WHAT ABOUT WATER?

State's Program All Staked Out

By WILLIAM E. WARNE
Director, Dept. of Water Resources

"Whoever brings the water will bring the people."

Thus California's future was accurately foretold by a young Irish immigrant as he de- barked from a ship in 1877 and admired California's pleasant climate.

The newcomer was William Mulholland, who had $10 in his pocket and a resolve to "grow with the country."

Joining the Los Angeles Water Dept., as a laborer or ditch tender, Mulholland worked his way up to the head of the department and to renown as one of the world's greatest engineers. He won fame as leader of Los Angeles' successful quests for water supplies and as builder of the great aqueduct, which sparked Los Angeles spectacular growth.

California history in a large measure is a story of water quests. San Diego was the first city to meet imaginatively the new water necessities brought about by the dynamic boom of the 1880's.

It abandoned developments of shoreward wells and creeks and started a 31-mile flume from the headwaters of the San Diego River, a project once ridiculed in San Diego as impossible. Other cities followed suit. Irrigation works and municipal water projects sprang up throughout the state from the Imperial Valley through the great Central Valley.

As pointed out earlier in this series of articles, California historically has had to solve water problems, one after another. Naturally a semiarid land, it has had to base its economic and agricultural growth and prosperity on foundations of water development. Eighty per cent of its crops are grown on irrigated soils. A major part of its booming urban and industrial growth is founded on bold and unprecedented water development projects.

The major cities are not located near the great water sources. Good farm lands are often found far from the larger streams. In California, water maldistribution is not only by regions but by seasons and by years. California has built hundreds of reservoirs to store excess runoff in wet years and wet seasons to equalize stream flow and to keep water in irrigation ditches during dry seasons and dry years.

DROUGHT SKIRITED

California, in the third year of a deep drought, continues to prosper and continues to produce record farm crops only because of farseeing water developments of previous years. Plans must be made now for the future. Water is available. Only the engineering works to distribute it to areas of need are lacking.

The fortunate position of the state in possessing large ground water storage basins is notable. Such basins, which yield more than eight million acre-feet of water annually, provide nearly half of all water used consumptively in California as well as much supplemental water for irrigation. It is estimated that at present we are overdrawing our ground water by five million acre-feet annually.

This water has to come from somewhere, and if these aquifers are overdrawn too long, they can be depleted. There is one thing that is worse than being too dry in the first place. That is recklessly to exhaust ground water after large investments are already built up.

Many peoples' heads are easily turned by "glamorous" and seemingly easy solutions to California water problems, and think that because scientists are studying such possible "far out" sources as cloud seeding to induce rains, and sea water conversion, success in these projects is imminent.

HELF'S EXPERIMENTERS

The Department of Water Resources has and is cooperating in experiments in rain-making. It is jointly engaged with the federal government in construction of an experimental sea water conversion plant, to be completed at Point Loma this year.

We should hurry the day when cloud seeding or sea water conversion will become practical and competitive in cost to natural water to help supply our growing water needs. But in the meantime, we had better keep our ditches full.

"In the past it was gold that came out of the fabulous Sierra streams and mines to bring men wealth," Robert de Roos wrote in "The Thirsty Land," a history of the Central Valley Project. "Now from those same hills comes the inexhaustible resource, the one sure wealth of the state. How water is used will determine what California will be."

To be sure that this future is great, we must proceed without delay in building the State Water Project, authorized by the voters last year.

That is where we go from
Mr. William E. Warne,
Director, Dept. of Water Resources,
Sacramento, California.

Re: Newspaper articles on water.

June 12, 1961.

Mr. Warne:

Having read your series of articles on water in the Hollywood Citizen I commend you for your effort to inform the public.

