

DATE UNKNOWN: 7-8-47

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GRAND JURY SILENT ON DAM

No definite information was forthcoming today from the county grand jury on whether it is to call an investigation into Matilija dam and its many problems, but Foreman A. A. Milligan did disclose today that the grand jury "still is considering" Matilija dam.

MEET WITH UNION

This disclosure came after a nearly day-long meeting yesterday of the grand jury at the courthouse. In the morning session yesterday, grand jurors met with representatives of the International Oil Workers union, local 120, who have asked for the grand jury dam investigation and with John Dron, Ojai engineer, who showed drawings of the dam and its site and who assertedly pointed out geographical weaknesses of the site.

Milligan admitted that the grand jury will have another meeting soon, definite time for it not yet being scheduled, but he would not go so far as to say that the next meeting, too, will be devoted to discussions on the dam. Indications seem to point, however, to the fact that the next meeting would be a discussion on the dam.

STATE OFFICIALS DUE

In the meantime, two officials from the state engineer's office, are to be at the damsite Monday to inspect the right abutment and its excavation preparatory to giving the go ahead signal for resumption of concrete pouring on that side of the canyon. Excavation of minor bad shale spots have been underway on the right abutment.

To the Supervisors'

Do you really think those informal Monday afternoon meetings you've been holding at the courthouse are quite cricket? It may be true that the meetings can help clear the agenda for Tuesday's regular board meetings so that those sessions move along smoothly.

But don't you think that if these informal sessions are to continue on and on that they should be held publicly? Don't you think the public has a right to know what is done by you and the dam boys and between you and the Ventura county farm bureau? It seems to me that the informal huddles are of interest to the public and that the public, responsible for your holding office, has a right to be in on the confabs.

PA VENTURA.

To Art Waite

I understand so many of the informal Monday afternoon board of supervisors sessions have been held in your office or in your presence that people are wondering if you're a new, sixth member on the board.

PA VENTURA.

MEMO TO BOB RYAN

7-8-47
Why not put a few beavers to work in our mountain streams? They can build good check dams free of cost. Anyhow, here are some interesting facts bearing on the subject, from the Santa Rosa Republican:

Beavers, of which there are several colonies in the San Joaquin valley, are now being trapped by the state fish and game commission for planting in various parts of California. We would like to see some of these busy little builders given a start at some good spot on the upper reaches of the Russian river and on some of the other living streams of Sonoma county.

The beavers construct checkdams by gnawing down saplings and small trees so they will fall into the water and fill in with sticks, mud and other available materials. Their houses are built in these dams and the impounded water above the dams provides a breeding place for fish and foods such as beavers like.

The dams thrown up by beavers hold the water back, spreading it and permitting it to seep down through the streambed at a slow rate, a situation said by agricultural experts to be greatly desired.

Many in the Santa Rosa valley have long advocated the construction of checkdams in the river to prevent the rush of flood water down to the sea. It is expected that some day we shall have to spend quite a lot of money in such developments. If we could get the work started by the simple act of planting beavers along the stream, it would seem to be a very desirable experiment.

It would seem to us that beaver colonies would be especially effective in the upper waters of the Matilija, Santa Ana, and Coyote creeks. Zone 1 is now building a storage dam on the Matilija and is soon to begin work on a second one below the juncture of the Coyote and Santa Ana. A series of beaver dams above the reservoirs thus to be created would operate to lessen the silting of those lakes and to produce a more even flow into them after the winter rains.

Wednesday, July 9, 1947

Voice Loud, Language Strong:

Dam Contractors Rocked By Charges

Voices became loud and the language strong yesterday afternoon when the county flood zone supervisors' session was taken over by charges and allegations that payroll padding was prevalent on the Matilija dam project.

The fireworks, arriving a little late for the Fourth of July, was set off by Cliff Mace, president of the Ventura County Building Trades council, when he said that the contractor on the job was creating new and unheard of job classifications and was guilty of discrimination among workmen.

HALLOCK REPLIES

His allegations were answered by John Hallock, project manager for the county's engineer on the job, the Donald R. Warren company. Hallock burned slowly during the early assault by Mace and finally exploded, challenging the labor representative to prove his assertions.

