

TEMPERS FLARE AT ZONE MEET

11-5-47

Tension mounted in the board of supervisors room yesterday afternoon at a meeting of the zone one advisory board, Ventura county flood control district, before advisory members received a promise from Donald R. Warren, Matilija dam engineer, that progress charts on the dam would be made available to the advisory board.

Advisory board members had been called together by County Surveyor Robert Ryan to talk over progress on the dam. He had completed an outline on dam building, property acquisition and expenditures when Randall Cremer, advisory board member and an engineer in his own right, asked permission to look at records on grouting.

EXPLAINS REASON

Cremer explained that he wanted to be sure that the whole Matilija dam operation when completed would be in line with the recommendations of Dr. Charles

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P. Berkey, geological consultant called in by the county. He asked for information on just how the grouting program recommended by Dr. Berkey is being carried out and explained that he thought considerable funds should be expended, if necessary, to make sure of the dam's safety.

Warren, making a public appearance here for the first time in weeks, rather touchily replied that his company will open its records upon recommendation of the board of supervisors but not for a lot of quibbling or for those without technical background.

Irked at the implication, Cremer answered that he was not quibbling and that he has seen that some of the recommendations he himself had originally made (on grouting and core drillings) now are being carried out on the dam. He also pointed out to Warren that he considered Dr. Berkey the outstanding authority on geology and that he would feel bad if Dr. Berkey is not satisfied with Matilija dam. Cremer said he wanted to be kept up to date on grouting and drilling, and he asked the supervisors for authority to inspect grouting records. Supervisors could take no action then because their meeting already had been closed.

GETS SUPPORT

Another advisory member, F. R. Schmieder, too, believed that everything of the Warren company should be in the board's hand, with the board, for instance, to receive copies of all correspondence sent by the Warren company to the state. If we have the information it will alleviate the doubt the public has, Schmieder declared, also pointing out that he thought attention should be paid to Cremer and his request.

"Do we or don't we get the records?" Schmieder asked.

Warren then said he saw no reason why progress charts can't be sent in.

The session ended up with

Ryan's declaring that he felt a consulting board should have been on hand for the Matilija job and that certainly such a board should be used on the next dam-building job. Warren agreed that would be a good idea.

LAND ACQUIRED

Ryan explained that close to \$2,200,000 has been spent so far on the Matilija dam, once estimated as a \$700,000 job. On Casitas, \$60,600 has been spent, and \$21,009 has been used on the conduit system, the other two portions of zone one's three-fold dam-building project. This leaves something over one million left out of the original \$3,400,000 bond issue that was supposed to finance the entire project.

John Herdfelder, rights of way agent, told the group that nearly all the land has been acquired in the Matilija area, but that there may have to be condemnation suits to obtain the rest. He said 250 acres out of 1,300 so far have been acquired in the Casitas dam site.

11-12-47

Berkey Recommendations On Dam Being Carried Out

11-12-47

MEMBERS of the Ventura county flood control district learned today that Matilija dam is nearly complete, but that the state engineer's office is unable to say just what additional steps will be necessary before it will be declared safe for storage of water.

Progress reports indicated that the dam proper needed only a few small pours to be complete. The remainder of the work on the project, according to Donald R. Warren company engineers, is in the installation of control apparatus, core boring and grouting beneath the right abutment.

John Hallock, representing the Warren firm, said that a tunnel is being completed beneath the right

abutment and pouring of concrete probably could begin next week.

In answer to a letter from District Attorney Arthur Waite, the state engineer's office informed the board that it appeared that all recommendations for safety precautions as contained in reports by Dr. Charles Berkey were being carried out. The state added, however, that core borings being taken at present would have to be studied and that the office "could not predict" unforeseen developments; what additional steps would have to be taken before state permission to store water could be obtained depends on "future developments," the board was told.

STIVERS CITES WATER NEEDS

11-12-47

Well Stiver, Zone 1 business manager, spoke before the Ventura Rotary club this noon on the water problems to be faced.

