

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles is, at the present time, and has been for some time past, buying the water in Owens Valley, drying up the fertile ranches and ruining the homes of the people in this section of the country, and

WHEREAS, the people of Los Angeles are being mislead by different men and women who, either for political reasons or financial ones, go before the different clubs there and make false representations concerning the water situation as regards Owens Valley and the City of Los Angeles, and

WHEREAS, the millions of dollars that are being paid by the City for water in Owens Valley can never be of a permanent help to the City unless storage is provided to impound the surplus water in years of large snowfall in the Sierras, and

WHEREAS, if this storage was provided the City of Los Angeles could always be certain of sufficient water for all purposes, and Owens Valley would have plenty of water for its uses, and the homes of the people here could be saved to them for all time to come, and

WHEREAS, THE LOS-ANGELES - OWENS VALLEY water controversy dates from midsummer of 1905. It is manifestly impossible to more than outline it, in a brief review, many important details having to be omitted, for during the eighteen years there has been much of action.

The Reclamation Service began making investigations in 1903, with a view ^{to} a reclamation project for Owens Valley. These continued for two years before Los Angeles publicly appeared in the matter. It was then announced that the City would come to Owens Valley for a water supply. J. B. Lippincott was at the

time the Reclamation Service head in California, and over the Owens Valley Project. About December 1904 he published an article indicating Owens Valley as a source of water supply for Los Angeles. At that time, and thereafter, he with his partner, C.K. Parker, were under pay from the City for investigating possible sources. That Lippincott, charged as a Government officer with the duty of promoting reclamation, was also being paid for work tending to defeat it, is easily established from the City's records. Reports and findings were wholly favorable to the Owens Valley reclamation project, as was found by a Board of Engineers called to consider it. The project was not only feasible, but was one of the most economical and most promising of all that the Service had considered. At the hearing before the Board, Lippincott made no denial of these facts, and advocated turning the matter over to the City. The Board refused to do this, and directed the continuance of investigations. In 1906 a bill was proposed in Congress granting aqueduct rights of way and various concessions. Congressman S. C. Smith, representing Inyo County, proposed a plan whereby the City's needs would be met and the rights of Owens Valley owners safeguarded as well. This was approved by the Secretary of the Interior, but through the influence of Lippincott, his superior Newell (whose part in the matter was kept under cover) and Pinchot, the President was prevailed on to direct that all restrictions on the privilege of taking water from Owens Valley be removed from the bill. It was so done.

The growth of California, the greater demand for its vacant lands, were then beginning, and there was a possibility that settlement of Owens Valley might add to the difficulties of stripping it of its water resources. This was met by the expedient of the throwing the whole of Owens Valley into "forest reserve," though for

square leagues not a tree appeared on its surface except where planted by settlers. As "forest" it could not be settled by any form of land location except homesteading, and homestead applications could be, and were, denied at the instance of Los Angeles. — In fact, conditions reached a stage where every application was acted upon subject to the approval or disapproval of the City of Los Angeles. So far as Owens Valley lands, water and development were concerned, the General Land Office was virtually transplanted to Los Angeles. During all this period, the reports made by reclamation engineers were received by Lippincott, and were by him retained indefinitely in his office in Los Angeles before being forwarded to ~~Los Angeles~~ *Washington*.

One Forest Bureau officer after another, after visiting Inyo, recommended that the alleged "forest land" in Owens Valley be restored to the public domain, but it was nearly nine years before the hampering restrictions were finally removed. There was a pretense of "protecting the source" of the water supply, but that it was mere pretense, and nothing more, is apparent from the claim being abandoned when the purpose of discouraging settlement had been well served. Such claim was never made in good faith, but merely served as a pretext. The water rights acquired by Los Angeles were largely by purchase of lands. While it may be said that this was fair procedure, its carrying out was far from being so. The initial purchases, of the Fastside Canal, are typical of others made later. There some settlers were willing to sell, for liberal prices, as in every community. Gaining a foothold, the City was able to "stampede" others, who felt that on them would be thrown the burden of sustaining the canal. Such owners had to sell, or go broke; and many a one parted with deepest regret with property

on which he had spent years and which he regarded as his life home. Identically the same condition prevailed in the 1923 purchases made by the City.

It is yet too soon to see just what will be done with the tens of thousands of acres of some of the Valley's best lands which have heretofore supported many homes; but it is more than probable that as in the case of the Eastside Canal, ranches near Lone Pine, some on what is called "Arkansaw Flat", near Bishop, and others, - lands heretofore cultivated will be allowed to revert to desert conditions. Abandoned homes, closed schools, are significant of the track of Los Angeles in Owens Valley.

But to return to our history: Some two or three years ago the City desired to secure additional legislation favoring the aqueduct. A prominent official visiting Bishop assured a meeting of citizens that the bill was merely for the purpose of legalizing the use of certain rights of way where the original survey had been deviated from, and that it was identical with an earlier bill to which no marked objection had been offered. A copy of the bill was secured, and it was found that this statement was false and misleading. Delegates were sent from Bishop to Washington, who successfully opposed certain features. W. B. Mathews telegraphed to the people of Bishop asking that opposition to the bill be withdrawn. To this a reply was sent that this course would be followed if he would guarantee that a certain agreement, to which reference will hereinafter be made, would be ratified by the City. He replied that this would be done. The agreement mentioned was reached in a conference between leading Los Angeles representatives and those of the Owens Valley ditches, in Bishop in April 1913. The Los Angeles men promised that the agreement would be officially sanctioned and accepted by the officials of the City. It was pigeon-holed without

action. A taxpayer's suit was put forward as the reason for lack of attention; but being aware of the readiness of the City to promise when favors were desired, and to forget when the emergency passed, Owens Valleyans consider it fully probable that the suit, so far as it served as an excuse for delay, was a matter of connivance.

Following Mathews' promise, more than a year went by without any advance on the part of the City toward making good on his promise or revising the earlier agreement. Finally a document was negotiated. It was not acceptable, being no guarantee of the Valley's rights. It may be mentioned that one of the chief negotiators on the part of Owens Valley, at that time a citizen held in considerable local respect, has in the recent past been one of the City's active agents in securing Owens Valley property.

Then arose the issue of constructing storage in Long Valley. The City has there an easement permitting the construction of a dam 100 feet high. If the dam were built higher, it would cover certain lands now owned by Fred Eaton, which it would be necessary for the City to purchase or condemn. It appeared that as a result of personal differences between engineer Wm. Mulholland and Mr. Eaton, the former has issued an ultimatum that the "Owens Valley dam will be built higher than 100 feet three years after Fred Eaton's death", or words to that effect. It further appears that while other Los Angeles officials favor a dam of increased height, that would impound in Long Valley a water supply ample for any emergency for either the City or Owens Valley, Mr. Mulholland's domination is absolute, and there is no probability of the problem being solved by construction of such storage.