However, in order to inspire confidence, it is well to make certain that statements of fact can be borne out with historic proof. Therefore, when you say, under "STATE'S PROGRAM ALL STAKED OUT" that William Mulholland came into "renown as one of the world's greatest engineers" it is well to analyze his engineering efforts and see if you are aware of the following facts: (1) Mulholland's application for a license to practise engineering revealed to the Bureau of Civil and Professional Engineers that he had had no technical training whatever. (2) That he acted as a consulting engineer on the Calaveras Dam and LaFayette Dam both of which proved disastrous. (3) That he failed to build a dam in the Long Valley site in the 1910 period, losing $300,000,000 worth of power in the following 30 years, and $300,000,000 worth of water for the City of Los Angeles because of a personal feud with Fred Eaton who had obtained land in the Long Valley site. (Eaton, former mayor of L.A., who misused the Reclamation Service badge of J. B. Lippincott in scaring Owens Valley ranchers to sell their lands and water rights cheaply under threat of condemnation.) Yes, Mr. Warne, I spent several weeks in the Department of the Interior- Reclamation Service-going through some 4,000 secret letters, telegrams and documents to learn the truth about these important matters—and the only American citizen who was ever authorized to make such investigation, and you, as a former officer in the Reclamation Service would be interested and astonished to see what my files contain on this subject. At least, to one like myself who has the true history of the Owens Valley Reclamation Project with its fraud and corruption on the part of Lippincott and his Los Angeles conspirators, the entire water subject is approached with caution and deep discretion in the face of the great barrage of confusing publicity which has attended the Feather River proposal.

MULHOLLAND—great engineer? Over the protest of some of the best engineers in California, Mulholland built the ill-fated St. Francis Dam which failed March 12th, 1928, and killed 635 innocent people who were caught like rats in a trap while they were asleep; and of which the Engineering News Record said was "A fabled foredoomed failure of a false practised, which cost the City of L.A. scores of millions of dollars. He also designed and built the Hollywood-Mulholland Dam which, under State suggestion was partially emptied with flower beds banked against it to keep it from falling down; the counterpart of the St. Francis Dam with the usual safeguards omitted. "Mulholland, GREAT ENGINEER?" Please let me know if you knew these things when you said that Mulholland came into "renown as one of the world's greatest engineers." Please tell me.

Sincerely Yours,

Andreas Nordiskog, Ph. D., President of
The Southwest Water League.

[Signature]
Andrae Nordskog, Ph.D.
President, The Southwest Water League
1361 Laveta Terrace
Los Angeles 26, California

Dear Dr. Nordskog:

Thank you for your letter of June 12, commenting on our series of newspaper articles on California's water problems.

Your statements regarding Mr. Mulholland are noted. Perhaps it did appear that we overstated Mr. Mulholland's fame as an engineer. If so, such was not our intention. It was not meant to pass judgment on Mr. Mulholland. Our statement simply was what many other writers have recorded in discussing Mr. Mulholland, that he had won renown as one of the world's greatest engineers.

However, we do not believe history can be denied, Mr. Mulholland, whatever mistakes he may have made, was responsible for one of the greatest water projects the world had known to his day. It is probable that he learned from the past as we all do. Quite likely all of the engineering world profited from the lessons learned on Mr. Mulholland's projects.

Your interest in water problems is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]
Director
THE SOUTHWEST WATER LEAGUE

(On call of the Mayor and City Council of Lynwood, California, 133 official representatives of 48 cities in Southern California met at the Lynwood City Hall on October 25th, 1920, and organized the SOUTHWEST WATER LEAGUE for the purpose of studying the water needs and water resources of the great Southwest, and since which time meetings have been held in many of these cities for the benefit of the public.)

Mr. William E. Warne,
Director, Dept. of Water Resources,
1120 N Street,
Sacramento, 2, California.

Re: Mulholland "great engineer?"

Dear Mr. Warne:

Thanks for your letter of June 30, 1961, relating to Mr. Mulholland and being one of the World's greatest engineers." That you did not mean to overstate his fame as an engineer. But— that he was responsible "for one of the greatest water projects the world had known to his day."

On my inspection tour of water matters in San Diego County last week, I stopped on my way back in Laguna Beach and had lunch with a banker formerly associated with W. D. Longyear of the Security Bank (One of the rich speculators that got Owens Valley water for lands in San Fernando Valley at 9,000% profit) and was advised that statements made by an official in your capacity would fall on deaf ears if it were found that they were not true; and that for that reason great care should be used in making such public statements.

