

# California Still Faces Drought Despite Rainfall

By RALPH H. HEPPE

SAN FRANCISCO, March 26 (AP)—Water, the lifeblood of California, is critically short this year in the nation's top agricultural state.

Jupiter Pluvius has failed the state for two winter rainy seasons in a row.

Heavy rains of this week have eased the power load, at least temporarily, and will benefit some crops. Only abnormal rainfall the balance of the season and unprecedented snows in the mountains, however, will alter greatly the long-range drought picture.

This is a vicious circle, for huge areas are irrigated by water pumped from reservoirs or from wells that catch the underground flow from the mountains. Pumping takes power and most of this comes from hydro-electric projects. The less rainfall, the more pumping, and thus the more power needed.

So the state has daylight saving time as an emergency power saving measure.

## "Brown Out"

It has a return of the wartime "brown out." It has a power director who is enforcing a 20 per cent cut in the use of electricity by homes, farms and industry.

The drought, however, is only one cause of the power shortage. Others include:

The state's growing pains with huge industrial expansion and a sharp growth in population. More land brought into production because of wartime food demands and high prices of the post-war era.

Strikes and shortages of materials that held back development of additional steam plants or hydro-electric projects.

A prolonged controversy between the bureau of reclamation and the Pacific Gas and Electric company over distribution of power.

The state chamber of commerce estimates 4650 factory locations and plant expansions were announced or started in the state in the 30 months ended June 30, 1947. Capital investment was estimated at approximately \$700,000,000.

The state's population jumped 36.2 per cent from 1940 to mid-1946 by census bureau estimates, reaching 9,342,038. It is now estimated at 10,000,000 or better.

**Farm Increase**  
Land devoted to farming has increased sharply. In the prewar years, an average of 5,334,000 acres of field crops were harvested. In 1947 the total was 6,175,000. Acreage of vegetables harvested jumped from 508,000 in 1940 to 822,840 last year.

The P. G. & E., which serves most of the dry area in Central and Northern California, reports that its expansion program was held up during the war years by the all-out needs of war. Postwar strikes, such as that in steel, held up materials and caused further delay.

The stalemate between the reclamation bureau and the company has been bitter at times. The bureau charges the utility has suppressed the real story of the shortage and continues to distort the picture to the public.

The company charges the bureau

seeks to get into the power business and "reestablish itself as a competitor."

The controversy was tossed to the state public utilities commission (PUC) by Governor Earl Warren when Secretary of the Interior Krug asked him to designate an agency to handle additional Shasta dam power during the emergency. Krug said the only basic requirement was that the power be made available to agriculture and industry "without any middle man's profit."

The PUC held a public hearing at which both sides aired their views. Both suggested emergency solutions. A commission decision is expected soon.

Tomorrow—new public and private power programs.

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## Formosa Is Bright Spot In Midst Of China's War

TAIPEI, Formosa, March 26 (AP)—There is peace in this island province of China—and it isn't the armed peace of a year ago, after Nanking put down riots with a "blood bath."

The reason is that Gov. Wei Tsiang found the answer to unrest in Formosa was to speed up its economic recovery.

Formosa has become a relatively bright spot in China's dark picture of civil strife, inflation and discontent.

The riots broke in February of 1947. Some estimate that 5000 Formosans were killed before order was restored.

Then Nanking recalled Gen. Chen Yi, a former warlord, last April and sent in Wei, who once was China's ambassador to Washington.

One of Wei's first acts was to lift martial law. Since then, the output of industry and agriculture has increased—in some cases sensationally.

The Taipei garrison is trifling in numbers.

**No Holdups**  
In Pingtung, South Formosa, I was told the countryside was full of bandits. Yet the Pingtung traveling bank tours the countryside in six armed buses staffed mostly by girls and hasn't had a holdup. It carries about four million yen (\$185,000) to pay off sugar growers.

It is true the Formosans haven't forgotten the "blood bath," which hasn't made Governor Wei's job any easier.

But Wei proceeded on the proposition that if he could break the reconstruction log-jam he would be getting at the core of the trouble. He appears to be succeeding.

Rice production has increased

seeks to get into the power business and "reestablish itself as a competitor."

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200,000 tons over last year to 1,000,000 tons a year, even with a shortage of fertilizer. Wei thinks he can have rice production at 1,500,000 tons annually by autumn. Sugar and coal production also are up sharply.

Inflation is not even remotely comparable to that in China proper. The Formosan yen now is 2150 to \$1 U. S. and the Chinese yuan or dollar in Shanghai has fallen as low as 500,000 to \$1.

No one seems to know just why the Formosan yen has remained strong. It is pegged to the same faltering politico-economic setup as the Chinese yuan.

**Few Winners Farm Land This Year**

TULELAKE, March 25—Probably not more than 10 per cent of the 44 lucky 1948 homestead winners will farm their own land this season. The estimate is made by a number of persons, familiar with the arrival of several of those who drew land.