The City proposed to Owens Valley interests that it would build a 100 foot dam in Long Valley, with certain agreements as to distribution of the water. Engineers for the Valley showed that

the proposed allotment would be unjust to Owens Valley, in withholding from the ditches the water due them under long standing rights.

They proposed as a counter plan that the storage be increased to that of a 150-foot dam, which would amply guarantee a sufficient reserve for the protection of all interests, both municipal and irrigation. For the reasons stated in the last preceding paragraph this was rejected by the City. Another agreement was suggested, and found numerous advocates in the Valley. Opposition was strong enough, however, to defeat its acceptance, as it was conditioned on acceptance by every separate ditch company. The Big Pine Canal, which the City has since purchased, held out solidly. While this agreement was pending, and contrary to its spirit, agents of the City began buying lands under what is known as the McNally Ditch. There, as in the case of the Eastside Canal, many unwilling owners were forced by circumstances to sell, until the City acquired majority control of the company. Mr. Mathews promised, in connection with this, that in case of the agreement being accepted, no lands would be bought west of Owens River. Nevertheless, the buying went on regardless of this promise; Mr. Mathews stated that he knew nothing of it.

It being a season of short water, owners of the Big Pine Canal refused to recognize the right of the City to the McNally Ditch water after it had passed that Company's headgate; and when it reached the Big Pine headgate, lower down, it was turned into that ditch. To meet this, the City's men began digging a cut-off which would have left the Big Pine headgate on dry land. An armed guard from the Big Pine company put a stop to this procedure, and it was not resumed.

In an effort to protect as much of the Valley as possible,

an Irrigation District was voted, and later bonds were voted to secure rights for the District on the Valley's ditches, to prevent our lands being stripped of all their water rights. The City, through the aid of local traitors, actuated by personal motives of gain or malice, succeeded in adding to its purchases. It acquired not only the McNally and Big Pine ditches but also a representation in others. Its emissaries have been and are busy using every method occurring to them to defeat and disintegrate the Irrigation District, to the end that the owners may be picked up one by one. Should their efforts succeed, the same condition will prevail on the remaining ditches as on those sold - the city will buy, for large prices where it must, for less where it can, but always with reliance on the value to it of a frightened public, believing itself forced to get out of a general wreck with whatever is possible. This stampeded condition does now now exist on the two main ditches of the Valley, however. A study of the records shows these facts, to be borne in mind:

The Irrigation District was organized by a vote of 599 for, 25 against.

On the instance of bonds, the vote was 702 for, 80 against - despite strenuous efforts on the part of a Los Angeles representative to defeat the bonds by every possible means of truth and otherwise - the latter mainly.

That illustrates what the sentiment was. Today the District holds options on the free ditches as follows, the options being secured from individuals:

BISHOP CREEK DITCH - 77 stockholders: all but 14 have optioned their stock to the District. Of the 14, one is being paid by the City, and one more is working with him and may be under pay; three properties have sold to the City prior to the option period; one is tied up in an estate; three are non-residents and have not been seen; and the remaining five are resident owners.

OWENS RIVER CANAL - 125 stockholders; 13 have not optioned to the District. Of the 13, two are attorneys for the City; one property was sold to the City prior to the option period; one, government service, awaits authority from Washington; three are non-resident companies, two of them landless; two are individuals, non-resident; and three are resident land owners.

Thus only eight (8) free agents, out of a total of 202 stockholders in the two companies, have taken the attitude of supporting the City's plans for extending its looting of the water resources of Owens Valley. This indicates an unchanged and almost unanimous public sentiment against the City's continued encroachments.

The people of Owens Valley have never opposed granting to the City whatever it might require for actual domestic and municipal purposes, but they have considered it wrong that their homes must be sacrificed in order that the City might build up farming communities elsewhere. The people cannot justly complain at the City buying out owners who have desired to sell, but they do not believe it just that home-makers should be forced out of their properties by unscrupulous and underhanded methods. We are seeing our settlements wrecked and lands thrown back to primitive conditions, when the City could acquire all its needed water supply by constructing a storage of ample proportions in Long Valley, filling its aqueduct, running its power plants, and yet allowing Owens Valley to be developed as Nature designed, into a region of farms, gardens and homes and prosperous communities, amid natural surroundings second to none other.

Were it possible to go into the subject fully, it could be shown that the Los Angeles history of Owens Valley has been one of wrong, from the use of its influence to secure virtual control of government bureaus and use them under false pretenses to overcome the rights of residents, through a succession of misrepresentations and bad faith.

The City's record of deception does not stop with its covert control of the Reclamation Service and its prevention of settlement in Owens Valley. It was only begun when the Reclamation Service secured from local owners of storage rights assignment of such rights to the Government in the belief by these owners that they were contributing to the Valley's development. Instead of the rights being restored to their proper control when the reclamation project was finally set aside, they became the City's property. There is more to the record than repeated breaking of promises for amicable adjustment of rights; more than the virtual corruption of Inyoites for the betrayal of their fellow citizens. It extends to the Los Angeles public, which has been led into a belief that the City "owns all the water in Owens Valley", and that its course has been fair bargain and sale ^{as} between willing individuals. Neither belief is true. There has been, and is, in Los Angeles among its hundreds of thousands of fair-minded people outside of the official leaders, a disposition to accept as true the statements, true or false, that have emanated from the inner circles. There was a pretense, early in the proceedings, that the water was sought for domestic and municipal purposes. This was soon abandoned, and irrigation of tributary lands became one of the acknowledged objects. When the campaign began, Sam T. Clover, editor of the Los Angeles News, was not one of the coterie owning San Fernando lands which Owens Valley water was to irrigate, to the immense profit of these owners. His paper had the courage to point out the wrong and injustice of much that was being done - and the News was skillfully forced out of business.

Committee after committee came to Owens Valley, never without the supervision of one of the select few who controlled the scheme. Delegations of City Councilmen came, and used, in some cases, their freedom from familiar surroundings to indulge in drunken debauches.

During some of those expeditions the flowing wine loosened their tongues, and proclaimed their intention of despoiling Owens Valley. Their declarations were in line with the earlier one made by the Los Angeles Times, that bats and owls would inhabit the Inyo County Courthouse when the City's plans were fulfilled.

The people of Owens Valley do not deny the growing requirements of Los Angeles. They do not deny the right to buy a supply to meet domestic and municipal requirements. But they do deny that there is any justice or right in the underhanded methods which have frequently appeared in the City's dealings. They absolutely deny the American fairness or justice of the City continuing to acquire water beyond all possible domestic and municipal uses, and merely in order that farming communities nearer the City's borders may be irrigated, or that the City may increase its business as a power merchant, when, as in Owens Valley, such further acquisitions mean virtually the driving of a prosperous and contented population from their homes. Many of these people have found in Inyo the land of their heart's desire, the place in which they desire to spend their remaining days. Many of them were of those, or of the stock, that redeemed this land from sagagery, that for desert conditions substituted homes, orchards, fields, and towns, with every modern factor necessary to make life enjoyable.

