

March 23, 1965

ALL-AMERICAN CANAL

The big ranch interests in Imperial County, Calif. have been able to fool the people into believing that they conceived the idea of the All-American Canal and that they have paid for it. Nothing further could be from the truth.

As readers of the Newsletter "THE PIONEERS WERE FAILURES" will recall, the original Pioneers were little farmers who got 160 acres per person under the Homestead Act of 1862. Because 75% of the water of the Colorado River came to the Imperial Valley in the months of June, July, and August, there was only 25% left to be used as irrigation water from the month of October through the Winter and early Spring.

BUT IN THE WINTER MONTHS AND EARLY SPRING WHEN BIG PROFITS COULD BE MADE IF THE CROPS WERE HARVESTED AND SENT TO THE CONSUMERS IN THE BIG CITIES BACK EAST, often there were no crops of winter vegetables and fruits because the crops had withered because of lack of irrigation water. SO MANY OF THE ORIGINAL LITTLE FARMERS WENT BROKE AND BIG LANDOWNING CORPORATIONS BOUGHT THEM OUT FOR PRACTICALLY NOTHING.

It must be understood that the Mexican Government when it permitted the dry bed of the Alamo River in Baja California, Mexico to be used to bring water to the portion of the Imperial Valley in California, U.S., that this agreement with the California Development Co. had a provision that the Mexican portion of the Imperial Valley must get $\frac{1}{2}$ of the water. Readers will recall that the monopolists in the Imperial Valley just across the border in Mexico who had the big ranches had first chance at the irrigation water as it came in the Alamo River for 60 miles and 10 miles below the Mexican-U.S. border and parallel to it. SO IN THE WINTER AND EARLY SPRING THESE BIG RANCHES WHICH HAD THOUSANDS OF ACRES GRABBED THE WATER FIRST AND THERE WAS VERY LITTLE LEFT FOR THE LITTLE RANCHERS OF THE IMPERIAL VALLEY OF THE U.S. So the crops would often wither in the winter and early spring and as the little ranchers here failed, the absentee landowners bought them out at very low prices.

THE SHORTAGE OF WATER WAS SO ACUTE IN THE IMPERIAL VALLEY OF CALIFORNIA THAT THE IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT FORBID ANY NEW LAND BEING PUT INTO AGRICULTURE. This was changed after the Boulder Dam and the All-American Canal was built.

About 1915, a man by the name Mark Rose who was an original Pioneer who arrived here about 1901, got together with a group of others and got land on the East Mesa which is about the general area of 20 miles East of Holtville where Mark Rose lived. This East Mesa land is at a higher elevation than the land supplied by the water coming in by the Alamo River. So it could not be supplied with water by cheap gravity flow from the Alamo River. In addition, the big monopolistic ranches in Mexico were grabbing the water ahead of the Americans in the U.S.

The U.S. Government had about 1910 built the Laguna Dam across the Colorado River so that water could be sent to the Yuma Valley in Arizona and to the Indian Reservation on the California side of the River. Mark Rose and his friends conceived the idea of using the Laguna Dam and starting the All-American Canal from the California side of it to bring water to the East Mesa to be used as irrigation. If this were done, there would be even less water for Imperial Valley in Mexico and in California since the inlet for the water to enter the Alamo River was situated 10 miles South of the Laguna Dam.

Immediately, the big ranches South of the border and the little

farmers of Imperial Valley in the U.S. objected to the plan of Mark Rose because they knew that it would result in less water for them. The U.S. Dept. of Interior was consulted and advised THAT THE BUILDING OF AN ALL-AMERICAN CANAL JUST TO SUPPLY THE EAST MESA WAS USELESS UNLESS A DAM WAS BUILT AT BOULDER CANYON SO THAT THE COLORADO RIVER WATER WOULD BE CONTROLLED SO THAT THERE WAS A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF WATER IN THE WINTER AND SPRING.

So Mark Rose and his followers changed the plan so a Boulder Dam should be built and also an ALL-AMERICAN CANAL which should bring water to the East Mesa and continue to the Imperial Irrigation District and also supply the District. With this change in plan, the little farmers were in favor of following Mark Rose and in 1918 began lobbying activities to get Congress to build the Boulder Dam and the All-American Canal. It must be noted that it was not the United States which forced these projects on Imperial Valley, Calif. It was the people of this County who exerted influence and lobbying activities on Congress to get this BECAUSE BY THIS TIME THEY KNOW THAT THERE COULD NOT BE SUCCESSFUL LITTLE FARMERS IN IMPERIAL COUNTY UNLESS A STEADY SUPPLY OF IRRIGATION WATER COULD BE OBTAINED IN THE WINTER AND SPRING MONTHS.

Congressman Phil Swing was elected and for 10 years he proposed laws authorizing the Boulder Dam Project and the All-American Canal. The reason that things took such a long time was that the big ranches across the border fearing loss of irrigation water began a publicity campaign against the projects. They were led by the Los Angeles Times which with its associates was the owner of an 800,000 acres ranch. These big ranches had as allies the powerful California Gas & Electric Co., the Southern California Edison Co., the San Diego Gas and Electric Co., and the Arizona Public Service Co. which objected to the entire scheme as SOCIALISM particularly so because the Federal Government was going to make hydroelectricity at the Boulder Dam and because the Imperial Irrigation District was going into the business of selling electricity.

With the passage of time, the plan was changed so that a new Dam called the Imperial Dam was to be made about 10 miles North of the Laguna Dam and that the All-American Canal was to start from the Imperial Dam and not from the Laguna Dam.

In 1928, Congress approved the building of the Boulder Dam and it was completed in 1935. It must be realized that without the Boulder Dam the Colorado River could not be controlled and that the All-American Canal is useless by itself. THE PAYMENT FOR THE BOULDER DAM WAS BY THE TAXES OF ALL THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES.

But for the Imperial Dam and the All-American Canal which cost about \$30 millions, 5 Irrigation Districts in Arizona and the Coachella Irrigation District and Imperial Irrigation District and the City of San Diego, all in California, obligated themselves to pay for the Imperial Dam and the All-American Canal. Even Mexico pays for the water to Mexico was to run into the All-American Canal and after going through the Pilot Knob plant to make electricity, was to be diverted back to the Colorado River for use of the ranches below the border.

Since the Imperial Irrigation District was to get 60% of the water the District was to pay back about 60% of the cost. SO DO NOT BELIEVE ALL THE LIES THAT THE IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT IS PAYING ALL THE COST. Anyone who has bought the average home of \$12,000 to \$15,000 on F.H.A. should know that by the time he pays for it in 20 or 25 years that with interest and taxes, he has paid twice the cost of the home. He should also realize that each 20 years, he keeps on paying the cost of his home. With the Imperial Dam and the All-American Canal, the Federal Government did not charge any interest and for the first 10 years no payments at all were made to the government. SO PRACTICALLY SPEAKING, THE IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT WILL NEVER PAY ITS TRUE SHARE OF THE COST OF THE IMPERIAL DAM AND THE CANAL. The truth is that the Federal Government owns the Imperial Dam and the All-American Canal. The Imperial Irrigation District puts out lies to make the people think it owns these projects. Mark Rose got outfoxed for to this day, no water is delivered to the East Mesa. The residents of Imperial County also got fooled by the big ranches which control the I.I.D. for they have been swindled in high electricity bills by the I.I.D. to get the money to repay the Government. THE BIG RANCHES ESCAPE PAYMENT...