

The Southern Counties

Reapportionment

Wide and long is the expanse of southern California territory shown in Congress as District 11, and represented there by Congressman Phil Swing. Many are the counties he answers for. Included in his territory are Riverside, San Bernardino, Orange, San Diego, Imperial, Inyo and Mono counties.

Last week at Riverside were assembled prominent Republicans. They sought ways and means for obtaining two additional congressmen for the "citrus district of Southern California," following the new census to be taken in 1930. Generally agreed was it that, under the Census and Reapportionment Bill, passed last spring, San Diego and Imperial would form one Congressional district. At last week's meeting it was suggested that Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino should combine with Pomona Valley and the Whittier section in Los Angeles, and might thus have population enough for two congressmen. If this plan could be worked out, thought the proponents, one district might be formed of the citrus belt of Los Angeles and all of Orange county. Another district could be made up of Riverside, San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono counties.

If these proposals are not found feasible, the next probable plan would be to make a Congressional district of Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties, thought those at the Riverside meeting.

The conference, which was conducted in Superior Court Room No. 1 at the Riverside Courthouse, was attended by Frank Miller, Banning; Joseph Seymour, Riverside; W. F. Eldridge, Corona; E. P. Clarke, J. F. Davidson and Raymond Best, Riverside; Roger Bruce, Hemet; T. B. Talbert, Santa Ana; Stanley Reinkens, Santa Ana; Howard B. Irwin, Fullerton; Frank Tausch, Anaheim; Clyde F. Newton, Orange; Earl B. Abbey, Santa Ana; Bruce McDaniels, Redlands; State Senator Swing and C. E. Johnson, San Bernardino; Isaac Jones, Ontario; Bruce Moore, Upland; Chas. G. Potter, Redlands; G. V. Holcomb, Chino; Ted Lee, Adelanto and F. S. Hosfelt, Rialto.

Rain, Rain

Rains in Southern California last week soaked parched mountain ranges, filled dried stream beds, limited fire hazards—even wrecked highways, tore away bridges, washed out fills. Not welcome were these wet days and nights, for much rain next year's water supply, forest fire control, depends upon the amount of dampness that seeps through the thirsty earth's formations.

Favored last week with heavy rains were the San Bernardino Mountains. Large amounts of fresh water poured into heretofore droughty brooks. So hard was the downfall that forestry officials were convinced that forest fires in that area would undoubtedly be reduced.

Daily showers also dampened Big Bear Valley. Every day for a fortnight at least, a few sprinkles have been welcomed in the resort vicinity.

Huge downpours last week pelted on the Mill Creek Canyon district, thoroughly soaking everything. Roads were washed with mud, streams swollen.

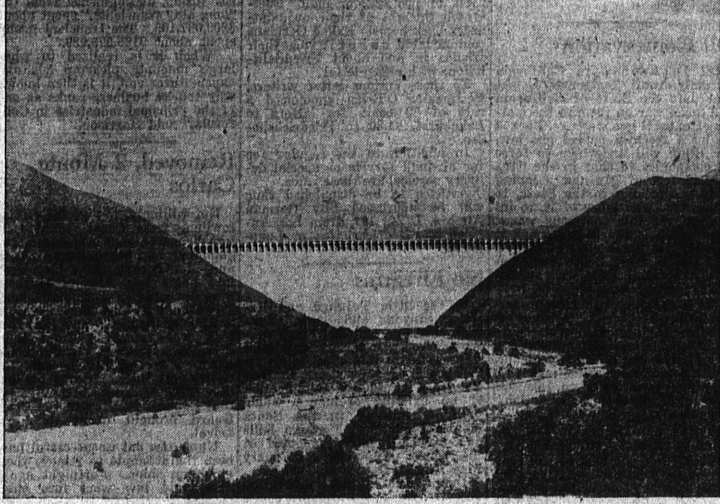
Santa Ana Canyon was the recipient of light showers. Never much above a slight "dust-settler" at each visitation, constant drizzle saturated the ground, minimized fire hazards.

Storms, cloudbursts did damage in the San Jacinto area. Two bridges were washed out; large sections of the new highway between Strawberry Canyon and Idyllwild were destroyed; electric power and telephone lines in the mountains met with havoc. Daily storms for a week preceded the two hectic downpours. A rainwater place six weeks as the time needed to repair the damage rains have done to this section.

Still Wrangling

Hot discussion pertaining to Ventura County's long contemplated harbor, fraught with disagreement, was occupying the minds of county officials there last fortnight. For months the wrangling has been rife.