If there were no remedy for water shortage conditions in the growing metropolis except through the spoliation of Owens Valley, there would be better defense for the City's attitude. But such a remedy there is. The proposed 150 foot dam in Long Valley would not only meet every need, present and future, of the City, but it would accomplish this end without material injury to Owens Valley. Here is a fruitful land, whose products will be required by the City, and capable of great development. The City's course would turn it into a waste, virtually because of the stubborn whim of William

Mulholland, apparently the all-powerful dictator of City policies.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Club women of Owens Valley respectfully ask their sister Club women of Los Angeles to thoroughly investigate this water situation to the end that the City may always have sufficient water for all purposes without ruining the homes of the people of Owens Valley to secure it.

INYO COUNTY FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

President.

Secretary Pro-tem.

Resolutions
passed by
Says County
Federation of
Women

2nd draft

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles is, at the present time, and has been for some time past, buying the water in Owens Valley, drying up the fertile ranches and ruining the homes of the people in this section of the country, and

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WHEREAS, if this storage was provided the City of Los Angeles could always be certain of sufficient water for all purposes, and Owens Valley would have plenty of water for its uses, and the homes of the people here could be saved to them for all time to come; now, therefore,

X BE IT RESOLVED, that the club women of ^{Inyo County}~~Owens Valley~~ respectfully ask their sister club women of Los Angeles to thoroughly investigate this water situation to the end that the City may always have sufficient water for all purposes without ruining the homes of the people of Owens Valley to secure it.

First draft

Bishop, Calif. August 4, 1934.

Mrs. Charles H. Toll,
415 Kenneth Road,
Glendale, Calif.

My dear Mrs. Toll:-

In addressing you at this time, I represent the interests of the united club membership of Bishop, Inyo County.

We find, as we try to look forward to the work of the coming club year, that we are confronted by problems both difficult and alarming. We are apprehensive for the future life and activity of our clubs.

In perusing your letter to club presidents, we find you have a keen insight as to why clubs do not grow. You say we should diagnose the situation and get at the root of the difficulty, and, that this may be more successful in the coming year's work, you urge us to make use of our district officers, and you say "Do not hesitate to command us. We stand ready at your call with our workers, to give required help at all times and in all emergencies."

That certainly inspired courage in our hearts to write to you and tell you of our troubles and enlist your aid to relieve our distress.

Here is our problem: our clubs have the largest membership in Owens Valley and, in years past, have done a great deal of credible club work; have had an appreciable influence on community life here; have accumulated enough funds wherewith to purchase a lot, looking forward to the building of a club house that would be a credit to the Town of Bishop; have laid aside personal prejudice and worked whole-heartedly for the 'Disabled Men and Women of the World War Fund', and succeeded in furnishing more than one-fourth of the entire amount procured in our district. Of this we speak only to remind you that we have "done our bit" to hold the standard of living clear, clean and high.

At this time we should be planning our year's course of study: one that would include public affairs; current news; music, history and art; a social program; and an increase in our membership. But here lies our difficulty, - we cannot concentrate upon any of these topics; we cannot get the focus of our minds away from the one all-absorbing topic of the Valley, - namely that of the injustice being done here by the officials of the City of Los Angeles. Our thoughts and conversation invariably turn to the crisis that confronts us all, and of the bonds of sympathy that have developed to bind us together in our troubles. In diagnosing the situation, the real root of the matter is the spirit of unrest, fear, distrust and resentment towards Los Angeles officials caused by the deeds of their agents done here during the past

eighteen months. You have doubtless read in the newspapers of the specific acts of maliciousness, cunning and trickery that has been accomplished by these agents. Of families being left in isolation and desolation. Their social and educational advantages taken from them; their lands made unsalable and their business chances ruined. The spirit of discontent has had its disastrous effect upon the minds of our people. It is no wonder that men lose their self control and commit deeds of violence when they see the fruit of their life's work, - and hard work too - jeopardized, or made worthless, by the nefarious acts of a powerful enemy. Well may they question whether it is better to walk out and leave it to return to desert, or, like Hamlet, end it all. God grant that they may have the courage to face the situation awhile longer.

Naturally we are on the defensive, and must wait for the next move of our opponent, and it is this waiting and the awful uncertainty and anxiety attending this waiting that has ruined business in our town and country; it has reduced land values to nil; it has angered the people and driven some to deeds of violence.

After having made loans in our valley for years, the Federal Land Bank now refuses to consider a loan here, and the reason, as was plainly stated in the newspapers, is the depreciated land values here due to the attitude of the officials of the City of Los Angeles toward us. Many men here face just such financial ruin as over-powered Harold Walline, whose tragic death has been widely published, and we fear others may be contemplating a similar deed of violence in their futile efforts to combat the ruin that seems inevitable.

Whose fault is all this? Why should it be allowed to continue? Is political prestige of more value than human life and happiness? Shall personal prejudice be allowed to rule while human beings are made to suffer? It did in the Dark Ages, but we are living in a different time. The women, as well as the men of Los Angeles, should think of these things. Los Angeles needs us; needs our friendship and our good will; needs our crops and our beautiful scenery.

Now, dear Mrs. Toll, we club women are turning to you and your coterie of workers to help us. You and your thirty-two thousand club women can change this attitude towards Owens Valley if you will. Surely the people of the City of Los Angeles do not intend to allow personal prejudice to govern the acts which control their water supply there, and at the same time commit such acts of injustice as is being done here.

You, in a recent letter to our County President, have urged that an elert woman be selected to actively press the collection of the amount due from us on the Endowment Fund, namely about Fifty-two Dollars. I regret to say it has not been paid, but, under the circumstances of general depression maintaining all over the Valley, due to the unpleasant relations existing between the people and the officials of the City of

Mrs. Toll - Page 5.

Los Angeles, it seems useless to ask for such a sum. Unless there is a change here from the unrest of the present situation, there can be no club work done here. Unless the Federation of Women's Clubs comes to our aid to change the policy now being pursued by Los Angeles City Officials against our valley we may not be able to hold our position among the clubs of your district.

Dear Mrs. Toll, the call for help comes to you from Owens Valley, what will you do about it?

Most sincerely yours,

For CLUB WOMEN'S COUNCIL.

