

Orr Affidavit

Exhibit 64

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DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

Letter from Lynn Crandall to Elwood Mead,
Commissioner, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
(Feb. 21, 1934)

370.
MINIDOKA Commissioner

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Idaho Falls, Idaho,
February 21, 1934.

Asst. to the Comr.

Engineering

ACCOUNTING

Dr. Elwood Mead, Commissioner,
U. S. Bureau of Reclamation,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Doctor Mead:

In reply to your request for my comments on the proposal to construct a government power plant at American Falls, I would say that there are several features of the proposal that will need to be carefully worked out if the present owners of storage space in American Falls reservoir are to contribute toward the cost of the power plant on account of the benefit that would ensue to them from making more water available for storage.

As stated by you, the canals that divert from the river at Milner require about 1200 second-feet for winter use. Of this amount about 200 to 250 second-feet is supplied by ground-water inflow from the Minidoka project, leaving 950 to 1,000 second-feet necessary to pass the Minidoka dam.

During the winter months, due to lowered area of Lake Walcott and increased inflow from several streams tributary to the river, there is no loss, as a usual thing, between American Falls and Minidoka dam; in fact, there often is a small gain during those months. I think that, on an average, about 950 second-feet passing American Falls dam during the winter months would yield 1,200 second-feet at Milner.

During the present winter the Government plant at the Minidoka dam has been using about 1,600 to 1,700 second-feet to carry its load. In extreme cold weather it may use as much as 2,000 second-feet on account of increased demand by the air heating load. The above use during the present winter at Minidoka dam plus 200 second-feet ground-water inflow below that point has supplied the requirements of the canals at Milner and allowed about 600 second-feet to waste past Milner down the river. On account of being able to use this 600 second-feet at its downstream plants the Idaho Power Co. for the past couple years has voluntarily

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refrained from withdrawing all of its stored water past American Falls. If the construction of the Government power plant at American Falls proceeds it will save the 600 second-feet now wasting past Milner all winter as the result of operating the Minidoka plant. However, when this is accomplished the Idaho Power Co. will be compelled to release enough of its storage to maintain waste past Milner of substantial volume in order to carry the load on its downstream plants, particularly the one at Shoshone Falls. Inasmuch as all water passing Milner is waste as far as irrigation is concerned, a definite plan should be adopted to stop all such water or at least as much thereof as possible, whether such waste comes from the Idaho ^{Power Co.} rights or from the Government power rights at Minidoka dam. Only by decreasing present discharge past Milner dam can the supply for American Falls reservoir be increased and to effect a permanent satisfactory solution of the problem this will require some negotiation with the Idaho Power Co. on account of its ownership of 300,000 acre-feet of water at American Falls. Of the above total, 45,000 acre-feet is a so-called primary right to be discharged past Milner, and 255,000 acre-feet is a so-called secondary right to be used by the Power Co. at American Falls but to be available for use below that point by the various canals if needed. The Power Co., however, by timing its withdrawal of the secondary right to the winter months when the canal draft is at a minimum, can also get, if so desired, most of this secondary water past Milner for use at its downstream plants.

On account of the fact that the Idaho Power Co. already has equipment installed at American Falls sufficient to use all the winter flow, and which could be connected with the reservoir to secure a greater head, if desired, it might be worthwhile to see what, if any, arrangements could be made with that company whereby all waste past Milner could either be done away with entirely or reduced to a very low amount. Such an arrangement might involve the construction of an additional power unit at Minidoka dam for summer use and for summer exchange with the Idaho Power Co., leaving the latter company to use the available discharge from American Falls and carry about half of the winter load of the Minidoka plant.

The power right of the Government at Minidoka dam, as awarded in the Foster Decree, amounts to 2,700 second-feet of earlier priority than American Falls reservoir. If the private canal companies on Snake River contribute to the cost of a Government power plant at American Falls they will want some definite commitment by the Government that the latter will forego during the winter months any claim to that part of the above decreed right in excess of such amount as will deliver 1,200 second-feet at Milner; otherwise there will be nothing to prevent the Government from eventually drawing up to 2,700 second-feet if its load should so increase as to require that amount of water.

It is not inconceivable that if the existing drought should continue for a number of years or become even more severe it might be necessary for the Twin Falls companies to cease winter diversions entirely and rely on wells, in order to permit of storing enough water at American Falls to save the crops on the several projects below that point. In such case an additional power plant at

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during the winter
American Falls would be useless and power would have to be developed either upstream from American Falls or in the Hagerman Valley section farther downstream where the river flow is replenished by springs.

I am not suggesting these various matters in any sense as opposing the proposal to construct the Government plant at American Falls as I think that such a plant would naturally result in the conservation of some water. The construction of the plant, however, would still leave unsolved the question of making available for storage the water that the Idaho Power Co. can waste past Milner and I cannot help but feel that a plan to work out the complete problem should be made before starting on a partial program. Sooner or later the need for irrigation water on Snake River will require the elimination of any discharge past Milner in years of deficient run-off, and plans might as well be made now to accomplish that result with the minimum possible cost.

Very truly yours,

Lynn Randall

District Engineer.

cc-C.E.

D.C., Portland

Supt., Burley

2/28/34