With the Matilija dam now nearing its finishing construction touches, he said, he felt the important question now is what steps shall next follow. A choice, he indicated, will have to be made between using the money remaining, approximately \$1,200,000, either for the construction of the Casitas dam or else for pipelines and conduits from the Matilija dam.

He said he would soon have estimates of the demands for water from the various potential users throughout the district and of the amount to be available from the Matilija. Then will have to be determined an equitable apportionment of the supply.

The conservation of water, he declared, is a must item for this whole area, and he bespoke the full cooperation of all interests in carrying the zone project through to success. Until the Casitas dam and the pipelines are in, he warned, the zone cannot expect to derive sufficient revenue to retire its indebtedness.

The speaker was introduced by Pat Flannagan. Cliff Hey, a new member of the club, gave a brief autobiographical sketch.

Two Men Named To Dam Board

11-21-47

TWO men were selected to serve on the Casitas dam consulting board and arrangements were made to negotiate with a third likely member when members of the board of supervisors, Ventura county flood control district, met at the courthouse this morning.

Supervisors appointed Ralph R. Proctor, compaction dam expert who developed the scientific approach to earth-fill dams and who now is with the bureau of water and power in Los Angeles, and Harold Conkling, hydrology expert who recently completed a survey in this county for the Santa Clara valley conservation district. Both men in talks yesterday with District Attorney M. Arthur Waite and Supervisors Sanford Butts and Lester Price, indicated they would be willing to serve.

SCOUT 3RD MEMBER

Supervisors then authorized Waite to contact Dr. Chester Marliave to see if he will serve as the third member, and, if he can't, to negotiate with another Berkeley geologist who used to be head of the geology department of the University of California. Marliave was highly recommended by Proctor and Samuel Morris, now with the bureau of water and power in Los Angeles and who, himself, was sought to serve on the board.

The two experts said Marliave had looked at all the dam sites in the state prior to 1940 and had plenty of practical field experience. Supervisors at first hesitated about Marliave because he had made a geological survey on Matilija dam this spring and had recommended the shutdown of pouring when trouble was found under block N.

VAST EXPERIENCE

It was decided, however, to try and obtain him because of his vast geological experience with dam-sites. Waite pointed out to the board that both Morris and Proctor thought Marliave's serving on the board would be in good order since his Matilija report had been done for the state and not for a contracting party. Several other experts had been ruled out because they had been connected in some way with contracting parties on the Matilija project. Morris, himself, was unable to serve on the board because he is too busy to devote time for the study.

In another move, supervisors following out a recommendation from Legal Consultant S. V. Prichard, authorized the district attorney to take the plans and specifications for Casitas dam to Los Angeles for their inspection by an official in the design department of the Los Angeles Metropolitan water department. Prichard, Morris and Proctor had indicated that it would be well for the board to hire such a design expert to have such plans checked.

TO INSPECT SITE

Proctor, Waite said, indicated he would come to Ventura county this weekend to inspect the proposed Casitas dam site, and arrangements were made by the board so that a representative of the Donald R. Warren company, engineers who designed the dam plans, and "anyone else who has any information" can accompany Proctor to the site. It is believed that Conkling, unable to be here this weekend, will look over the dam site on Monday.

All handling of the consulting board appointment proceeded in friendly fashion this morning, but an unamicable note was sounded when a telegram from Warren, received here Wednesday was read to the board. In it, Warren took a slap at County Surveyor Robert Ryan.

"This office has often requested your employment of consulting engineers, first, to insure the public of the adequacy and safety of the project, and, second, that we might have the benefit of their knowledge. Since Ryan has acknowledged that he is opposed to the flood control project we recommend that the consulting board now being selected be directed to obtain their data for review from a source that is fully in accord with the expressed will of the people," Warren's telegram said.

Silence followed and then Supervisor Robert Lefever asked: "What source would that be?"