Letter to
Mrs Joel
from Club-
women's
Council
Written by
Mrs Winter-
ton



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

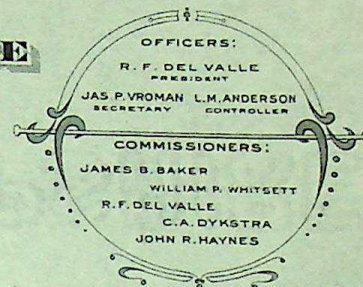
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

METROPOLITAN 4200

BUREAU OF WATER WORKS & SUPPLY
WM. MULHOLLAND, CHIEF ENGINEER

207-9-11 50 BROADWAY

BUREAU OF POWER & LIGHT
E.F. SCATTERGOOD, CHIEF ELECTRICAL ENGINEER



OFFICERS:

R. F. DEL VALLE
PRESIDENT

JAS. PYROMAN, L.M. ANDERSON
SECRETARY CONTROLLER

COMMISSIONERS:

JAMES B. BAKER

WILLIAM P. WHITSETT

R. F. DEL VALLE

C. A. DYKSTRA

JOHN R. HAYNES

November 13, 1924

Bessie T. Best, ~~Secretary~~, *President*
Business Women's Club,
Bishop, California

Dear Madam:

Believing that your organization will be interested in knowing of the progress that has been made by the Public Service Commission in its efforts to help bring to the attention of the California Highway Commission the necessity of improving the road from Mojave to Bishop and to help arouse the people of our state to a fuller realization of the matchless hunting, fishing and recreational possibilities of Owens Valley, we are sending you some material that is indicative of what has thus far been accomplished.

In answer to this committee's letter to the Highway Commission several weeks ago, a copy of which was forwarded to you, we were invited to appear before that body at its meeting in San Francisco on October 25. On the day before this meeting I secured an audience with Governor Richardson and placed before him the necessity of improving the Owens Valley road. The Governor was deeply interested in the subject and addressed a note to the Highway Commission expressing the desire that every possible consideration be given the matter.

The meeting with the Highway Commission, attended by President Del Valle and myself, as members of the committee, resulted in the Commission instructing the Highway Engineer to make an estimate of the cost of maintenance of the road from Mojave to Independence, it being the opinion that that section of the road most seriously needed attention. A copy of the Commission's letter to our committee advising us of this action, as well as a copy of the Commission's recorded action, is enclosed herewith, and is self-explanatory.

Letters were sent to a large number of civic and commercial organizations in Los Angeles requesting that they give active support to the movement to bring about, first, the temporary improvement of the Owens valley road and, second, the construction of a hard road into and through Owens Valley.

From the Automobile Club of Southern California our committee received the assurance that that organization is actively in support of the permanent improvement of the road. Mr. East, chief engineer for the Automobile Club has also given us

valuable assistance in arranging further meetings with the Highway Commission's Committee of Nine.

Acting on the letter from our committee, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce adopted a resolution expressing its wholehearted support of the project and invited our committee to appear before its Board of Directors to further discuss the subject. At that meeting, which was held Thursday, November 6, officials of the Chamber once more stated their determination to give every assistance at their command in carrying forward this work. President William Lacy announced at the conclusion of the meeting that he will appoint a committee of three Chamber officials to work with a similar committee from the Automobile Club in the formation of a club of 50,000 persons who will spend a part or all of their vacation period in the Owens Valley High Sierras region. A copy of the Chamber of Commerce resolution is enclosed herewith.

The matter of supporting the movement to bring about the permanent improvement of the Owens Valley road was placed before the Playground Department of the City of Los Angeles. That Department adopted and forwarded to the Highway Commission a resolution urging that this improvement work be carried through. A copy of the Playground Department's resolution is enclosed herewith.

In answer to our communication to the Lions Club of Los Angeles, that organization has invited our committee to appear before it at an early meeting to set forth the subject in detail, in order that proper action may be taken.

Answering our committee's request that Los Angeles Club Women give this road project their earnest attention, we have been advised by Mrs. Augusta W. Urquhart, President of the California Federation of Women's Clubs that the appeal for improvement of the Owens Valley road was presented to the Federation at a recent meeting and the support of the Federation was voted.

At a meeting of the Highway Commission's Committee of Nine held in Los Angeles Friday, November 7, President Del Valle and I once more presented in detail the necessity for the improvement of the Owens Valley road by the Highway Commission. In return, the Commission's Committee of Nine expressed the warm desire to take whatever steps are within its power to bring about this highway improvement.

Los Angeles newspapers, during the past two months, have carried a large number of news stories and editorials pointing out the scenic beauties and recreational opportunities of the Owens Valley region and the urgent need of permanently improving the Owens Valley road. No doubt a number of these articles have come to your attention. We are enclosing herewith a copy of the full page lay-out printed in the Los Angeles Times, Sunday, November 9.

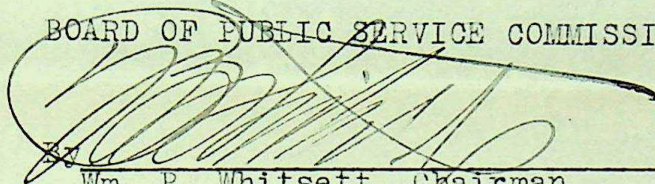
Our committee is deeply appreciative of the wonderful assistance so generously given by the communities and organizations in Owens Valley that have supplied us with material and

photographs to use in the preparation of an Owens Valley booklet. We are happy to report that the actual work of compiling this booklet will be set underway within a few days. When off the press, we sincerely hope that it will help spread throughout the state the message of the marvelous outing opportunities that await the people in the Owens Valley region.

In conclusion, permit us to say that our committee has become so intensely interested in and enthusiastic over this whole subject that we could not stop now, even though we tried to do so.

Very truly yours,

BOARD OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, likely belonging to Wm. P. Whitsett, is written over the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Wm. P. Whitsett, Chairman,
Special Committee on Owens Valley Road

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

C O P Y

CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY COMMISSION

Forum Building
Sacramento

October 31, 1924

Mr. R. F. Del Valle, Member,
Board of Public Service Commissioners,
643 Olive Street,
Los Angeles, California

Dear Sir:

For your information I am enclosing a copy of a motion passed by the California Highway Commission shortly after your appearance before the Commission at San Francisco on October 25th.

This does not mean that the Commission has decided to take over this road for maintenance, but that it will very likely do so after this report is received from the State Engineer.

I wish to assure you that I am very much in favor of the taking over for maintenance of this road, and will endeavor in every way to secure the approval of the Commission.

Yours very truly,

(signed) N. T. Edwards

NTD:MC

Commissioner

(C O P Y)

VOTED, that the State Highway Engineer is herewith requested to prepare estimate for taking over for maintenance that portion of the State highway from Mojave to Independence, for inclusion in the budget of 1925.

LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

128-132 South Broadway

Los Angeles, Cal.

November 3, 1924

Mr. Wm. P. Whitsett,
Department of Public Service,
207 So. Broadway,
Los Angeles, Cal.

Dear Mr. Whitsett:-

Referring to your letter of October 10th in regard to the campaign to encourage travel to the Owens Valley and the development of the highway to make this possible. I am enclosing for your information a copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce and forwarded to the State Highway Commission.