Carpenters walked off the job early last week, causing operations to be partially shut down. Mace said the men were not on strike but had walked off on their own accord because of what they termed unsafe working conditions and discriminatory action on the part of the contractor.

"There may be a picket line slapped on the job if it is not cleared up," Mace threatened.

Mace said that the contractor was hiring men to operate special equipment and was paying these men for doing special work while actually they were working mostly as laborers. He charged also that some crafts were being paid under

a new wage scale that was not to go into effect for the entire job for 18 days.

VOICES CHARGE

Mace said that there were more jackhammer men listed on the payroll than the contractor had jackhammers. Hallock said Mace apparently didn't know much about rock work. Mace said he knew plenty about rock work and that he knew when payrolls were being padded.

"You've made so many allegations this afternoon without the least bit of proof that I'm asking you now to prove any one of them," Hallock challenged Mace. Mace said he could prove them.

Not only did Mace say he could prove them, but went further to say that he intended to have a man keep a check on the job in the future to be sure that no more workmen were allowed to draw pay for a classification in which they didn't work. He admitted, however, that it would be difficult to get any workman to admit that he had been paid for work he didn't do in the past.

MEETING PLANNED

The argument went back and forth until early evening when Mace finally bid the board good-bye with word that a secret meeting was slated for later in the week when the men would decide what action to take. He suggested that the board look into the charges.

Meanwhile, all of the workmen but the carpenters reportedly have returned to work but carpenters are needed to build forms for concrete pouring, thus blocking progress on the job until the matter is settled.

The board took no action on Mace's charges of past payroll padding, but said a check would be kept in the future. District Attorney M. Arthur Waite explained that the one of the purposes of hiring an engineer on the job was to keep a check on such matters and that he couldn't see how the county could very well hire another man to play watchdog over the engineer.

BOARD OKEHS ANOTHER DAM PAYMENT

The county flood zone supervisors yesterday authorized payment of \$90,728.80 to Atkinson Kier Bressi and Bevanda for work completed thus far on Matilija dam, bringing the total payment to date to \$1,213,466.60.

In an estimate filed with the board by the Donald R. Warren company engineers, the dam costs thus far were broken down as follows:

Diversion of river, \$7,500; excavation of 86,605 cubic yards of material, \$309,183.42; drill grouting, \$5,988; pressure grouting, \$3,495.75; grout pipe, \$9,258.31; mass concrete \$862,795 (for 5,760 cubic yards); copper sealing strips, \$2,783; galvanized sealing strips, \$3,688; installations, \$8,626; extra work order under block N \$9,853 (out of \$58,000 allotted); extra work order for excavation on right abutment, \$5,574 (out of \$12,000 allotted); extra work order for excavation on left abutment, \$73,884 (out of \$92,000 allotted); slip joint, \$1,319,164; minus 10 percent retained by the flood zone for contingencies.

The Ventura (Calif.) County Star-Expre. Press

Zone 1 Manager Examination Authorized

A civil service examination for the position of manager of zone one of the county flood district was authorized by the flood zone supervisors yesterday afternoon upon motion by Supervisor Russell Cook.

The board voted to have the civil service personnel director prepare a recommendation for the job.

In other flood zone activity, the board voted to recommend to the advisors of zone two that the drainage problem surrounding the city of Oxnard be investigated

and a recommendation returned. A letter was read from State Engineer Edward Hyatt authorizing payment of \$12,000 for re-vent work in the Santa Clara ri-

ver, with \$3,000 additional for engineering and contingencies. The board also authorized the district attorney to proceed with negotiations to obtain additional land below the dam for dumping of surplus excavated materials.

District Attorney M. Arthur Waite said that these negotiations were in progress with Joseph P. Levy, owner of the land in question and that if a satisfactory deal could not be made, condemnation would have to follow. In the meantime, he said, he had been notified that \$100 per month rental would be charged for use of the land.

ZONE ONE MANAGERIAL EXAMINATION AUG. 20

Supervisors of the Ventura county flood control district adopted specifications for the zone one managerial post and set Aug. 20 as the date for competitive examination for the job when they met yesterday afternoon at the courthouse.

This marks the second time the job has been set up; nearly a year ago examinations were given and three top contestants were chosen, but the board bogged down in making the final managerial selection. As an upshot, most of the duties of the proposed post were dumped in the lap of already-busy County Surveyor Robert Ryan.

