EXPLANATION OF VOTE

The following explanation of votes was received and ordered printed in the Journal:

STATEMENT OF THE UNDERSIGNED IN EXPLANATION OF THEIR VOTES IN SUPPORT OF ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NUMBER THIRTY-FOUR.

We wholeheartedly support the proposition because we believe that the policy of the city of Los Angeles in the Owens River Valley in Inyo County, and the methods adopted by that city in carrying out that policy, are against the best interests of the State of California.

We consider that the Los Angeles city council is in an unusual position to secure an additional water supply, has constructed an aqueduct from the city of Los Angeles to the power portion of the Owens River Valley, which carries approximately 400 second feet of water, which is drained from the mountains surrounding said valley and from the approximately 290,000 acres of land within said valley.

It has purchased approximately 80 per cent of the agricultural lands of Owens Valley which has heretofore been used largely for orchards, alfalfa and other farm crops. These lands purchased by said city in Owens Valley are being rapidly devastated of orchards, buildings and improvements heretofore enjoyed by the inhabitants of Owens Valley, which was settled first in the early sixties and which since that time has grown and has been developed by the use of several irrigation systems or ditches and within which has grown up six prosperous cities or towns.

That said lands, because of such devastation, are rapidly being returned to their former desert state. The water that was used for irrigation of the valley has been caused by said city to drain into its conduit and has been transferred to Los Angeles where a very large percentage of it is and has been used by said city to irrigate the farm lands of San Fernando Valley.

That said city has hired county officials of Inyo County to appraise the lands purchased by said city; that said city has also released at a nominal rental a small part of its lands to persons who care for them and conduct chicken ranches and other farming businesses in a limited way. The agents of the city have participated in the politics of said county and supported and opposed various candidates for county office in Inyo County. Said city has refused to assume any responsibility for the loss of business suffered by the towns of said valley resulting from the devastation of the lands surrounding the cities and towns of the valley.

Said valley contains the main taxable agricultural property of the county of Inyo, and 80 per cent of it already has been greatly impaired in value because of the ruinous practices of said city of Los Angeles. control over the lands of Owens Valley, and that valley has been annexed to Los Angeles, except that it has never exercised such control in the interest of the county of Inyo. It has acted in many ways, apparently, in a proprietary rather than a municipal capacity.

We believe that if the city of Los Angeles had, in the beginning, purchased available dam sites and reservoir lands, it could have constructed water works which would have supplied in the past years and in years to come sufficient water to have irrigated Owens Valley and still have supplied the needs of Los Angeles, and that if it had not necessitated the expenditure of twelve million dollars in the purchase of lands in Owens Valley, and would not have damaged this exceptionally beautiful, fertile and prosperous valley.

We seriously condemn the unnecessary destruction of Owens Valley, which is evidenced by uprooted trees, demolished buildings, abandoned schools, etc.

We seriously criticize the attitude of Los Angeles toward the towns in Owens Valley which have been unnecessarily damaged and which are facing almost complete depopulation.

We deplore the policy of the city which abandons its municipal functions and enters into extensive activities as a private nature to the ruination of another political subdivision, and admit surprise that such can be legally done, as hereinafore set forth.

Above all we deplore the fact that a city of such magnitude would rely for its water supply upon a draining system rather than the storing of water in reservoirs where it would remain constant, pure and certain in quantity.

We condemn the precedent here established which recognizes the right of a large municipality to purchase almost unlimited acres in another and smaller political subdivision and to dominate and devastate such a land, which results in great embarrassment, damage to and almost complete disruption of the community life of the smaller political subdivision, without adequate compensation.

What has happened to Inyo County, unless steps are taken to prevent a repetition of that invasion, may happen to other rural counties of the State.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

We recognize the fact that it is the right and in fact the duty of Los Angeles to provide, lawfully, adequate municipal water supply for her needs. We therefore from the facts hereinafore set forth, which we believe to be true, recommend as follows:

First.—That the city of Los Angeles should forthwith proceed, by lawful purchase or condemnation, to obtain ample dam sites and reservoir lands and rights of way for necessary aqueducts and water rights sufficient to provide her necessary water from Mono Lake section and Long Valley Basin.

Second.—That said city should at once dispose of all of her farm lands heretofore purchased as soon as practicable at a reasonable market price under their present devastated and arid condition.

Third.—That said city should proceed forthwith to pay to the inhabitants of said cities and towns in said valley whatever damages they may have suffered or will suffer between now and the time of rehabilitation; and if said city shall not proceed forthwith to construct its own water works and obtain its own necessary water supply it should proceed at once to purchase all of the property, except personal property, in said cities and towns and pay also the reasonable damages for the good will of the businesses in said cities and towns.

Also said city should, if she does not construct her own water works as before suggested, forthwith purchase all of the remaining lands located in said valley.

Fourth.—The necessary riparian and appropriate rights of the lands in said Owens Valley should be left undisturbed.

Believing as we do that the resolution offered by Assemblyman Dan E. Williams, which resolution is known as Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 34, sets forth the facts substantially as we have hereinafore enumerated them, and also that his conclusions are substantially the same as ours, and also believing that this is one of the most serious problems and there fore the resolution here adopted is, at this time, of unusual importance, we, the undersigned members of this Assembly, have given it our most sincere and earnest support. We trust that his Excellency Hon. C. C. Young, Governor of California, will use his good offices so that the residents of Owens Valley may be compensated for the injuries suffered by them from the acts of the city of Los Angeles, and that peace, harmony and prosperity may again obtain in this most valuable section of California.

ISAAC JONES.

BRADFORD S. CRITTENDEN.

T. M. WRIGHT.

ELBERT G. ADAMS.

FRANK W. MIXTER.

ROBERT L. PATTERSON.

W. W. BERNARD.

W. W. ROSSCOF J. ANDERSON.

Assemblymen.