In order that the Chamber may render such assistance as it can in the campaign, our Board of Directors would be very glad to have the Board of Public Service Commissioners lunch with it next Thursday, November 6th, at noon, and discuss informally the matter of directing tourist travel toward Owens Valley.

Very truly yours,

LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(signed) A. G. Arnold

AGA:JH
Enc.

Secretary

RESOLUTION TO STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

Ever since the first highway bond issue, held in the State in 1909, the City of Los Angeles has been desirous of adequate highway connection with the Owens Valley country. Since the initial steps were taken by your Commission to include the Mojave to Bishop road as a State Highway project, the need for the improvement of this route has rapidly become more and more urgent.

The recreational possibility of the Owens Valley region is becoming known each year to an increasing number of residents of Southern California, and an active campaign is now under way to encourage travel from Los Angeles to this area.

In view of this situation, the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce herewith urges upon the Highway Commission the following suggestions for their consideration:

1. That the Mojave to Bishop road be included as a primary project in any plan or plans that may develop in reference to the State Highway system.
2. That steps be taken immediately to push forward the grading and temporary improvement of that section of the road between Mojave and Independence.
3. That at the earliest possible moment consideration be given to the construction of a proper road from Mojave to Bishop.

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of resolution adopted by the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce at the regular meeting held Thursday, October 30th, 1924.

ATTEST:

President

Secretary

P L A Y G R O U N D D E P T .

of the

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

C O P Y

156 North Spring Street

October 24, 1924

California Highway Commission,
Forum Bldg.,
Sacramento, Calif.

Gentlemen:

It has been called to the attention of the Playground Commission of the City of Los Angeles that there is great demand and urgent need for improving the highway leading from Mojave, California, through Owens Valley, via Bishop to Tioga Pass.

This Commission realizes there are many reasons why such a project should be furthered, but desires only to present to you some facts which are directly related to the interests that this Commission has in sponsoring the improvement of the Highway.

The question of the condition of this highway and its improvement has been a point for discussion on several occasions by the Playground Commission, and at a meeting of the Board held October 23 the following resolution was unanimously adopted and the Secretary was instructed to forward to you a copy.

WHEREAS: The Federal Government, in May, 1924, has officially recognized the importance of wholesome out-door recreation and authorized through permanent committees definite action which will foster and promote wholesome outdoor recreation in all its phases.

WHEREAS: The City and County governments of several cities and counties in California have officially taken action to provide opportunity for wholesome recreation for the residents of their various communities.

WHEREAS: The City of Los Angeles through its Playground Commission has established and conducted for the past two seasons a municipal recreation camp in the High Sierra Mountains near Mammoth Lakes, the full development of which and other future camps is greatly restricted by present road conditions and uncertain transportation facilities.

WHEREAS: In the southern part of the state the available

camp areas are fast disappearing and with a constantly growing population, new territory for recreation purposes should be made available to meet the ever increasing demand.

WHEREAS: There is lying dormant at this time within reach of hundreds of thousands of California residents probably the greatest undeveloped and unexcelled recreational area in the whole world.

WHEREAS: There is great need and urgent demand for an improved highway through the Owens Valley territory from Mojave to Tioga Pass and that such a highway would be of inestimable value to the residents of that section through which the road passes and also would render a great service to hundreds of thousands of men women and children of California in that it would provide and bring within reach unexcelled recreational opportunities in the greatest mountain playground in the world, therefore be it

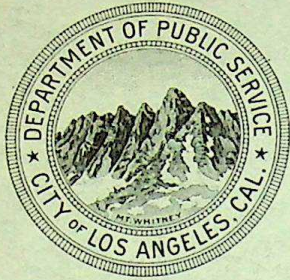
RESOLVED: That the Board of Playground Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles approves and endorses the plan to improve the highway through Owens Valley from Mojave, California to Tioga Pass, and would strongly urge the Highway Commission of the State of California to use all its power and effort to bring about such improvement at the earliest possible moment.

(SIGNED) Frederick G. Leonard

President Playground Commission

Charles S. Lamb

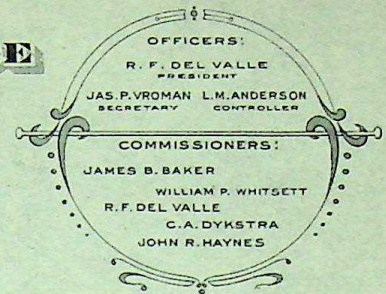
Secretary



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

METROPOLITAN 4200
BUREAU OF WATER WORKS & SUPPLY
WM MULHOLLAND, CHIEF ENGINEER

207-9-11 50. BROADWAY
BUREAU OF POWER & LIGHT
E.F. SCATTERGOOD, CHIEF ELECTRICAL ENGINEER



October 6, 1924

Hydration

Bessie P. Best, Secretary,
Business Women's Club,
Bishop, California

Dear Madam:

Enclosed herewith is a copy of a letter from the Board of Public Service Commissioners to the California Highway Commission. The letter, we believe, is self-explanatory.

During the recent visit of our Commission to Owens Valley, it was repeatedly stated by representatives of our party that the Department of Public Service is most actively interested in a movement to secure the construction of a hard road from Mojave into and through Owens Valley. Following the Commissioner's return to Los Angeles, we have taken such steps as we believe will be most effective in securing this vitally necessary improvement.

First of all, the matter has been thoroughly presented to the Los Angeles newspapers for the purpose of securing the wholehearted support of this project on the part of the press. During the past three weeks, a number of special news stories and editorials emphasizing the necessity of hard roads into Owens Valley have appeared in the Los Angeles newspapers. This publicity will continue and will grow in volume.

As the attached copy of the letter to the California Highway Commission discloses, the matter has also been formally presented to the State authorities by our Commission. Large organizations throughout Southern California, such as the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and the Automobile Club of Southern California, are being urged to lend their support to a State-wide campaign to bring about the construction of the Owens Valley road.

At the present time our Commission is gathering material to be used in an attractive souvenir booklet, 50,000 or more of which will be printed and distributed. This booklet will present to the reader the many attractions, scenic beauties and recreational opportunities of Owens Valley and the High Sierras in that region.

It is particularly desired that each and every town and community in the Valley present the numerous scenic or recreational attractions and the travel routes which it has to offer the

visitor in Owens Valley. In accordance with this plan, we ask that you mail us at the earliest possible date all such data relative to the Bishop district, which could be used in the preparation of the Owens Valley booklet.

In addition to bringing the great recreational attractions of your region to thousands of people throughout the country, the booklet is being prepared with a special view of hastening the construction of the Owens Valley road.

In conclusion, we desire to emphasize the fact that our Commission regards its interest in helping to bring about this highway improvement as a subject absolutely separate and apart from the Owens Valley water question now under consideration. The establishment of hard roads into Owens Valley is simply a matter of common interest to both your people and the City of Los Angeles.