DUTIES TOLD

Specification now require that the manager direct the administration of the business office and act as administrator of all zone one affairs, supervise the maintenance of dams, reservoirs and pipe lines, enforce rules and regulations of the zone, supervise the sale of water, collection of monthly charges and meter records, prepare the annual operating budget of the zone, keep abreast with legislative and fiscal enactments which affect the district, supervise negotiations for acquiring lands, easements and rights of way and perform all other acts necessary or proper to accomplish the purposes of the county flood control acts.

To qualify for the job, which is a wage bracket of from \$325

to \$425 with the starting salary being \$388 a month, persons must be high school graduates with 10 years of experience in administrative matters or university graduates with five years experience or an equivalent of education and experience. Three years of the experience must have been within the past 10 years.

QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications say special experience in responsible supervisory capacity involving the supervision of a number of employes, the responsibility for coordinating work with that of other departments, experience in sale and purchase of real property and obtaining easements and rights of way and in the conservation and distribution of water is preferred. It also is suggested that applicants be able to size up situations and persons accurately, to adopt an effective course of action, to get along well with others and to have the ability to write clear and concise reports.

Supervisors, in adopting the specifications presented by Personnel Director Mahlon Turner — they thought earlier drafts were too rigid — said they thought someone besides God, All Mighty, would be able to apply for the job now.

PROTEST VOICED

At the meeting, supervisors also accepted an option to purchase the J. E. Cooke holdings in the Asitas dam area for \$19,230 with salvage rights of up to \$2,000 retained by the Cookes. They approved the deal after first hesitating because of the absence of Sanford Butts and Russell Cook. Supervisors also agreed to purchase for \$50 holdings in the Matilija dam area owned by Mrs. Minnie Harris.

A protest entered by Joseph P. Levy against county appropriation of surplus water from Matilija dam was filed.

July 11, 1947

Vol. 72, No. 208

A MANAGER FOR ZONE 1

WHILE standing around waiting for a county official to bring in some information on another subject, the county supervisors on Tuesday interrupted their conversation to pass a member's suddenly proposed motion authorizing a civil service examination for a position of manager for the Zone 1 water project.

Zone 1 certainly needs a business manager. It has needed one from the start, a year and a half ago. We profoundly hope that this casual action may result in recruiting a good one.

However, something more than merely posting a civil service examination notice will be required to enlist the right man for this important job. To obtain an experienced, capable, big-calibre manager for this multi-million dollar enterprise, somebody who knows how will have to seek out such a person. You do not ordinarily procure specialized executives by opening the lists to Tom, Dick, and Harry. That sort of personnel is not customarily loitering around courthouse hallways.

Perhaps the supervisors have this very thought in mind. Perhaps they are planning to go to the places where competent water project executives are to be had and seek one out. Perhaps, indeed, they already have done something along this line; perhaps they have some likely applicant lined up. We hope so, but we wonder. One never knows, or is able to guess about these matters, because of the board's practice of secret meetings.

A weak man of mediocre talents, lacking experience, might muddle Zone 1's affairs even beyond the point where they are now muddled. A resourceful and able executive might straighten them out amazingly. Here's hoping one of the latter category will somehow be installed.

PAY PADDING CHARGED

PROOF DEMANDED IN SHARP CHALLENGE BY DAM MANAGER

Union Official Says Will Check Information Of Peter Noble,
Employee At Matilija Dam Which Is On Cost-Plus Basis So
That Any "Payroll Padding" Might Hit Taxpayers

Whether there has been "payroll padding" at the Matilija Dam remained a moot question today as Union officials and Dam officials went to the records. This was one of the results of the meeting this week of the Ventura Board of Supervisors at which an additional \$90,727 was authorized for payment for work done during the month of June. The Board also announced receipt of word from the State that Blocks M and N had been protected sufficiently so that it is safe to continue concrete pouring. It was at those blocks that soft material had been found and work halted some time ago.

