

6-2-47

POURING ON DAM RESUMES

Concrete once again was pouring into forms on Matilija dam as work resumed today ending a stoppage ordered by the state after discovery of a clay pocket beneath two blocks of the project.

The concrete was being poured into forms on block M. It was when this block was being poured that the soft spots were first found on the left abutment. Pouring of new foundations and additional gravity sections in the newly stripped areas is expected to begin later.

REPORT DUE

Tomorrow, the zone one directors and county supervisors are to hear a report made by Dr. Charles Berkey of Columbia university. The report was compiled by Berkey after he was called here from the east by the district as consultant. His report was in the hands of County Surveyor Robert Ryan today and was being prepared for presentation to the board.

The report is expected to not only cover the present status of the dam and its prospects for completion, but will also serve as a review of the entire project and present Berkey's views as to whether proper preparation was made prior to starting construction of the arch-type dam.

STUDIES PIRU SITE

Berkey last week made an extensive tour of the Piru canyon area with V. R. Freeman, hydraulic engineer for the Santa Clara Conservation district to study the possibilities of the damsite now being discussed by zone 2. Freeman said that he and Berkey inspected a site on Piru creek just below the junction with San Felicia creek.

Preliminary observation, Freeman said, disclosed a favorable reservoir site but a rather wide dam site. Berkey's report on the tour is expected this week as to the prospects of the San Felicia location.

If It Wants One, Grand Jury Has Starting Point

(EDITORIAL)

NO doubt the county grand jury at its forthcoming meeting will decide whether to investigate the Matilija dam project. It has been asked to make such an inquiry by the local oil workers' union.

The union contends that this important public undertaking has been grievously bungled at great cost to the taxpayers. It suggests that some of the persons who have been entrusted with the responsibility for planning and building the dam may be guilty of criminal or culpable acts or of neglect of duties. A culpable act is one deserving of censure or moral blame.

The Star-Free Press has no "pipeline" knowledge of what the grand jury intends to do. It does seem to us that an official investigation might be salutary if conducted properly. By that, we mean if the grand jury would devote sufficient time and a sufficient degree of collective interest and determination to get together all the facts, to check, double-check and sift them; and to set them forth in systematic fashion understandable to the public. Then to base a straightforward recommendation on whatever those facts showed.

Any lick-and-a-promise hearing, designed either to whitewash anybody or to make anybody a scapegoat, would be worse than useless. Such a performance would be a public disservice.

In case the grand jury does decide to investigate the handling of the dam project, a suitable starting point has been provided by the formal report just submitted to the county by Charles P. Berkey, geological consultant. For example, he states:

... it appears that there has not been at any time an adequate exploratory investigation of the site. Superficial examination and random sub-surface tests were apparently considered adequate despite the fact that the local rock formations are well known to be strongly folded and deformed internally with development of minor structures in the form of slips, crush-zones and local displacements, all of which when exposed are potential weaknesses.

Even the natural undisturbed formations are not of uniform quality, but are made up of a succession of beds of alternating sandstone and shale of differing quality.

Thus hard members are associated with comparatively soft ones, repeated one set after another in succession.

When such a formation is deformed by folding and powerful crowding as this one has been, it is inevitable that internal adjustments must result in just such structural complexities as are seen almost everywhere in the Matilija district. Under such conditions, no one can predict with full assurance just where the next weakness will be encountered, and in consequence it is more important than usual to make rather detailed exploratory tests before venturing upon an important construction undertaking.

For these reasons, it seems to me, a more systematic program of foundation exploration ought to have been adopted in the beginning. It would have found at an earlier stage the weakness now attracting special attention and perhaps others that have not been discovered. Such a program was evidently not thought necessary and clearly was not done, with the result that it can not be done as thoroughly as is desirable. The dam is placed, the foundation is occupied, the structure is half finished; the practical question is not what should have been done, but what can be done now to advantage in finishing the present structure and in further treatment to make it safe.

That statement, in itself, is a serious indictment. Dr. Berkey is a top-ranking specialist on geology as applied to engineering problems. He states that certain steps which should have been taken were not taken. If the grand jury did nothing more than determine definitely why the essential foundation exploration was not made, and who was to blame for its not being made, one, at least, of several important questions would be answered.

FLOOR OF DAM

FAULTY

CAN BE REMEDIED, SAYS NOTED GEOLOGIST, COUNTY CONSULTANT

J.C.2
Friday June 6, 1947
Completion Of Matilija Project With Safety Held To Be Possible And Practical, Cost-Plus Contract Discussed; Lack Of Pre-Construction Work Hit

County Supervisors today awaited recommendations from County Engineer Bob Ryan and Engineer Don R. Warren on the Dr. Charles P. Berkey report and investigation of Matilija Dam. Dr. Berkey, employed by the supervisors because he is an outstanding geologist, studied the dam and surfaces it contacts with the result that the hitherto unnoticed floor of the south side of the dam was found to be of a sugary quality.