PLEASE NOTICE: That Mulholland was NOT responsible for "one of the greatest water projects the world had known to his day." Mr. Fred Eaton, former Los Angeles Mayor and its chief engineer, pioneered in Owens Valley and Mono County as far back as 1893. J. B. Lippincott, who later worked for the Reclamation Service as the California resident engineer on reclamations projects, spent considerable time in Owens Valley with Eaton, having known him since 1893, spending his vacation with Eaton in Owens Valley in July, 1900. The belief being, according to Lippincott's sworn testimony in the 1912 Aqueduct Report, that he and Eaton were very closely associated in their observations and consideration of using waters from Owens Valley for use in Southern California; and that Eaton (who personally confirmed the facts to me in 1927) represented a group of Los Angeles financiers and newspaper owners in their efforts to get Owens Valley waters for use in SAN FERNANDO VALLEY and went to New York seeking the funds to pay for such an undertaking. BUT—that the bankers refused to finance the job as it would not pay for the loan out of revenue for agricultural purposes. That if Eaton could get the City of L.A. to issue bonds for municipal purposes, they would underwrite the job. And so—secretly they worked on the job, with Eaton using Lippincott's badge to scare Owens Valley farmers into selling their water rights or face GOVERNMENT condemnation, A shameful and ILLEGAL operation that was put over on the defenseless farmers. Correspondence between Dr. F. H. Newell, Chief of the Reclamation Service and his assistant chief, Arthur E. Davis, show that they accused Lippincott of "being so biased against the Reclamation Project in Owens Valley, and so moved by selfish considerations," etc., that he should be retired--to get a job with the Los Angeles Water Board at a much greater salary than as a reward for past services--for betraying the Government and the O. Valley farmers.
Lippincott did get a job with the L. A. Water Board at twice his former salary after making false reports to the Government regarding his expenditures on the Owens Valley Reclamation Project.

Letters showing that Eaton actually made the surveys on the Aqueduct Route down to Haiwee Reservoir site, far south of the lower end of the Reclamation Project; and that Lippincott (during the time he was pretending to further the Owens Valley Reclamation Project, was using his surveyors—at Government expense—to place the bench marks—U.S.G.S.B.M. all the way to the Haiwee Reservoir site, secretly for the Los Angeles Water Board. And that the first time that Mulholland entered the scene was in letters dated November, 1905, wherein he acknowledged that Eaton was making such surveys secretly for the City of L. A.

Mayor Owen MacAleer of Los Angeles in a letter to the Secretary of the interior in 1905, seeking permission to have the Owens Valley Reclamation Project killed in favor of the City of L. A., assured that it would be an easy thing to build such an aqueduct to Los Angeles because it presented "NO DIFFICULTY in engineering." That the water would flow down hill from a 4,000-foot level to the ocean level at Los Angeles. Eaton and Lippincott were the real creators of the Los Angeles Aqueduct; and, if Mulholland wants credit for having built the 900-second-foot-flow concrete aqueduct to Haiwee Reservoir, which was stated by Mr. Fred C. Finkle (for the American Cement Manufacturers Association) to be ONE-THIRD no good at all, one-third partly good, and the other third which would actually hold water, then Mulholland is entitled to such CREDIT??????? You may possibly believe that I am biased in these opinions against Mulholland, but should you know the true history of his treatment of the Owens Valley farmers you would see my point of view. When the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce sent a Committee to Owens Valley in 1927 seeking a settlement of the war between the City and the Valley, Mulholland was asked—"Is there no degree of justice that can be afforded these farmers?" Mulholland replied with a sneer—"Justice hell, there are not enough trees in the valley to hang the _______ _________." All of these statements are of public record to be found in booklets printed by the farmers and in the State Engineers report to the Governor. So they are not of my own making.