There was a slight pause before Waite spoke up to say "I think the consulting board should be advised to get the information from anywhere it sees fit." With this, the board agreed.

Supervisors decided that the consulting board probably would need information from Ryan's office, from the water survey office of Richard Jamison, and from Warren's company. The telegram then was filed without further comment.

DAM BUNGLING IN NEW PHASE

The button-button game of who is to bear the blame for bungling things at the outset of the Matilija dam project went into a new phase yesterday afternoon.

Flood zone supervisors, after starting their afternoon meeting with an executive session, took exception to a wire from Donald R. Warren of the Warren Engineering company in which he claimed he had asked for consultants to give him aid in the early stages of the project and that his request had been refused.

WANTS PROOF

Supervisor Lester Price suggested that some sort of documentary proof be submitted by Warren to support his claim that he asked for consultants. "To the best of my knowledge," Price said, "we have done what has been suggested all along."

Russell Cook said he recalled that Warren had asked for consultants, but couldn't remember when.

Percy Dennis suggested that a letter be sent to Warren requesting clarification of the claim.

Warren's wire apparently was in answer to criticism that he had not employed enough experts to guide him through some of the pitfalls of the dam's construction.

RECALLS STATEMENT

Robert Lefever recalled that Warren had once said he did not need outside help of any kind to build the dam. "You can turn it around any way you want and you still get the same answer," Lefever said. He issued an off the record statement as to why he felt "a mountain is being made of a molehill."

Lefever then made indirect reference to a report submitted to the board by Bob Ryan, board engineer, which had been prepared by Richard H. Jamison on safe yield figures from the dam, and indicated he felt there was a lot of energy being utilized to belittle various people in the dam picture.

Jamison Report On Water Yield Refutes Warren

CONTRARY to Engineer Donald R. Warren's report, 4,000 acre-feet of water cannot be considered as the safe yield per year from either Matilija or Casitas dams. Furthermore, size of the proposed pipeline system from Matilija to Casitas should be further studied before a decision is reached on the size of the conduits.

That's the summation of a report presented yesterday to the board of supervisors of the Ventura county flood control district by County Surveyor Robert Ryan and prepared by County Water Survey Richard H. Jamison after a thorough study of rainfall figures and runoff statistics, with evaporation, temperatures and seepage being taken into consideration.

SAFE YIELD

Warren, in presenting his zone one report in 1945 had justified the Matilija-Casitas dam projects on the basis, besides flood control, that Matilija, with a 7,000 acre-foot storage capacity, and Casitas, with a 22,000 acre-foot capacity, would assure a safe draft per year of 4,000 acre-feet from each reservoir. (The safe yield is the amount of water that can be safely let out of a reservoir and sold each year during a dry cycle without running the reservoir dry and with old water right users being cared for.)

Using all available statistics and trying out several sets of figures, Jamison found that during a five-year low runoff cycle the safe yield from Matilija dam probably could be no more than 2,800 acre-feet. Using 1927 as the starting year for use of Matilija, (a period which could approximate present-day conditions since many experts feel that a dry cycle now is on hand) Jamison came up with some disheartening figures.

CITES SAFE YIELD

He found, for instance, that if the Matilija reservoir had been full to its 7,000 acre-foot capacity on May 1, 1927 and if water had been used at a yearly draft of 4,000 acre-feet (See WARREN'S page 7)

11-26-47

Warren's Water Estimates Held Faulty

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900 acre-feet that the reservoir would be dry just a few years later. Using the same starting point for a five year period, Jamison found that 2,800 acre-feet would be the probable safe yield. If, however, the starting point with full reservoir had been November of 1927, only 2,100 acre-feet of water could have been expected as the annual safe yield, Jamison said.