The charge of "payroll padding" was hurled by Cliff Mace, president of the Ventura County Building Trades Council in connection with the alleged payment of the wage scale of air hammer men for work done as muckers. When challenged by John Hallock, project manager for the Don Warren Engineering Company, Mace explained that perhaps he should have said "irregularities." He said he would put on a man of his own on the check to confirm information he had received from Peter Noble, employed at the Dam.

District Attorney Arthur Waite said he had talked with Mace prior to the Supervisors' meeting, and had looked into the situation, but at first glance found no padding.

It had been explained that the job is a cost-plus job in which the company that pays the workers receives a percentage for itself on top of the actual cost. This would mean that the more money spent, the more the contractor would get, and the more the taxpayers would pay.

The report was circulated that air hammer men were ordered, and that they worked part of their time as air hammer work and part of their time as "muckers" (shoveling) which is a lower paid classification. To pay

(Continued on Page 12)

BERKEY AID SOUGHT AGAIN

Dr. Charles Berkey, geological consultant, is sought by the supervisors of the Ventura county flood control district to survey the apron site at Matilija dam and the floor of the dam.

That was revealed this morning when the supervisors authorized County Surveyor Robert Ryan to contact Dr. Berkey and see if he will be available to take on the consultant job.

CALLED PREVIOUSLY

Dr. Berkey was called in this spring on Matilija dam to serve as the county's geological consultant after a bad seam was discovered on the left abutment. Percy Dennis, chairman of the flood control district, said today that at that time Dr. Berkey wanted to examine the dam floor down to bed rock but work had not progressed sufficiently for him to do so. With surface material removed from the dam floor, Dr. Berkey will be able now to make a thorough examination, Dennis said.

AUTHORIZE FUNDS

The motion to contact Dr. Berkey was made by Robert Lefever and seconded by Sanford Butts.

Supervisors also authorized extra work order No. 8 which allows \$7,000 to cover electrical work which was omitted from the original Matilija dam contract because details of gate and valve operation mechanics were not available. The work will be done on a cost plus basis.

Union Labor News
**Carpenters
Remain Away
From Dam Job**

Whether carpenters return to work on Matilija Dam before Aug. 1, when the builder must pay increases provided for in the new Associated General Contractors' agreement for Southern California, depends on the craftsmen, themselves, and not on any "orders" from the local union or from the Brotherhood's general president, Wm. L. Hutcheson.

Cliff Mace, president of the Ventura Building and Construction Trades Council said last week this is what the whole controversy boils down to because the men are not going to labor for Atkinson Kier Bressi and Bevanda at the rate of \$1.65 an hour when they can collect \$1.90 on any other construction job in the county.

Mace made his point by revealing that out of 176 mechanics dispatched to the job, only 25 have remained since the dam was started.

Nevertheless, the council president wired Hutcheson at his Indianapolis headquarters that the union "will furnish carpenters as soon as and as fast as possible." The telegram was sent in reply to one received from the general president which stated: "Members are to be sent back, and if any individual does not return to work, the employer is privileged to employ any member he desires."

About the same language was contained in another wire—one received from J. Stewart, contractor attorney, Los Angeles, on Wednesday of last week (July 16). This one read: "Unless I receive notice that your men are back to work by 5 p.m. today, we will require other building and construction trades to furnish men to us for performance of Matilija Dam job."

There appears to be a similarity and a difference in these telegrams.

Both wires convey the impression

"strike" *at present we Americans are*

whose debt our people are

whose balance is still \$

At present we Americans are

Debt Loaded

be penalized as a direct result

war? Is there no limit to how

the countries against whom

pay too large indemnities. H

tally arguing that these poor

**VENTURA RIVER
FUNDS VOTED**

Before adjourning, congress voted \$500,000 for construction work on the Ventura river, the United Press reported from Washington, D. C., today.

PART OF HUGE FUND

The money was part of a \$253,550,825 fund voted by congress to the army engineers for new construction on flood control projects in fiscal 1948. The federal money will be used on Ventura river revetment work, a program long planned to curb flood difficulties on the river but held back during the war years. The office of the chief of engineers, U.S. war department, civil works division, will have authority over the work.

The plan of improvement provides for construction of a levee along the left bank of the Ventura river from Gosnell hill to the ocean. The levee is needed to prevent further floods which could damage property and even take lives. Damage has occurred in the past because the river bank has insufficient slope to handle floods of magnitude.

