

STATEMENT OF DR. FREDERICK A. DAVIDSON,
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TO THE DALLES LOCK AND DAM.

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The construction of the Dalles dam will destroy the Fishery of the Yakima Indians in the Columbia River at Celilo Falls and break a sacred Treaty of the United States with these Indians for the preservations of the fishery. It will also destroy Celilo Falls one of the most historical natural monuments on the Columbia River. These falls have been a point of interest and attraction ever since they were discovered by Lewis and Clark in 1805. What, if anything, is to be gained by the loss of this valuable natural resource and the destruction of these human values?

At a hearing of the Yakima Indians before this subcommittee on February 19, of last year, I stated that the power production of Bonneville dam and likewise all of the lower Columbia River dams is seriously reduced when the flow of the river recedes during the period of low water. The experience of the past fall and winter when the flow of the Columbia River remained at a very low level for an extended period shows how seriously the river's flow can affect the power production of the Bonneville dam. During this period of low water the production of the dam was so greatly reduced that a state of emergency existed and many of the industries as well as the domestic users depending upon the dam for electricity had to be drastically curtailed.

The Dalles dam which is under construction in the Columbia River some fifty miles above the Bonneville dam will have its power production just as seriously affected by the flow of the

river as does Bonneville dam. Therefore, why put 350,000,000 dollars or more into a hydro-electric plant that can operate at full capacity for only 6 to 8 months out of a year.

m The Army Engineers are cognizant of the loss in power production of the lower Columbia dams when the flow of the river recedes. In order to offset this loss the Engineers have consistently recommended the construction of two large storage dams, one at Libby in the upper Columbia River region and one at Hell's Canyon on the Snake River. The millions of acre feet of water stored by these dams when liberated during the low water period of the Columbia river would bolster up the production of the lower river dams. Secretary Mc Kay has withdrawn the petition of the Interior Department opposing the private power development of the Hell's Canyon region which, if carried out, will definitely prevent the construction of the Hell's Canyon dam. Senator Martin of Pennsylvania, chairman of the Senate Public Works Committee, has introduced a bill to rescind the authorization of the Libby dam..This then, will leave the lower Columbia dams permanently handicapped in power production. Therefore why spend hundreds of millions of dollars to build another dam, the Dalles dam, in the lower Columbia river where it will be permanently handicapped in power production?

There is a shortage of power for existing industry and domestic consumption at the present time in the states of Oregon and Washington. However, it is very doubtful if the construction of the Dalles dam will alleviate this shortage. There is every indication that the entire production of the Dalles dam will be

utilized by the establishment of new industries in the vicinity of the dam. A large block of power has already been set aside for an aluminum factory that is being proposed at The Dalles, Oregon. Furthermore if the Federal power contracts to these new industries are the same as those issued to the industries using Bonneville power, the Federal Government will have to supply the industries with steam produced power when the production of the Dalles dam cannot fulfill the contracts on account of the drop in the river's flow. This will create an additional load on the power facilities of the region and make the present shortage of power more acute. It appears that there is a hidden policy to over-sell the power production of each new dam in order to create a false shortage of power that may be used as a ploy to get congressional funds for additional Federal power projects on the Columbia river and its tributaries.

There is much talk about how the Dalles dam will pay for itself through the sale of the hydro-electric power it will produce. Only very seldom is it mentioned that the cost of the boat lock in the Dalles dam will be arbitrarily written off and not charged to the cost of the dam when its capitalized value is determined. In other words, the millions of dollars that will go into the boat lock built into the dam becomes a direct gift by the Federal Government to the small group operating the river transportation.

No one would lay out millions of dollars to bring back the horse and buggy days as a means of transportation. Yet the Federal Government is doing virtually the same thing when it

builds the large boat locks in the Columbia river dams in order to bring back an old and antiquated method of river transportation. During peace times the Columbia river transportation is in direct competition with the rail roads that parallel the river. At the present time these rail roads are losing money because so much of their freight and passenger business is being taken away from them by the motor freight trucks and passenger buses that operate on the highways also paralleling the river. In times of war the river tug and barge becomes a "sitting duck" target for the bombers and besides all river transportation can be completely interrupted by the destruction of the boat lock in any of the dams.

There is certainly no economic justification for putting millions of dollars of the taxpayers money into an old and antiquated method of river transportation that at best can serve only 3 states in the Union.

When testifying before the subcommittee on February 19 of last year I pointed out that the hydro-electric and industrial development of the northwest was being made at the expense of the eastern states taxpayers. The chairman of the subcommittee informed me that the development of the northwest was going to be a benefit to the country as a whole and its cost was being borne by all the taxpayers alike. I still insist that there is nothing to be gained nationally by destroying industry in one part of the country for the purpose of developing it anew in another part. It is interesting to note that Representative Fenton of Pennsylvania has given us a concrete example of this uneconomic procedure in the Yakima Herald, April 24, 1953.

Representative Fenton (R-Pa.) made the following comments during the testimony of Kirby Billingsly, Chelan County Public Utility District Commissioner, before a House appropriations subcommittee. Billingsly made a plea for funds for the Bonneville Power Administration in which he said that westerners " are sick and tired of having easterners say.... that their tax moneys are being spent to develop those western power projects."

Fenton took immediate exception, exclaiming:

" I have been so sick and tired of listening to that statement that the whole country is benefiting by it that it is not even funny."

"Now I will tell you how it is hurting the country and in no uncertain terms, particularly my part of the country."

Fenton stated that three coal mines in his Pennsylvania District had been closed putting 2900 men out of work.

" Those people are going on relief and the tax payer has to bear that burden," he said.

Fenton continued:

" This government has absolutely turned its back on the eastern section, particularly the anthracite coal area... You say that easterners should not have a thing to say about it. We are paying the taxes for you fellows and do not think we ~~are~~ are not; we are paying plenty. I am just about sick and tired of it too.

" I, too, am in sympathy with irrigation but I think power is getting too powerful throughout the country, not only in the Northwest but under the guise of cheap power it is taking our industry away from us."

So intent are the pressure groups and the Army Engineers in promoting the hydro-electric and industrial development of the Columbia river that all sense of human values is being discarded. The aluminum industry operating on Bonneville power near Portland, Oregon is being allowed to operate without removing the fluorine gas from the fumes escaping from its furnaces. As a result this deadly poisonous gas is killing the cattle in the vicinity of the industry and endangering the lives of the farmers. The farmers have large law suits against the aluminum industry (Reynolds Company) pending in the courts. They have also appealed to the news papers and board of health of the city of Portland for assistance in their efforts to stop the aluminum industry from discharging the fluorine gas.

I have been informed that both the press and board of health have taken no action in this matter for fear of casting a harmful reflection on the industrial development of the region. It is about time someone puts a stop to this insane rush to spend the taxpayers money for the development of the aluminum industry in the Northwest.

As of last year, I would like to refer to the progress being made in the use of atomic energy as a source of industrial power. Small pilot plants are now being operated for the production of electric power by atomic energy. These plants are indicating great possibilities for the use of atomic energy for this purpose. In fact the industrial experiments of the Atomic Energy Commission are so promising that the Westinghouse Electric Company is putting two million dollars into the construction of a factory for the commercial production of atomic power plant equipment. There is little doubt but that the use of atomic energy for industrial power will be made a practical reality in the near future. When this occurs the hydro-electric developments in the Northwest will become dwarfed as producers of electric power and the colossal monuments of concrete that are now being erected in the Columbia river may become white elephants on the public's hands.