We trust that you will be able to send us, within a very few days, the information above mentioned.

Very truly yours,

BOARD OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

By

Chairman, Special Committee On Owens Valley Road.

C O P Y

October 4, 1924

California Highway Commission,
Forum Building,
Sacramento, California

Gentlemen:

Believing that the time has arrived for the permanent improvement of that section of the State Highway system reaching from the Town of Mojave through Owens Valley to Tioga Pass, the Board of Public Service Commissioners on September 10, 1924 un-animously adopted a resolution pledging its active support to this vitally necessary improvement. A copy of the resolution is attached hereto.

Subsequent to the adoption of the resolution, the Board appointed a special committee with authority to present this matter to your Honorable Commission.

There is now an excellent concrete boulevard leading from Los Angeles to the Town of Mojave, a distance of 106 miles. From Mojave, however, the only vehicular route into Owens Valley is by way of an unimproved and extremely rough road which in many sections is little better than a trail.

The City of Los Angeles is directly interested in securing the improvement of the road from Mojave into and through Owens Valley for two reasons:

First: The ownership and operation by the City of Los Angeles of the Owens River aqueduct system, representing an investment of \$33,000,000, makes it necessary for the City constantly to use this road for the transportation of materials and workmen.

Second: The City of Los Angeles has established a summer camp in the Mammoth Lake region, north of Bishop. Full development of the wonderful outing possibilities of this municipal camp ground can never be realized until a hard road is built into Owens Valley.

In addition to the direct ways in which this road affects the interests of Los Angeles City, our Board desires to call your attention to other conditions which prove, first, that the improvement is most urgently needed, and second, that it

is a highway improvement which properly should be handled by your Honorable Commission.

That section of the road between the town of Mojave and a point nine miles north of Indian Wells, is within the County of Kern. Since this section of Kern County is neither populated nor available for agricultural development, Kern County cannot be expected to finance the improvement of this road, as a county project.

From the Kern County line to Tioga Pass, the road travels through Inyo and Mono Counties. While it is true that a hard road into Owens Valley would greatly benefit the residents of this region, it is also a fact that the cost of financing this project is altogether too heavy to be borne by the comparatively few taxpayers residing in these two sparsely settled counties.

It is the existence of the conditions above noted which doubtless influenced the action of your Commission, when it took steps several years ago to have this route surveyed and accepted as a necessary State Highway improvement.

Since the initial steps were taken by your Commission to include the Mojave to Bishop road as a State Highway project, the need for the improvement of this route has rapidly become more and more urgent.

As your Honorable Commission is well aware, the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada mountains has come to be recognized during the past few years as the greatest hunting, fishing and recreational area in the country. Each season the number of California citizens who seek to enter the Sierra Nevadas by way of Owens Valley is increasing by thousands. From the south, at the present time, this matchless playground can only be reached by way of the difficult, unimproved road stretching from Mojave to Tioga Pass.

Realizing the tremendous recreational possibilities of the Owens Valley region, and the benefits that will accrue to the residents of Owens Valley and to the State of California generally through the development of this area, our Board has already taken steps to encourage the formation of an outing club with a membership of approximately 50,000. Membership of this club will be confined to those persons who desire each year to visit or travel through the High Sierras in the vicinity of Owens Valley.

The necessity for making this section of the High Sierras accessible to the people of California is becoming more and more evident year by year. It is a fact, however, that the unexcelled, mountain beauties and outing possibilities of this region can never be made accessible to the great mass of our citizens until hard roads have been constructed into the Owens

California Highway Commission #3

Valley country. With this condition in mind, we cannot express too forcibly the absolute necessity for immediate action looking toward the construction of a permanent State Highway from Mojave into and through Owens Valley.

In view of this situation, our Board desires to submit to your Honorable Commission the following suggestions for your consideration;

First: That steps be taken to push forward the grading and temporary improvement of that section of the road from Mojave to Independence. Grading and leveling of the road, if completed this fall and winter, would open the highway for comparatively easy travel next Summer.

Second: That immediate consideration be given to the construction of a hard road from Mojave to Bishop.

Third: That following the completion of a hard road from Mojave to Bishop, this highway be extended through the mountains to Tioga Pass.

In order that our committee may be given the opportunity to present to your Commission, in more detail, the many urgent conditions which make necessary the above mentioned improvements, we respectfully request that we be given an opportunity to appear before your Commission at an early date. If you will give us notice of the earliest possible date upon which we can present this matter to your Commission, at a meeting in Sacramento, San Francisco or Los Angeles, we shall be prepared to provide you with much additional information and data bearing upon this question.

Very truly yours,

BOARD OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

by W. P. Whitsett (signed)

Wm. Mulholland "

R. F. Del Valle "
Special Committee on Owens Valley
Road.

C O P Y

WHEREAS: The Owens Valley, with its hundreds of mountain lakes, streams and high Sierra meadows and forests, is the richest fishing, big game hunting and outing park adjacent to any modern city, to which already hundreds of our citizens go for their vacations and many are already establishing summer homes, and

WHEREAS: The automobile and aeroplane make it possible to bring the beauties of the Owens River region within the reach of all citizens of our City, in a volume that will many time offset the conflicting interests of that Valley and the people of our municipality, therefore

RESOLVED: That this Board approves the plans developed by Mayor Cryer and Chief Engineer Mulholland and pledges that it will use its best endeavors to procure the support of the newspapers, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, the Automobile Club of Southern California and other organizations to complete, at the earliest possible date, a pleasure highway between Los Angeles and Bishop, to use their earnest efforts to bring about better railroad facilities, to secure the establishment of a series of aeroplane landing stations that will rapidly multiply the interest in this direction, that the people of Southern California can avail themselves of the wonderful out-door life offered by the mountains, the streams and lakes surrounding Owens Valley, that we will immediately endeavor to have the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce appoint a committee to confer with a committee to be appointed by the property owners of the town in the Owens Valley, to work out a program of summer and winter sports and recreations and to advertise same and to undertake, at once, through the great organization of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, to form a club in Los Angeles and Southern California, of fifty thousand persons who will agree to spend from ten to thirty days each year in the delightful mountains and valley tributary to these towns, in order to show our appreciation of your cooperation.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Public Service Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles at its meeting of Sept. 10, 1924

(signed) Jas. P. Vroman
Secretary.

AN OPEN LETTER TO W. A. CHALFANT

For several years prior to 1921, the undersigned, with other members of a committee representing the Associated Ditches, devoted a large share of their time and energies to negotiating an agreement with the City of Los Angeles, to settle all conflicting interests in the waters of Owens River. Mr L. C. Hall was employed throughout these negotiations as our counsel. When we finally arrived at terms and conditions which we deemed highly favorable to the valley, we urged the acceptance of the agreement so zealously that we were accused of "standing in" with the City.