NO—credit for the conception of, and the creation of the Owens Valley Aqueduct, must go to Eaton and Lippincott whose name was found on L. A. Water Board letterhead as "Assistant Chief Engineer" after he had been fired by the Government for his shameful betrayal of the Owens Valley Reclamation Project. Arthur P. Davis wrote to Dr. F. H. Newell, his Chief of the Reclamation Service that Lippincott had used the same dishonest and illegal tricks in San Joaquin Valley where a reclamation project was NOT under consideration, by withdrawing very large acreage from entry, not for Government use, BUT, for private purposes. Yes, my dear Mr. Warne, this, and much more can be told of the successful efforts of Interior Department officials to keep the truth from being known, even to the Secretary of the Interior in fooling the President of the United States.

In spending my time in writing this on a Sunday evening instead of resting, I do so only because you are the first high State officer who has indicated an interest in knowing the truth. With best wishes, I am Sincerely Yours,

Andrae Nordskog, Ph. D.,
President of the Southwest Water League.

Encl.: Government Operations.
Mr. William E. Warne, Director
Department of Water Resources,
Sacramento, California.         Re: Mulholland "great engineer."

Dear Mr. Warne:

In your letter of June 30, 1961, you say that "Quite likely all of the engineering world profited from the lessons learned on Mr. Mulholland's projects." All engineers worthy of the name said that all of the factors responsible for the St. Francis Dam failure were known prior to its failure, so they did not have to wait to learn those facts.

Speaking as an HISTORIAN and not as a critic I call your attention to the following facts:

1. When I was given radio time on KGFJ to tell the truth about the water-board operations the Mulholland politicians offered the station-owner $1,000, ostensibly to get me off the air, which they accomplished; and then got the radio license revoked and killed that station, this act scaring other stations into political submission.

2. After I had contracts, with pre-payments made to radio stations KFZ and KFVD, the Mulholland politicians, with threats of reprisal, got my contracts cancelled. This was certified by the station owners. The owner of one of the stations, privileged to wear a POLICE badge as a protection for his bootlegging, was threatened with license revocation and the loss of his POLICE badge if he did not cancel my contract.

3. Mr. David Horsely, pioneer motion picture producer of Hollywood, published a weekly BULLETIN called "HOLLYWOOD DAM NEWS" exposing the weakness of the Mulholland Hollywood Dam (after the St. Francis Dam failure) and engaged time on radio KMTR. At the hour appointed for his broadcast, Mr. Horsely, with only one arm carried his manuscript and was at the studio door ready to enter; when a Mulholland strong-arm man with two strong arms, roughly brushed Horsely aside and told him that Horsely was NOT to give his radio speech, but that he, himself, with two good arms against Horsely's one arm, was to use that radio period. Horsely, unable to resist the strong-arm man, meekly surrendered, due to the political influence of the Mulholland water crowd which had used its usual threats of reprisal if they permitted Horsely to speak. Politics, Mr. Warne? POLITICS? Yes, and much more just like the foregoing, known to the writer because of the undue influence it had on him, and which was all contrary to public policy; against the taxpayers' interest.

4. You wonder just why Mulholland was heralded as being a great engineer? Harry Chandler told me, after Mulholland's St. Francis Dam fell down, that it was because Mulhollina dhae so many favors for the Chandler group which had options of 47,000 acres in San Fernando Valley, and combined with the E. T. Earle group (L. A. Express) another 16,000 acres, a total of 63,000 acres out of the 100,000 acres in San Fernando Valley to be watered with Owens Valley waters, and on which the Times made its great fortune, that the Times built Mulholland as a (paper-made) engineer. These facts should be known to a man in your high position so as to be on guard against similar encroachments in the future. Sincerely Yours, Andrae Nordskog, Ph. D.

Mr. Reuel L. Olson,
Attorney at Law,
3848 East Colorado Blvd.,
Pasadena, California.

Dear Mr. Olson:

It was nice to hear from you by telephone Monday and that your book was used as reference in the Arizona-California hearings in San Francisco.

Your reference to the make-up of the water league, will say that as Gladstone said that the most effective committee was a committee of THREE, with two-at-home sick-a-bed. Looking back over a period of some 40 years of personal endeavor, I find that not one fraction of the victories I have had would have been attained had I waited confirmation of those who failed to make up the necessary quorum.