Last year approximately 50 per cent of the 86 who drew land handled their own farming problems.

Practically all of the land in the Copcock bay area where the farm units lie has been farmed to grain, much of the land is rough and needs leveling and few of the lucky candidates have heavy equipment to undertake so extensive a program this late in the season and they are reluctant to invest heavily in machinery at the present time.

Much of the land has been leased to local growers, already established.

Too, a large percentage of those to whom the land went, live at a distance and are not familiar with farming here.

Some requests are still reaching the Tulelake Growers office from persons interested in leasing units this year.

**RECESS**  
WASHINGTON, March 26 (AP)—Both the senate and house recessed for Good Friday and will not convene again until Monday.

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## Likes U. S. Food



"Even the food in jail is a lot better than England's," Maurice West (above) said in the Columbus, O. city prison as he awaited return to England. West, 34, a veteran from Leavesden, Green Watford, Hertfordshire, England, is charged with illegal entry into the U. S. He told authorities he stayed away on the liner Queen Elizabeth and walked unnoticed past customs guards in New York. He was picked up in Columbus and says he hopes he can return to the U. S.

**Dentists Talk Over New Cure**

PORTLAND, March 26 (AP)—The final lecture meeting of a series designed to acquaint Oregon dentists with the new sodium fluoride treatment in preventing decay in children's teeth moved today to Astoria.

An estimated 200 Portland dentists attended yesterday's meeting here at which Dr. Hugo M. Kulstad, Pomona, Calif., chairman of the American Dental Association's council on dental health, said this is the first state to have made a concerted effort to inform both dentists and the public about the treatment.

He warned that sodium fluoride is a poison and self-ministration is dangerous. He pointed out also that it is not a cure-all, but its effectiveness ranges from 40 to 50 per cent.

Its success increases when diet is controlled—specifically when candy and other sweets are not used excessively.

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## Hearings To Be Held On Coal Tie-Up

WASHINGTON, March 26 (AP)—The coal strike inquiry board decided today to hold open hearings on the miners' pension dispute. It planned a fast schedule as to speed a report to President Truman.

John L. Lewis and the coal operators were summoned to the first public meeting at 2:30 p. m. (EST) today.

The board elected Judge Sherman Minton as chairman.

Minton said the three-man board intends to work steadily through the Easter holidays to speed its final report.

All the board has power to do is determine what are the facts in the dispute and report to the president.

But such a report is necessary under the Taft-Hartley labor law before the government can turn to the courts and seek an order for the coal miners to stop their strike.

**Court Order**  
President Truman indicated at a news conference yesterday that he will seek such a court order when he can.

The board resolved to "work 24 hours a day if necessary" to get its report to Mr. Truman.

The president asked the three-man board to report by April 5, or sooner.

The board named Thomas Kennedy, a labor relations professor at the University of Pennsylvania, as its secretary.

The board members, in addition to Federal Judge Minton, are George Taylor, former chairman of the war labor board and now a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and Mark Ethridge, publisher of the Louisville Courier-Journal.

The mine walkout, now in its 12th day, grew out of a pension fight between Lewis and the soft coal operators.

The walkout closed the industry down tight, curtailed many industrial operations and caused government-ordered cuts in railroad passenger and freight service.

Drugs and medicines cost people of the United States \$175,000,000 annually.

**NEW FERRY TO BE COMMISSIONED**

PORTLAND, March 26 (AP)—Oregon's new \$500,000 ferry, the M. R. Chessman, went into the final construction phase today before going into service between Astoria, Ore., and Megler, Wash.

The last phase, installation of a fire extinguishing system, will take about 10 days.

The ferry made its trial run yesterday, clipping off the measured mile in the Willamette river here at approximately 12 knots.

After final installation the boat will run downriver for service at the Columbia river mouth.

**Fishing Ban Proposal Eyed**

SALEM, March 26 (AP)—A preliminary initiative petition to ban commercial fishing on the Columbia river and its tributaries from sunset to sunrise was filed with the state department today by W. J. Seufert, The Dalles fish packer.

If 18,969 signatures are obtained, the measure would be on the ballot next November.

**US Traces Tale Of Mihai Plot**

WASHINGTON, March 25 (AP)—The state department said today it has received "reports of rumors for a plot against the life of King Mihai of Romania."

It is "taking measures" to protect him against assassination, it said.

Officials declined to say where the reports came from, or what protective steps have been taken.

The 26-year-old deposed king is visiting here.

**RED TO HALT WOMEN'S TRAINING**

MOSCOW, March 26 (AP)—Red star, the Soviet army newspaper, said today the Soviet education ministry will abolish military training of women in higher educational institutions April 1.

Some exceptions will be made, Red Star said. These will include students in dentistry, pharmacy and telegraphy, at institutions where defense training continues.

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