This agreement in the first place provided for the construction of a 100 foot dam in Long Valley, with foundations for a 150 foot dam and also additional storage of 15,000 acre feet on Reck Creek. This would have furnished a full supply of water at all times for all the land which has ever been irrigated within the boundaries of the present Owens Valley Irrigation District.

It would have also opened up the way, had physical conditions permitted dam construction, to conserve the entire flow of Owens River, in which conservation the Valley would have shared. It would also have opened up the way for bringing into the valley, the waters of Mono Lake Basin, a government project which contemplated the reclamation of over 40,000 acres of arid lands in Owens Valley.

This plan would have postponed indefinitely the necessity for additional water purchase by Los Angeles in Owens Valley, for it would have given Southern California opportunity to conserve its own flood waters and time to promote the Colorado River project.

We published this proposed agreement verbatim. We advocated it day and night. We realized that it meant the salvation of the valley. It seemed too good to be true. We had put our hearts into this effort to save the Valley, (ourselves included, it is true). In the face of heavy odds and apparently insurmountable difficulties, we saw our efforts apparently culminating in complete success.

Not only was the water question settled and guarantees for increased prosperity and development assured, but construction projects, involving a pay roll of approximately 700 men, would have commenced immediately and continued for a decade, insuring increased business and prosperity for every business man in the Town of Bishop.

But this agreement is dead—dead as a door nail. And the storage project is dead as far as the Valley is concerned. Killed through the efforts and influence of W. W. Watterson, W. A. Chalfant and J. C. Claussen, acting apparently under the advice of Fred Eaton. Control of the organs of publicity and financial influence and coercion, were the means used to accomplish the killing.

When you rejected that agreement, you inflicted an irreparable injury upon the Valley. To use a sailor's phrase, you scuttled the ship, and ever since, in an apparent attempt to retrieve your blunders, you have been placing the blame on others and pretending to make efforts to salvage the wreck.

The subterfuge of covering one's own blunders and misdeeds by trying to fasten the blame on others is as old as the hills. To say the least, it is a cowardly alibi.

If you had stopped with efforts to fasten upon others, the blame for your own disastrous blunders, we might have ignored them, since we possessed all the facts to prove the truth of our asseertions, whenever we so desired, but when you deliberately try to inflame the public mind to mob violence and assassination, as in your issues of January 3rd and January 7th, we feel compelled to expose your true character. In your special issue of the 7th inst., you make a false, hearsay charge that "One of the chief trio, (Hall, Watterson or Symons) is said to have stated his intention to 'ruin the valley if it's the last act of my life'."

No such statement was ever made by any of the three. There has been nothing left to ruin since you and your masters rejcted the agreement we had negotiated, organized your so called Protective Association with W. W. Watterson at its head, squandered \$17,000—of the people's money and accomplished nothing except to file a complaint to enjoin the City of Los Angeles from storing water in Long Valley from which the irrigators would have received immense benefits and without expense to them.

The Irrigation District is a delusion and a snare. It won't protect anybody or anything. It won't help anybody except perhaps the salaried politicians, the paid attorneys and the owners of dry land, who would automatically receive a bonus in the shape of legal claims against the District for water.

On the contrary, it will depreciate the holdings of every farmer in the District who now owns an edequate water right. It will overwhelm the tax-payer with a burden too heavy to bear, the weight, of which he has only begun to feel, and eventually force him to sell, (if he has anything left), on the City's own terms.

You are so blinded by prejudice that your reasoning powers have almost ceased to function. Instead of appealing to the intellect of your readers, your sheet has degenerated into a lawless appeal to passion and mob violence.

The people are beginning to realize that W. W. Watterson, J. C. Claussen and you are responsible more than any other members of the community, for the condition of affairs we have described.

Dated January 11th, 1924.

GEO. WATTERSON
WM. SYMONS

MAYOR PORTER'S

Statement On

Owens Valley and Mono Basin Land Purchases

FOR the information of the citizens of Owens Valley, the Mono Basin and Los Angeles, the Board of Water and Power Commissioners is pleased to present a communication recently received from Mayor John C. Porter.

In his letter, Mayor Porter requests that the Board of Water and Power Commissioners take such steps as will best protect both the land owners and the City of Los Angeles in the purchase program to be carried forward by the City with funds from the \$38,800,000 Water Bond issue.

"In dealing with the people of Owens Valley and the Mono Basin," Mayor Porter declared in his letter, "let us make these points very clear:

"1. The City of Los Angeles expects to deal fairly and frankly with the people of Owens Valley and the Mono Basin.

"2. For every dollar invested, the City of Los Angeles must receive in return a dollar's worth of value.

"3. For every dollar invested by the city for lands and town properties we insist 100 cents must go into the hands of the actual owners—and not into the pockets of speculators and option brokers."

Following receipt of Mayor Porter's communication, the Board officially stated that it already had taken steps to secure the withdrawal from entry of all public lands in Owens Valley and the Mono Basin. The Board further stated that the Mayor's declarations represented its intentions in every respect and that every effort will be made to conduct the land purchase program in line with the policies of the city's chief executive.

BOARD OF WATER AND POWER COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

June 24, 1930.

(Read Mayor Porter's Letter on Pages 2 and 3)



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY HALL
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

JOHN C. PORTER
MAYOR

June 11, 1930.

Board of Water and Power Commissioners,
207 South Broadway,
Los Angeles, California.

Gentlemen:

Pending the completion and approval of the engineering and financial details to be included in the water development and supply program authorized by the citizens of Los Angeles on May 20, last, I desire to recommend that one special phase of the work be given immediate attention.

I refer to the danger of speculation and exploitation in Owens Valley and Mono Basin lands on the part of individuals or syndicates seeking to reap private profits at the expense of both the rightful land owners and the City of Los Angeles.

I urge that the Water and Power Commission take such steps as will safeguard both the actual owners of Owens Valley lands and the City of Los Angeles against the tactics of those who are or may seek to exploit the Owens Valley and Mono Basin lands for unwarranted profits.

Owners of homes, ranches and business properties in Owens Valley and in the Mono Basin should officially be advised that the City of Los Angeles, in carrying out its land purchase program, will deal only with the actual owners of property. These owners should be advised that they will not require, in any particular, the services of legal advisers or land brokers in dealing with the city.

So far as my office is concerned, I shall seriously question any land purchase transaction that may have been presented to the city through the medium of a third party, whether that third party be an individual broker, a so-called legal adviser, or a syndicate.

Especially, your Commission is urged to take every proper precaution possible to prevent the optioning of Owens Valley and Mono Basin lands by speculators with the purpose

June 11, 1930.

Board of Water and Power Commissioners (2)

later of disposing of these lands, at a fat profit, to the city.

Furthermore, I believe steps have been taken, but should be verified, to have the Federal Government withdraw from entry all Government lands that may still be open for entry in the region of the city's purchases. This should be done to prevent the entry of these lands by speculators for the sole purpose of forcing the city to purchase.

