

6-3-58

House Subcommittee Buries High Hells Canyon Dam Bill

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Hells Canyon Dam legislation, subject of one of the nation's great private-vs.-public power fights, was buried Monday in a subcommittee. It appeared dead at least for this session of Congress.

The House Interior Reclamation Subcommittee turned down a bill to authorize a single multi-million dollar high federal dam in the Snake River bordering Idaho and Oregon.

★ Republicans claimed that with the help of two Southern Democrats, they had killed the bill, already passed by the Senate.

A leading advocate conceded it probably was dead, but said the fight would be carried on in the next session of Congress.

The proposed Hells Canyon federal dam, which has been before Congress about six years, would flood the sites of three smaller dams which the Federal Power Commission has authorized the Idaho Power Co. to construct in the same stretch of the Columbia River tributary. One of these three dams is nearly built and a second is under construction.

The subcommittee voted 15-13 to report the bill adversely to the full Interior Committee. The 13 Republicans who voted against the bill were joined by two Southern Democrats, Reps. James A. Haley (Fla.) and George A. Shuford (NC). The 13 voting for the bill were Democrats.

Later Motions

Later, on motions introduced by Rep. A. L. Miller (R-Neb) the group rejected a move to reconsider and then voted to table the reconsideration request.

Miller told a newsmen this successfully buried the bill because now a two-thirds vote is required in any move to reconsider the Hells Canyon bill, either in the full committee or subcommittee.

Rep. Wayne Aspinall (D-Colo), subcommittee chairman, indicated he too considered the bill dead. He said the adverse subcommittee report probably would be permitted "just to lie there" and die officially at the end of the current congressional session.

Rep. Gracie Post (D-Idaho), sponsor of a Hells Canyon bill that was killed by the subcommittee.

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Doesn't Mean High Dam Bill

am, of course, deeply disappointed in the vote in the House or Committee this morning. My membership on this committee presumes an interest at least, and often a dedication to the promotion and development of our natural resources. Yet for the sake of supporting private development in the Hells Canyon stretch of the Snake River, every Republican and southern Democrat voted to bury a great natural resource. It is hard for me to understand. I have been working—with all the strength and purpose I possess—since before my election to Congress, for a High Hells Canyon dam. I do not propose to stop now in my efforts to secure the maximum development of the Snake River water resource—the Snake River."

Snake River Is Best Bet

Pacific Northwest interests that clash over what form the water resource development in the Snake River takes, are strengthening the position of neighboring Canada, in which several of the Columbia River units have their sources.

The recent victory of the Conservative Premier, John Diefenbaker, was attributed in some degree to the aggressive policy advocated with respect to the United States. British Columbia, which is the province with Columbia River sources, has a power policy, enunciated by its Premier W. A. C. Bennett, which must be viewed realistically on this side of the international boundary.

In addressing the British Columbia Parliament Feb. 27, Bennett gave notice that his province in-