nation
Blackwood said he took his family with him when he crossed

into Red China from the Portuguese territory of Macao April 26 "because we did not want to become separated."

The young American from Cincinnati, Ohio, said he left Korea, where he was a clothing salesman, for Communist China because of "curiosity" about the nation. He said they sought out the Red checkpoint to report their entry and the "why fors."

"At first the Reds seemed to like it," Blackwood said. "But then they changed their attitude, apparently because they found I was in the armed forces during the Korean war and was a businessman."

Blackwood was discharged from the Air Force as an Airman 1C in October, 1954.

Had 'Companions'
The Blackwood family was taken to Canton where they were kept under house arrest in two different hotels. "We didn't have armed guards, just what the Reds called 'companions,'" he said.

The Reds expelled the family from Communist China two weeks ago, and they went to Hong Kong to await transportation to the U.S.

Smith Access Road
Opens Timber Area

Coos Bay — The Smith river access road, a 67-mile segment costing \$7 million, makes timber valued at \$90 million accessible, according to Ross Youngblood of the Bureau of Land Management here.

The road, the last three miles of which are still being constructed, winds along the Smith on an easterly course starting in northwest Douglas county, 13 miles from the river's mouth.

Youngblood said the valuable timber, mostly Douglas fir, covers about 100,000 acres.

Florence Chadwick
Sets Swim for Aug. 5

Weston - Super - Mare, England — Florence Chadwick today postponed until Aug. 5 her plan to swim across the 10-mile Bristol Channel because of high winds and rough water.

The 36-year-old English channel champion hoped that tide conditions will be suitable at that time.

Two Feet of Snow
Falls in Argentina

Buenos Aires — While much of the United States was sweltering in a heat wave, parts of Argentina today had a cold wave with below-freezing temperatures and heavy snowfalls. Points in the western part of the country reported two feet of snow.

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Earthquake Probably In Aleutians Recorded

New York — A "fairly strong" earthquake probably centered near the Aleutian Islands was recorded today in seismograph readings at Fordham University.

The Rev. Joseph Lynch, chief Fordham seismologist, said the tremor had a magnitude of 6.5.

The world premiere of Puccini's opera, "Tosca," was in Rome on Jan. 14, 1900.

Suspect Arrested in Slaying of Policemen

Venice, Calif.—A suspect in the Monday slaying of two El Segundo, Calif., policemen was arrested today and booked on suspicion of murder after telling patrons of a bar that more police should be murdered.

The suspect, John Phillip Petersen, 30, told arresting officers: "I guess you guys picked me up for the murder."

A Lot of Talking
A bartender called police to report that Petersen had been doing a lot of talking about the murders. The bartender had a friend follow the suspect home, then called police.

Officers surrounded the house and arrested Petersen. They said they found some clothing stuffed in a closet that possibly contained bloodstains.

Routine Traffic Check
Officers Milton Curtis, 25, and Richard A. Phillips, 29, were slain when they stopped the killer for a routine traffic check. After shooting the officers, the suspect abandoned the stolen car and fled on foot into the beach area.

A house to house search was carried on during the night by more than 100 officers who set up roadblocks in an attempt to corner the suspected slayer.

Optometric Society To Meet Tonight

The July meeting of the Southern Oregon Optometric society will be held starting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 23, at the Rogue Valley Country club.

Dr. R. L. Stephen of Grants Pass, president of the society, urged all optometrists in the area to attend to discuss plans for the fall and winter public affairs program.

A report on the driver-vision screening program conducted recently by the Medford Safety Council will be presented by Dr. Robert Harland, secretary.

State Optometric Group To Be in Safetyrama

Portland — The Oregon Optometric association will participate in the Oregon Traffic Safetyrama which will run from July 25 through Aug. 3 in the Meier and Frank auditorium in Portland. The general theme of the association's booth will be "It Takes More Than 20/20."

Dr. Don B. Chambers of Milwaukie is in charge of arrangements for the booth. He says there will be a professional optometrist present at all times. Interested persons may have their visual acuity, color perception, and depth perception checked if they so desire.

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MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE



QUICK EXIT—Dick Clemens, animal trainer with the Shrine circus, slips quickly out of the cage in which he puts jungle beasts through their paces. The circus will be at the Medford High school stadium Friday and Saturday, Aug. 2 and 3. Shows will be given each day at 2:30 and 8:15 p.m.

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Plum Varieties Showing Promise

Buffalo, N. Y. — Fruit breeders at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station here have developed several superior varieties of plums that show promise for the fruit-growing industry.

The varieties, being planted by growers in New York state, include Stanley, Albion, Hall and American Mirabelle. Stanley, which is replacing Italian Prune, is the most widely grown so far.

Italian Prune figures in the parentage of two other selections, unnamed to date, that show promise and are available on a restricted basis for trial by interested growers from the New York State Fruit Testing Association here.

One is a large, reddish-blue freestone plum that ripens early and may be of value for roadside stands or for local fresh fruit markets. The second is a late season prune that has good quality, is self-fruitlet and may have value in prolonging the season for prune-type plums.

Other varieties also are under test in the Station orchards that may prove of value to New York State growers in the future. They include an early prune-type plum from Oregon and a very productive late selection from the Vineland Station in Ontario, Canada.

Grants Pass Man Found Innocent of Manslaughter

Grants Pass — A Circuit Court jury late Monday found William Lewis Chapin, 82, innocent of a manslaughter charge in connection with the fatal shooting June 12 of Wyatt R. Swisher, 32, at a motel here.

The jury deliberated an hour and 45 minutes. Chapin had pleaded self-defense.

BIRD OF PARADOX

Paterson, N.J. — Even Solomon would have had a tough time solving this one. A newspaper report of a stray parakeet flying into a local hospital brought 30 letters and phone calls from persons each claiming the bird as his own.

Dental Personnel Attend VA Courses

Chicago — More than 100 career dental personnel from all over the nation have taken postgraduate courses at the Veterans Administration Dental Training Center during its three years.

The training program provides instruction in special problems encountered by VA field stations and a review of the basic principles and latest developments of dentistry. Enrollment is drawn from dentists and auxiliary personnel employed by the Veterans Administration dental program.

Courses are designed to meet VA requirements and include geriatrics, psychiatry and anesthesiology. Novice dental assistants and technicians are offered shorter courses.

Among the participating faculty members are officials from the American Dental Association, researchers from Argonne National Laboratory and professors from the University of Chicago.

Seattle — The body of Anton Boyke, 23, Victoria, B.C., was found in the Pacific Ocean 20 miles west of Grays Harbor Monday after he fell from the sailing yacht Saturn, the Coast Guard reported.

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