Taking the hypothesis further, Jamison found that even if a wet year like 1931-32 followed a dry cycle in which the annual draft from Matilija had been 2,800 or 3,000 acre-feet that water would have been wasted. The runoff would have filled the reservoir but since all of it could not have gone into the pipelines, (estimated by Warren to carry about 40 acre feet a day to Casitas) the water would have overflowed the reservoir and gone down the stream. If another dry year had followed the five-year dry cycle, the water supply would have been below the dam's outlet, Jamison found.

CHARTS USED

Jamison's study shows that about 531 meiner inches of water are required each year to care for the old water rights held by Raucha

Ojai Mutual Water company, Rancho Matilija and the like. His charts reveal that in some months, if the runoff figures are no better than they have been in past dry cycles, (the only time when water is needed) the water right users would get all the water from Matilija dam; in some instances there would not even be enough water to supply the water users. Unless a backlog of water could have been built up there would have been eight months in 1930, for instance, when the total flow would have had to go to satisfy the old water rights. And in 1928, as another example, there would have been no water going into Matilija from May through November. A year like 1945 would have left Matilija devoid of runoff from July through November.

In dealing with Casitas, Jamison assumed that the dam had been put into operation in December, 1925; he came up with the probable safe yield of 2,600 acre-feet annually. He showed however, that if the dam had been put into operation in December, 1927, that only 400 acre feet could have been expected at the annual safe yield.

NO CONCLUSIONS

Using figures that would have the dam start in May, 1927, Jamison found that by taking out a yearly draft of 4,000 acre-feet from Casitas that the reservoir would be dry by July, 1931. Using a yearly draft of 3,000 acre-feet and starting with an empty reservoir in December, 1925, Jamison showed that by May 1, 1927, the supply at Casitas would increase to 21,543 acre feet, leaving only

957 acre feet of vacant storage space. The inflow in the next four years would have been small and draft and evaporation and seepage during the period would reduce the amount of stored water to 2,444 acre feet by the end of November, 1931. This 2,444 acre feet appears to be a safe amount for hold-over, Jamison said. But if the annual draft of 3,000 acre feet had continued and small runoff had occurred the next year, the reservoir would have been empty during October, 1932.

Jamison pointed out that since the reservoirs are small care must be taken in their operation so that some water will be available at all times, especially if domestic water is to be served. He gave no conclusions on the amounts of water to be safely diverted from Matilija to Casitas because he said more study is required, but he pointed out that if water is diverted to hold the stored water in Casitas reservoir at a high elevation that a large portion of it would be disposed of by evaporation and seepage.

He said the actual amount of seepage can't be ascertained until the dams are in operation. To get a better idea of the seepage factors he recommends installation of equipment to measure the evaporation, the keeping of measures showing the amounts of water entering the reservoirs and the water released and records of the elevation of the water surface.

NO OVERFLOW IN '46

Jamison also points out that since the water sheds tributary to the two reservoirs are adjacent when the runoff of one is low, the runoff of the other is low. The same holds true for high runoffs. His tables show, basing each dam at 3,000 acre-feet yield, that from May, 1927, to February, 1932, there was available for diversion only 585 acre feet. The floods of February, March and April, 1932, produced 15,850 acre feet of overflow at Matilija dam but there was only 6,985 acre feet of vacant storage space in Casitas reservoir to receive it. That is, that if the dams had been in operation then most of the huge volume of water would have gone down to the sea since the Matilija excess could not have been stored.

Carrying out the statistics for 1946, Jamison found there would be no overflow at Casitas until February, 1937. The supply at Casitas then would go downward, beginning to overflow again in February, March, April and May in 1938 and then not reaching the overflow stage again until 1941. There would be no overflow in 1942, only four months of overflow in 1943, three months of overflow in 1944, two in 1945 and none in 1946.

To Don Warren and Bob Ryan

Some of your recent interchanges have reminded me of certain designations used by Shakespeare in "As You Like It." You perhaps remember—"Retort courteous"—"Quip modest"—"Reply churlish"—"Reproof valiant"—"Countercheck quarrelsome"—"Lie with circumstance"—and "Lie direct."

PA VENTURA.

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11-29-47