Six powerful oil companies last fortnight added a new episode to the series of events comprising



PROPOSED SAN GABRIEL CANYON DAM
3,442,000 barrels of cement will close a mighty cavern.

the harbor discussion. Associated Oil, Shell Oil, General Petroleum, Boise Chica, Pacific Western and Richfield combined in issuing a formal protest to the proposed \$2,000,000 bond issue providing for a harbor at Huemene. Considering the protest is T. G. Gabbert, chairman of the County Board of Supervisors and County Harbor Commission.

Very wrath were the six powerful companies. They were against the Huemene harbor. If they should be made to ship through Huemene, said the companies, they would be compelled to build pipe lines from Ventura to Los Angeles, do no shipping by water.

Reasons: They find the present facilities at Huemene inadequate for handling petroleum. The proposed Huemene harbor would not be large enough to accommodate safe entrance and exit. Ocean-going tankers could not be accommodated without much expense, delay. The cost of shipping from the port would be too great. Therefore, if the county builds the harbor the oil companies will not use it.

Suggestions: That the action of the Huemene harbor project be postponed; that a committee be appointed to meet with the representatives of the oil firms, determine definitely the use, value, economic necessity for such a project.

While oil companies and County officials bickered last week, Ventura County taxpayers leagued themselves together, formed two opposing factions, one favoring the Huemene harbor, another favoring no harbor at all. The organized factions:

Huemene. Formed to support a \$2,000,000 County bond issue for the Huemene project, as recommended by the Ventura Harbor Association. For its general chairman the association selected T. G. Gabbert, chairman also of the County Board of Supervisors and the County Harbor Commission.

No Harbor. To combat further increase in property taxes, to oppose the Huemene harbor and the bond election necessary thereto, is the Ventura County Taxpayers' Association. Formed immediately following the organization of Huemene proponents, the Taxpayers' Association selected as its president, Eugene P. Foster, Ventura business man.

Dam Dedicated

With ceremonies auspicious and impressive, Big Dalton Dam, located five and one-half miles north of Glendora, was formally dedicated last week.

As one of ten completed dams in Los Angeles County's \$40,000,000 flood control plan, Big Dalton cost \$311,000; will impound 1200-acre-feet of water. Its size: 500 feet wide at the top, 150 feet above the stream bed. Its purpose: Protection for ranch land near Glendora, Azusa, Covina, from flash floods pouring down Big Dalton Canyon from adjacent mountains.

Other dams of the County flood control plan now completed:

Thompson Creek, San Dimas, Live Oak, Salk Pit, Pacoima, Sierra Madre, Santa Anita Canyon, Puddingstone, Devil's Gate. These dams represent an aggregate investment of \$8,000,000. Now under construction is the largest flood control dam in the world, the San Gabriel, to cost approximately \$25,000,000.

H. W. Rohl was contractor for the Big Dalton dam. County Flood Supervisor E. C. Eaton was engineer.

Muddy Waters

When heavy rains on the west slopes of the Rocky Mountains last fortnight increased the water discharge at Rockwood to 50,000 second feet, arid Imperial Valley thought its water problem was solved. But having an ample amount of the precious liquid is not always a solution to the Valley's water problem.

New troubles last week faced the southern county. There was irrigation water aplenty. But with the water came an excessively large volume of silt. Test taken last week showed that the silt content of the river water at Ondrade Heading was 28 per cent by volume. At Dahlia Heading the silt volume in the water was 21 per cent.

Hundreds of thousands of tons of mud are being deposited in the river canals. Cost of dredging is becoming higher with each rain. Other complications are arising, too. Filtering plants in several of the Valley towns have been unable to remove entirely the brown coloring from the water as it comes from the Little Colorado drainage.

At Calexico during the past week there was especial anxiety. The ditch which supplied the city water plant was so choked with

silt that it was necessary to ration out the water supply for three days until a dredger opened up the canal.

Brawley also had difficulty in delivering enough filtered water to its residents.

Nicholas Den's Patent

When Nicholas Den received, many years ago, government patent for his land adjoining Rancho Dos Pueblos (now part of Ellwood field in Santa Barbara County, he did not know that underneath its rough surface oil was waiting to be drilled—all which would make his heirs millionaires. Neither did he know that his grant would sometime be questioned, his boundaries investigated, his title doubted.

But present holders of the old rancho, Barnsdall and Rio Grande oil companies who leased the land from Den's heirs, are having to defend their claim. According to the assertions of E. W. Lloyd, who is applying for a patent to the lands, there is a strip of public land ranging from a few feet to several hundred feet in width lying between the high tide line of the Pacific Ocean and south boundary line of the Rancho Dos Pueblos, which is the property of the United States government. The land is now leased by the Barnsdall and Rio Grande oil companies. Located on this strip are five producing oil wells.