The revelation followed the question raised recently by Supervisor Sanford Butts and printed exclusively May 9 in The Ventura County News questioning the formation at right, or south, end of the dam. Mr. Butts then demanded a comprehensive report from an outstanding outside engineer which would consider the entire proposition, and not alone the left, or south abutment, which then was in the public eye.

Dr. Berkey, outstanding in his profession, then was engaged, and gave his report this week. He said the left, or north, abutment where soft formations had been encountered could be completed in safety. He then made the startling revelation concerning the right abutment and floor formation near blocks C, D, E, F which had been left in a sugary state by erosion. He suggested a plan of "anchoring" by which cement could be poured into deep holes as the cure for this condition.

Extensive testing and grouting of future construction was urged.

The Dr. Berkey report criti-

cized the initial exploration of the site, and also the failure to take coring tests before starting construction. In this connection, the CIO oilworkers union recently asked that the Grand Jury consider the case. Recently, also, another Ventura newspaper in a front page editorial, suggested that the County and its engineer on the dam, Don R. Warren company, part company.

Another angle was injected into the case this week with the raising of the question of the Warren contract in view of the fact that the job has assumed gigantic proportions compared to what the people first expected, and that the engineering job therefore has jumped greatly. Investigation at the Court House indicates that the Warren contract is on a 4 1/2 per cent cost plus basis. This was held in at least one source, a responsible man who wished to remain anonymous, to mean that a new contract with Warren is not necessary, and also that Warren probably stands to make a considerable larger fee as a result of the increase in money to be spent.

6-12-47

6-28-47

Three Grand Jury Members Visit Dam

6/12/47
Three members of the 1947 grand jury, after studying geology and design reports, yesterday afternoon paid an inspection visit to Matilija dam.

Those taking a look around the dam were A. A. (Bud) Milligan of Oxnard, grand jury foreman, Cliff Dodds, Santa Paula, and Floyd Binns, Simi. They were accompanied by County Surveyor Robert Ryan.

The grand jury never has announced that it is conducting an investigation of the dam, as requested by the International Oil Workers union, local 120, but the foreman did report after the last meeting of the body that the grand jury "still was considering" Matilija dam.

CITY STARTS BUS RUNS TO DAM

6-28-47
City bus service will begin on Monday to the Matilija dam area to transport workers for the day, swing and graveyard shifts, leaving the terminal at 7 a.m., 3:30 p.m. and 11 p.m., Citizens' Transit Boss Jim Myers said today.

The bus taking the graveyard shift out will wait to bring the swing shift workers back to Ventura, Myers said.

"We will probably use the dri-

vers employed on the school run during the winter months," the director said.

The service was worked out through the labor temple and the dam contractors, Myers reported. P. E. Noble, personnel director

for the contractor, Atkinson Kier Bressi and Bevanda, said the new service was going to be a great help in keeping a steady supply of labor for the job. "We certainly are appreciative to the city of Ventura for opening this service," he said. "It will aid greatly in solving a tough transportation problem."

"It's going to save a lot of rough wear and tear on private cars," he opined.



MATILJA DAM LOOKING DOWNSTREAM—Jutting up out of the canyon floor of the Matilija, zone one's dam now makes an impressive sight. At the base of the dam on the left side of the canyon can be seen the jagged point of Hanging Rock, which weathered the storm of blasting and stripping and remains even-

tually to be covered by the lake. Above the dam, reaching from left to right is the pouring trestle, a concreting method adopted by the construction company, Atkinson Kier Bressi and Bevanā. The dam is to be constructed to the height at which the trestle now stands. The dam is poured in such a manner that a

block is never at the same height as the one next to it, thus preventing the forms (that superstructure atop each block) from overlapping. Each line that can be seen across the face of the dam is a five-foot layer of concrete.

(Star-Free Press Photo)

Gravity Apron Being Poured On Upstream Side of Dam

CONCRETE is being poured into a big apron on the upstream side of Matilija dam in preparation for closing up the "bear hole" under block N.

The concrete is being poured into a chute which has been installed down the face of the dam at about a 45 degree angle. A crane swings big buckets of concrete into position and workmen prod it on its way with shovels.