In dealing with the people of Owens Valley and the Mono Basin, let us make these points very clear:

1. The City of Los Angeles expects to deal fairly and frankly with the people of Owens Valley and the Mono Basin.

2. For every dollar invested, the City of Los Angeles must receive in return a dollar's worth of value.

3. For every dollar invested by the city for lands and town properties we insist 100 cents must go into the hands of the actual owners - and not into the pockets of speculators and option brokers.

May I recommend to your Commission that you immediately take such steps as will most effectively protect the interests of the City of Los Angeles and the property owners in Owens Valley and the Mono Basin along the lines just presented.

Yours very truly,

John C. Porter
M a y o r .

JCP/BP

TWO SIDES TO EVERY QUESTION

On account of the tirade of abuse and vilification to which we have been subjected because of our opposition to the Irrigation District, we think that a statement of the reasons for our attitude will not be out of place.

Under the most favorable conditions it would be difficult to carry on an Irrigation District in Owens Valley because of the high cost of administration. See the expenses already incurred and remember that this is only a beginning. No water or property acquired and no ditch assessments paid by the District.

Under our present system of irrigation (probably the cheapest in the whole state of California), most of our farmers are going behind.

The main argument advanced by the District enthusiasts was that it would protect the valley against the encroachments of the City of Los Angeles. No idea could be more misleading. We would like to impress the following facts upon all who may read this article, particularly the residents of the town of Bishop. THE IRRIGATION DISTRICT WILL NOT PROTECT ANYTHING BUT, IF ALLOWED TO CONTINUE, IT WILL EVENTUALLY RUIN ALL OUR FARMERS NOT ALREADY BANKRUPT. Many of our farms are now so heavily encumbered that the interest on the mortgage greatly exceeds the cash rental value.

Suppose the District were properly functioning and Los Angeles wanted to acquire more water, how would it be likely to proceed? It would buy more land and shut off the water, would it not? And where would the water go? Why down hill naturally—into the river and aqueduct. Where else could it go? Some of our District enthusiasts answer: "Why it would be used somewhere else in the District." But there would be no "somewhere else" in the District because that "somewhere else" would have been bought up by the city, and naturally the farmers would not ruin their good land by swamping it.

Mr. James F. Peck, a well known water attorney employed by the Protective Association, recommended the formation of a holding corporation instead of an Irrigation District. Had his advice been acted on, Mr. Peck's fee of \$10,000 would have been a cheap investment. But other counsels prevailed.

We wish to add a few words regarding options to purchase the water stock taken by the District and proposed purchase of the same. The California Joint Stock Land Bank of San Francisco has loaned several hundred thousand dollars to farmers in the District. Within the past thirty days this Bank has sent counterparts of the following letter to its debtors:

December 22, 1923.

"Mr. _____,
_____, California.

Dear Sir:

It has come to our attention that you either have or are about to sell to the Owens Valley Irrigation District, your stock in the Bishop Creek Ditch Company, which stock we hold under pledge as a part of the security in connection with your mortgage to us for \$_____.

As this water stock represents a right which for practical purposes is appurtenant to the land described in your mortgage, and as your attempt of sale would threaten the severance of this water right from the land, we feel seriously concerned about the matter, and in our opinion the accomplishment of such a severance would materially depreciate the value of our security.

As you are aware, the mortgage provides that in case the security is jeopardized, or its value threatened, we may declare the whole debt immediately due, the mortgage making us the sole judge in this matter. We would regret to be compelled to take this course, but it may be that if such a proposed sale be carried out by you that we would be compelled to do so for our own protection.

We would thank you to advise us promptly what are the real facts in the case.

Yours very truly,
A. W. HENDRICK, Vice-President."

If the proposed sale of \$736,000 worth of District Bonds goes through, it means that an additional lien for the pro rata of this amount will be placed upon every ranch in the District (with more disastrous contingencies in the background.) This means depreciation of the security and will furnish just as good grounds for foreclosure before maturity as an option of water stock.

We have been called traitors for negotiating and recommending an agreement with the City of Los Angeles which is now generally conceded to have been most favorable to the Valley,—infinitely more so than one recently recommended by the Irrigation District Directors. We have been called traitors for fighting for the water rights of all the settlers when the same were encroached upon in Long Valley. We were called traitors when we opposed the suit instigated by the so-called Protective Association to enjoin the construction of a dam in Long Valley, a project which would have solved the problem of furnishing an adequate water supply at all times for every acre of irrigated land within the District. We are again called traitors for opposing a plan which means the confiscation of our property and that of our neighbors.

We submit there are two sides to every question.

GEO. WATTERSON,
WM. SYMONS.

W B Best

WHEREAS, the Board of Public Works of the City of Los Angeles has publicly announced that it is ready and willing to buy and is now negotiating for the purchase of all lands and water rights under the following ditches: Owens River Canal; Bishop Creek Ditch Co., Farmers Ditch Co., and the Rawson Ditch Co.;

And the City has also announced through the same channel that they could not pay reparations or damages to the towns in Owens Valley for any losses sustained by them, their reason for not doing so being the opinion of City Attorney Stephens that it could not be done legally and lawfully;

THEREFORE, it is deemed advisable at this time to make every effort possible to carry on the work that has already been done, maintain the position we occupy, and compel the City of Los Angeles to make good the damage it has done.

The foundation for damages to the Town of Bishop has already been completed. The report of State Engineer McClure is in the hands of the Governor, has been printed in pamphlet form, and while not available locally, it is very much in our favor. The sentiment of the citizenship of the State is with us; the members of the State Legislature are daily becoming more interested and more informed, and we need to place our case before them during the present session. This must be done promptly.

As the same conditions exist in the other towns of the valley, Laws, Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine have been asked to join with us so that all may be represented.

It will be necessary to raise sufficient funds to carry on an active campaign, using every means possible to collect damages from the City of Los Angeles, the first move being to get the necessary legislation through the present session of the State Legislature. The Board of Trustees of the Town cannot levy a tax to cover this expense, thereby distributing the cost equitably over the whole town. It is thought best that each property owner make a voluntary contribution to this fund of ONE DOLLAR for each one hundred dollars assessed valuation of his or her real estate and improvements. This will answer the same purpose as a direct tax, and funds will not be accepted on any other basis. Any reparations received will be distributed on the same basis to only those who have contributed to this fund.

I, or we, the undersigned property owners of the Town of Bishop hereby appoint F. H. Arcularius, S. H. Ayres, J. S. Eastman, Jess Hession and T. G. Watterson a committee for the above purposes, and authorize them to do any and all acts and deeds within their power to accomplish a right and just settlement with the City of Los Angeles. We pledge our share of the contribution and will pay the same at once.

Your assessment 850

Contribution 850