If Lloyd succeeds in proving that the land is government domain, he will be entitled to purchase from the government the surface rights by using Valentine scrip. Practically all of this scrip has been exhausted (see "Island Domain"—Women) but all of that which does remain apparently has been acquired by Lloyd, and now has been tendered to the government in payment for the tideland properties.

Should Lloyd's claim prove to be founded, the oil land would be government property, and the Barnsdall and Rio Grande companies would have to vacate. Enormous would be the companies' loss and the government's gain if such were the case, as these wells produce 20,000 barrels of oil per day—more than one half of the production of the entire field.

Even more heart-rending to the oil companies involved is the fact that, should the land be decided public property, then they are responsible to the government for the 4,000,000 barrels of oil already produced, as that also is owned by Federal authorities.

Attorneys for the Barnsdall and Rio Grande companies, claim that questioning of the land's title is absolutely unfounded. They quote a decision of the California Supreme Court in 1869 where it was decided that boundaries of properties along the coast should have the mean high tide line as one extremity. They hold that every grant of land along the coast has markers beyond average high tide, but that the markers were placed back from the sea in order to prevent their destruction.

Whether the valuable oil land is

public property or private grant will be decided on September 5, in a hearing before John H. Edwards, Assistant Secretary of the Interior.

A Dam Dilemma

Two modes of action last week confronted Engineer E. C. Eaton, chief flood expert on the San Gabriel Dam. He could accept the lowest bid on cement for dam construction work, offered by the Southwestern Cement Company at \$1.72 cents a barrel, I.O.B. Astoria, Or.; he could authorize the erection of a county cement mill and thus avoid competitive bickering.

"A very fair price," said Engineer Eaton, is the bid offered by the Southwestern Portland Cement Company on the 3,442,000 barrels of cement necessary for construction activity on the flood control undertaking. If accepted, this contract would represent a saving of \$1,273,000 over the lowest bid offered last year. Last year's smallest figure was set at \$2.05 1/2 a barrel; it was rejected later because of legal difficulties over the building of the dam.

Intent on saving the County even more money is Engineer Eaton. He is figuring on whether the County would have to expend less funds if it erected its own cement plant. Large deposits of limestone and shale exist in the San Gabriel canyon. By installing a kiln and grinding machine for cement making and using it, then selling it, the County might have sufficient raw materials for construction work on the giant project, and yet be money ahead. Another advantage considered is that the proposed county cement mill would be closer to the dam site than the freight unloading point now stipulated in the contract. Transportation charges could then be saved.

Left out entirely in this year's bidding were Riverside Portland Cement Company and California Portland Cement Company dissenters. Complaints made by them argued that specifications were faulty. Their reason was that the quality of cement called for by the County was to comply with standards set by the American Society for Testing Materials, and that this criteria varies from time to time. Therefore, it was impossible for them to submit an intelligent bid. The Supervisors refused to comply with the dissenters' request for postponement of opening of bids; the companies refused to send in their prices.

Result: If any independent concern delivers the 3,442,000 barrels of cement—the biggest single order ever required for any construction work in the county—it will be the Southwestern Company.

Fickle Firmin

Residents of the Point Fermin section of San Pedro last fortnight were considerably agitated by the very evident sliding of the ground under their feet. Misgivings tormented them when they recalled a similar slide experienced a few years ago at Portuguese Bend. Several miles from them, this area began to move, to fall, to skid, until it finally descended into the sea.

Worried over their precarious position, property owners of the sinking soil made a hurried call to numerous geologists of note.

The experts last week assembled, examined the formation minutely, gave out a report of their findings. Not dangerous at all is this gradual sliding of the ground. Soft formations several feet underground give way; heavy rocks above slide down; people fret and fume. All to no purpose. The fault is merely part of a geological condition existing all along the shore line from San Pedro to Redondo.

"The ground may eventually work down into the ocean and then topple over, but that will require months," said William Muhlendahl, retired chief engineer of the bureau of Power and Light of Los Angeles County, in his report. "People living there need have no anxiety over a sudden slide."

James Hyde, vice-president of Los Angeles Board of Public Works, believed the shore movement to be a catastrophe, caused by an act of God. Pity and consternation is what he felt for the people of Point Fermin.

His suggestion: By a \$400,000 bond issue funds raised could be used to purchase property of land owners there; then the affected area could be converted into a park.



T. G. GABBERT
He heads Huemene proponents