During the time when THE GRIDIRON accused Buron Fitts (D.A.) of negligence in his failure to prosecute Mulholland for criminal negligence in building the ill-fated St. Francis Dam, and he wrote me a letter in which he inferred that such accusation might be considered libelous, you became alarmed and discontinued your articles in THE GRIDIRON, although several others of our water league, Koebig, Turley, Fox and others, including Finkle, continued their articles, which covered many full pages of space, which at advertising rates of $200 a page constituted a gift of many thousands of dollars to the cause on my part. With not ONE DOLLAR from our members, who would not have even assembled had it not been for the constant publicity in THE GRIDIRON. And so, it may be that the name of the water league and a personal name became synonymous. It has not weakened their causes by associating the names of their founders, such as Pepperdine with the Pepperdine College, and Mrs. Scripps with the Scripps institutions. The fact remains that the name of the water league has been continued down through 30 years because of the activity of one person. There should be no jealousy or envy on the part of any good Christian.

There is no room here for the real history of the writer's efforts on behalf of the suffering public, except to say that a woman biographer, who quoted my book, SPIKING THE GOLD over the all-night program, midnite to 6 A.M., with responses from many States for an entire week, asked me for the privilege of writing my biography, but after several weeks of effort gave it up because she said it was too voluminous with many, many victories on my part to undertake the work.

With the expenditure of thousands of dollars on may part, traveling to Washington, in constant research on water matters, a slight contribution toward my continued efforts along this line, might cover part of the porter's tips I have paid along the way, would prove sincerity on the part of those, who like yourself, desire to see me continue. With best wishes to you, I am Sincerely Yours, Andrae Nordskog.

1361 Laveta Terrace,
Los Angeles, 26,
California.

Mr. Reuel L. Olson,
Attorney at Law,
3848 East Colorado Blvd.,
Pasadena, California.

Dear Mr. Olson:

When I wrote you today reminding you of the time that Buron Fitts (D. A.) tried to bluff me out of my attack on him for not prosecuting Mulholland for the St. Francis Dam disaster, at which time he angrily drove Lyman Farwell, Bliss and me out of his office, I forgot to mention what took place in 1944 at the "McArthur for President meeting" at the Kipling Hotel on West 6th Street. Fitts and I were the special guest speakers at a luncheon with several hundred (mostly women) present. No doubt fearing that I might mention his uncalled-for action as District Attorney, in driving us out of his office, he leaned across to me back of Mrs. Louise Ward Watkins, who presided, and said to me: "You know, Mr. Nordskog, since you knew me as District Attorney, I have changed my mind about lots of things taking place at that time." Bully for Gus. Chickens do come home to roost.

At the same tragic period of his rebuff, I had been engaged to speak for the Pleiades Club of which Mrs. Fitts was President. At the last moment, no doubt through the unwholesome influence of her husband, she asked me NOT to speak; that they had arranged for another speaker. I said "NO, I came here prepared to give my lecture on Constitutional Law, and I am going to give it." She weakened and finally said OK and I gave my speech as per schedule.

Then at a later date, after Fitts was out of office, some 300 woman members of the Pleiades Club gave a fine luncheon at the Cocoanut Grove at the Ambassador Hotel where Laughlin Waters, United States District Attorney, was the guest speaker. Mrs. Fitts, as President and Chairman, introduced Mrs. Nordskog and me as the guests of honor for that occasion, with a fine introduction; and Mr. Waters lauded me for the fine civic work I had done many years ago with his own father when we were both directors of the Greater Pico Boulevard Association, widening and paving that highway to the Ocean, and obtaining greatly reduced rates (some 52%) from Los Angeles to Santa Monica. It really was a gala day for us after Fitts had thus burned himself out in his undue action as District Attorney. Yes, Mr. Olson, the Chickens do find a way to come home to roost.

In my other letter, mailed today (this is written after dinner) I enclosed for your perusal copies of two London, England magazines, and of the Glendale Independent—regarding my suit against the Federal Reserve banks to recover SEVEN BILLION DOLLARS in gold for the U. S. Treasury, and the letter from Alexander Chisholm, Chief Deputy City Controller. Hope these will bring you up to date. Best wishes to you as always. Sincerely Yours,