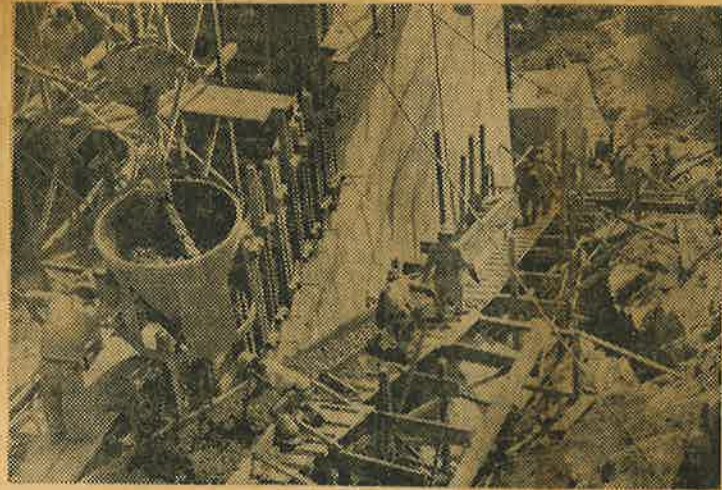
CREWS BUSY
On the downstream side of the dam, crews still are busy stripping away soft, shale and clay from the huge slabs of rock that support the dam. The excavation now has progressed downstream nearly 50 feet from the block where soft material was first discovered.

When the state engineer's office is satisfied that all of the crumbly shale has been removed, the contractor plans to pour another gravity section, or apron on the downstream side, filling in the excavation.

TO POUR SOON

Inside of the "bear hole" beneath block N, some concrete is expected to be poured soon to serve as support for the block before additional pouring takes place on top. The contractor is to fill the hole with concrete between a supporting wall to be built and the solid concrete of the adjacent block. During this pouring, pipes will be placed into the hole and will be used to force grout under pressure into all of the pockets and crevices of the excavation.

On top of the dam, a trestle has been completed and pouring from this device is expected to begin soon. The trestle, constructed at



(Star-Free Press Photo)

POURING APRON BLOCK—Tons of concrete are being poured down a chute on the upstream side of the dam to form an apron around the blocks where soft, clay material was discovered. When this apron is completed, crews will begin to grout and concrete a section under that portion of the block where stripping has been completed.

the eventual height of the dam, reaches from the north to south sides of the dam.

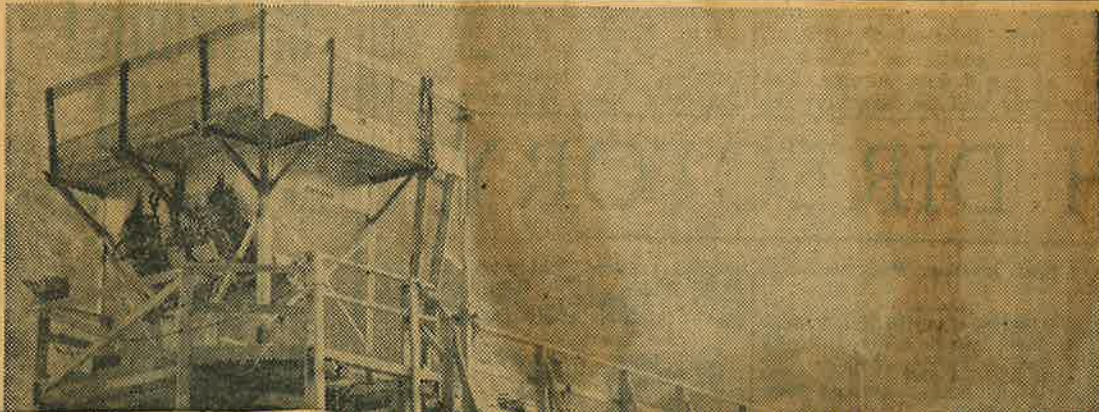
At the extreme north end (above the left abutment) a bunker has been situated near the mixing plant, in swinging distance for a long-boomed crane. The crane will swing buckets of concrete into the bunker and man-powered, rubber-tired carts will convey it to the pouring forms. With this system, a steady stream of concrete can be maintained into the forms.

According to the contractors' records, 52,400 cubic yards of con-

crete now are in the dam.

On the left abutment, new gravity sections are being poured where additional stripping has been completed. These new sections soon will be ready for the pouring of blocks which will complete the arch of the dam into the rock of the abutment.

On the right abutment, high on the face of rock cliffs, workmen are stripping and washing the rock in preparation for pouring the gravity sections and blocks which will complete the dam on that side.



When to Stop
Sermon By The Pastor
11:00 A.M.
"Shadow Over
America"
7:30 P.M.

SUNDAY SCHOOL, 9:45 a.m., Morning worship, 11 a.m., Baptist training union, 6:30 p.m., Evening service, 7:30 p.m., Prayer meeting, Wednesday, 7 p.m., Brotherhood and Women's Missionary League, 7:30 p.m., Street service, Saturday, 7 & 8 p.m.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST, Ocean Avenue and San Clemente street, R. W. Greener, pastor, Sabbath school, Saturday, 9:30 a.m., Main service, Saturday, 11 a.m., Prayer meeting, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Young people's meeting, Friday, 7:30 p.m.

SANTA PAULA FIRST UNIVER-SALIST CHURCH, 736 Main street, Dr. George Cross Baker, pastor, Sunday school, 9:45 a.m., Morning service, 11 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S METHODIST Main