

Cascade Locks Chronicle

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Editorial Views and Discussions

PAYROLLS OR MORE SURPLUS CROPS

It was with considerable surprise that we read editorial comments from two Mid-Columbia newspapers last week, both voicing the opinion that a government chlorate plant near Bonneville is to be desired. Both comments came from progressive-minded communities slated to benefit by industrial expansion in the Columbia Gorge. Both opinions are from newspapers, which have been heretofore forward-looking and logical in their views and interpretations.

Both seem to lose sight of the fact that the start of construction of a factory in our region by a firm which had all but announced it was ready to break ground, would be only a bringing of a new realm here—a boom that would lead to a lasting economy—to payrolls which we so sorely need. Erection of a government plant would be of inspiration to other industries—steel, powder, lumber and aluminum, representatives of which industries have surveyed possibilities of locating in the gorge.

"Why shouldn't the public be furnished sodium chlorate at cost from federal plants, as well as electricity at cost from federal plants?" asks the White Salmon Enterprise.

The Dalles Optimist, attempting to sustain Walter Pierce, its patron saint, in his proposal of a federal chemical plant at Bonneville, sights the present plight of the Northwest farmer by quoting a Hood River truck gardener. "A federally operated fertilizer plant in the Mid-Columbia would be a Godsend to farmers and fruitgrowers in meeting the mounting cost of production." The Optimist declares in quoting the truck gardener.

But we wonder if these two newspapers have stopped to think that vast quantities of fertilizer would not have materially aided the plight of the farmer in recent years. What the farmer has needed has been markets, not cheap fertilizer to raise more crops which would be harvested at a loss, then allowed to rot or be carted out to the hog pens.

Perhaps The Dalles and White Salmon want cheap fertilizer. We believe most farmers around here would prefer markets for their products, rather than the saving of a few dollars in fertilizer that would help them to grow more unsalable crops, produced by an institution which would be but another example of that error of the century—government in business.

BONNEVILLE TOWERS

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are being altered to meet the demands of the Port of Portland for additional river clearance. The Columbia towers will become the highest transmission towers in the world, as far as is known.

In fact, in designing the 650 miles of Bonneville transmission line, the largest job now under way in America, it was necessary to develop an entirely new technique of line design and calculation. First a manual of instruction was worked out providing organization short cuts. Survey parties were required to "go to school" for 10 days before they were sent into the field.

Then a short circuit board, really a model of the entire transmission and substation system, was built to eliminate laborous calculations and to determine voltage drops and reactions under different load conditions at the 14 substations. This was done by means of a series of Vector diagrams in which transmission line circuits were simulated graphically. The trick or short step came when a series of these diagrams, representing one of the lines, was rotated and different load conditions could be set up and voltages determined.

Other shortcuts Bonneville engineers used were templates in outlining the sag of transmission lines over widely varying terrain, and drawings instead of word descriptions to describe arcs of land needed for right of way and substation sites. Utilizing a trick employed in building sets for boys, they also standardized units making up substations so they could be moved about to fit the varied conditions. Substation buildings were not only designed to harmonize with the landscape, they were standardized, starting with a minimum structure of one room and stepping up to embrace offices, patrol rooms, garages and storage


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space.

Bonneville surveyors claim to have employed the longest tangents in the world, one from the top of the Saddle mountains in Central Washington to Northrup canyon, near Grand Coulee, 80 miles away, and the other 74 miles long. They did it at night, using automobile headlights and checking it with heliographs by daylight. The longest tangent heretofore employed

was in California. It was 40 miles long.

In short, the Bonneville transmission system, on which 525 men are now employed, not counting WPA line clearance crews, has presented some problems never before encountered. And the engineering staff, unconcerned over politics, PUD laws and the socialistic implications of public power, has had a lot of fun solving them.



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