PROJECT NEEDED

The project was recommended after a study by the U.S. engineers. Supervisors this year sent a letter to congress asking for the construction funds. They pointed out in their resolution that the project had been authorized but no construction funds appropriated. The \$500,000, however, will not cover the entire cost of the project.

By January of this year, cross sections had been taken at 500 foot intervals along the tentative alignment of the levee. Preliminary test borings had been made and work had been done on the design.

Grand Jury Probe Favored By Lefever

Another long afternoon of wading through confusing and conflicting documents, letters and reports was spent by the Ventura county flood control district supervisors yesterday with Matilija dam and its multifarious problems holding the limelight.

Director Robert Lefever prefaced the afternoon's session by urging that the recommendation of the Oil Workers union asking a grand jury investigation of the preparation for the dam be instigated. "If people think there is fraud in any of the Matilija dam dealings, let's bring it out," Lefever urged the board.

HITS AT UNION

"They (the union) keep stirring things up until people think there is something crooked," Lefever continued. "I think we should go on record urging the grand jury to follow the union's recommendation."

District Attorney M. Arthur

Between
MAY 24 &
July 31 1947

Lefever Favors Grand Jury Probe

(Continued from page 1)

Waite said he felt the grand jury would proceed with such an investigation if and when it appeared justified and would hear any testimony that might be offered.

Chairman Percy Dennis ended the discussion by stating "They (both the union and the grand jury) know where we are if they want us."

WARREN WRITES

A lengthy letter from the Donald R. Warren engineers, employed by zone one on Matilija dam, recommended denial of several claims by the contractors, Atkinson Kier Bressi and Bevanda for payments over and above the contract price. Warren's letter indicated that only where the contractor was required to use methods, material or equipment other than originally planned was additional payment required.

Thus far, the letter claimed, there has been no change in the dam construction that has affected the scope of work.

Warren's letter, however, recommended that the contractor be granted additional money for that extra concrete material used in pouring the gravity section to a greater depth than was originally believed necessary. It also pointed out that the contractor should be reimbursed for "certain standby costs."

The contractors, in a letter signed by John Kier, stated that the firm had been informed indirectly that certain changes were being contemplated in the plans for completion of the dam after dis-

covery of clay under the left abutment. These changes, the letter continued, apparently were decided upon by a number of "experts" and have resulted in a revised estimate of the dam's overall cost to approximately \$2 million.

IN THE DARK

The contractor, however, the letter explains, has not been advised of any contemplated changes, has received no word that there has been any change in plans for procedure and would like to be given some indication of what is to be expected to complete the dam. Such items as extended aprons and new grouting methods have not been reported to the contractors, the letter said.

Further, Kier's letter stated, the contractor will not undertake

any part of the project not covered in the original contract until the board issues a change order. Kier said his company would like a general outline of future plans for the dam.

Kier, present for the session, asked also that the board withhold any action on Warren's recommendation for extra payment until the contractor had received a copy of the letter and was able to study its contents. The request was acknowledged.

Minutes were received of a meeting of the zone two advisory board May 23 at which time Santa Clara river flood control was discussed.

The zone two board also asked that the Revelon slough area from U. S. 101 highway to East Fifth street be surveyed for a drainage project. The directors authorized Surveyor Robert Ryan to conduct such a survey.

Ryan also was authorized to make a trip to Sacramento today to discuss the Ventura river levy program with state engineers.

CLASS OF SERVICE		DESIRED CABLE	
TELEGRAM	DAY LETTER	DAY LETTER	NIGHT LETTER
		URGENT RATE	DEFERRED

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

WESTERN UNION

JOSEPH L. EGAN
PRESIDENT

\$	CHECK
S	ACCOUNTING INFORMATION
F	TIME FILED

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

To Mr. Chas O. Berkeley

July 31 1947

Care of or Apt. No. _____

Street and No. 1076 Combarmete Rd

Place Palisade New Jersey

Excavation is proceeding in open below down
and expect bottom to be exposed in week or two days
Due to much decrease of foundation material
board requested me to ask if you could be
available to look at foundation. Please let me
know if you would care to come out again. as usual
get the following

Robert Egan

Sender's name and address
(For reference only)

Sender's telephone
number